

The Power of the Blessing

Part 5

2 Chronicles 30

1 King Hezekiah now sent word to all Israel and Judah, and he wrote letters of invitation to the people of Ephraim and Manasseh. He asked everyone to come to the Temple of the Lord at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover of the Lord, the God of Israel. 2 The king, his officials, and all the community of Jerusalem decided to celebrate Passover a month later than usual. 3 They were unable to celebrate it at the prescribed time because not enough priests could be purified by then, and the people had not yet assembled at Jerusalem.

4 This plan for keeping the Passover seemed right to the king and all the people. 5 So they sent a proclamation throughout all Israel,

12 At the same time, God's hand was on the people in the land of Judah, giving them all one heart to obey the orders of the king and his officials, who were following the word of the Lord. 13 So a huge crowd assembled at Jerusalem in midspring to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. 14 They set to work and removed the pagan altars from Jerusalem. They took away all the incense altars and threw them into the Kidron Valley.

15 On the fourteenth day of the second month, one month later than usual, the people slaughtered the Passover lamb. This shamed the priests and Levites, so they purified themselves and brought burnt offerings to the Temple of the Lord. 16 Then they took their places at the Temple as prescribed in the Law of Moses, the man of God. The Levites brought the sacrificial blood to the priests, who then sprinkled it on the altar.

17 Since many of the people had not purified themselves, the Levites had to slaughter their Passover lamb for them, to set them apart for

the Lord. 18 Most of those who came from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun had not purified themselves. But King Hezekiah prayed for them, and they were allowed to eat the Passover meal anyway, even though this was contrary to the requirements of the Law. For Hezekiah said, “May the Lord, who is good, pardon those 19 who decide to follow the Lord, the God of their ancestors, even though they are not properly cleansed for the ceremony.” 20 And the Lord listened to Hezekiah’s prayer and healed the people.

21 So the people of Israel who were present in Jerusalem joyously celebrated the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days. Each day the Levites and priests sang to the Lord, accompanied by loud instruments. 22 Hezekiah encouraged all the Levites regarding the skill they displayed as they served the Lord. The celebration continued for seven days. Peace offerings were sacrificed, and the people gave thanks to the Lord, the God of their ancestors.

23 The entire assembly then decided to continue the festival another seven days, so they celebrated joyfully for another week. 24 King Hezekiah gave the people 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep and goats for offerings, and the officials donated 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep and goats. Meanwhile, many more priests purified themselves.

25 The entire assembly of Judah rejoiced, including the priests, the Levites, all who came from the land of Israel, the foreigners who came to the festival, and all those who lived in Judah. 26 There was great joy in the city, for Jerusalem had not seen a celebration like this one since the days of Solomon, King David’s son. 27 Then the priests and Levites stood and blessed the people, and God heard their prayer from his holy dwelling in heaven.

Ch. 31

1 When the festival ended, the Israelites who attended went to all the towns of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, and they smashed all the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah poles, and removed the pagan shrines and altars. After this, the Israelites returned to their own towns and homes.

2 Hezekiah then organized the priests and Levites into divisions to offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings, and to worship and give thanks and praise to the Lord at the gates of the Temple.

5 The people of Israel responded immediately and generously by bringing the first of their crops and grain, new wine, olive oil, honey, and all the produce of their fields. They brought a large quantity—a tithe of all they produced.

When Hearts are turned to God

1. The Journey isn't too great
2. The Sacrifice isn't too large
3. Hearts are restored to God
4. The Tithe is restored
5. The House of God is equipped for the work of Ministry

2 Corinthians 8:7-8

7 But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love...

- If there is a tool that the Lord uses to prove the heart. A diagnostic tool to prove and bring to the surface what is down deep, I believe it is a tool that looks like this (An Offering Plate).

- Time and time again Jesus stares into the offering plate of our life.
- The word offering is used in the Bible 743 times.
- That means on average each book of the bible uses it over 11 times.

Luke 21

The Widow's Offering

1 As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. 2 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. 4 All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

- What impressed Jesus wasn't the size of Her Offering but the percentage of her Offering.
- The Rich gave God 2% she gave God 100%.
- Jesus said, "this poor widow has put in more".
- That tells me God doesn't look at \$'s God looks at %.

Story: Successful Business man struggles to pay his Tithe.

1. The Tithe or First Fruits is God's plan

Some might think this is not so.

They might say Tithing is from the Law.

- Tithing is taught in the Law

Leviticus 27:30

"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord."

A Couple things to Consider:

2. Tithing came before the Law

Hebrews 7

This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, **2** and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything.

8 In the one case, the tenth is collected by people who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. **9** One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, **10** because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

3. Tithing is the only thing Jesus ever said the Pharisees did right.

Matthew 23:23

23 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.”

4. Jesus said there is something that belongs to God

Matthew 22

15 Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap Jesus in his words.

17 Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?”

18 But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? **19** Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, **20** and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

21 “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said to them, “**So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.**”

5. The Key that unlocks the Power of God’s Blessing is Obedience

Story: When I was 16 God Challenged me in my giving... He said “What you offer me costs you very little. When will it cost you something?”

- When you bless what is on God’s Heart...
- He will bless what is in yours...

Malachi 3

6 “I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. **7** Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty.

“But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’

8 “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

“But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’

“In tithes and offerings. **9** You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. **10** Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. **11** I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,”

says the Lord Almighty. **12** “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord Almighty.

- **God says Israel has robbed him in Tithes and Offerings**
- **Because of this they are under a curse.**
- **Then the Lord says bring the whole tithe into the Storehouse.**
- **Then God says something that you will not find anywhere else in the whole Bible... Test me in this... and see if I won't open the floodgates of heaven on you... and bless you... and prevent the pests that devours... and make you a people that everyone calls blessed by God!**