

LIFE'S WILDERNESS SHORTAGES AND GOD
Part VII: Trusting God's Lead To Provide Through His Peoples' Freewill Offerings
(Exodus 25:1-9; 38:21, 24-25, 29; 36:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. Many churches that preach the Gospel put varying degrees of pressure on their members to give money, time, labor or other goods and services to the church for its survival and functions. Such pressure can come in the form of suggested "tithing" of ten per cent of one's income to the Lord's work or of admonitions in the pulpit for people to give more than they have previously given to meet church goals.
- B. However, at Nepaug Bible Church, we have sought to heed 2 Corinthians 9:6-10 that emphasizes the need for believers to give of their own volition, setting the amount they give for themselves, for we believe the "tithes" of Scripture are not required in the current dispensation in accord with 2 Corinthians 9:6-10.
- C. Our current giving practice has more than once been charged as being faulty for allegedly leaving our Church ministries vulnerable to financial failure for such an "open-ended giving approach."
- D. Well, God's provision through His peoples' freewill offerings for the tabernacle provide direction and encouragement for giving as 2 Corinthians 9:6-10 directs for our era (as follows):

II. Trusting God's Lead To Provide Through His People's Freewill Offerings.

- A. God directed Moses to announce the need for a collection of various materials for the construction of the tabernacle, a collection to be received on a personal freewill basis of the people, Exodus 25:1-2.
- B. This collection involved the transfer of all kinds of valuables including precious metals (Ex. 25:3), costly cloth (25:4-5b), wood (25:5c), perfumes and condiments for perfume (25:6) and gems (25:7).
- C. What **astounds US** is recalling **the generation** that was to **GIVE these precious items for God's tabernacle** would be **the SAME one** that would **later die in the wilderness** for its **TEN REPEATED FAILURES to TRUST God** for its **OWN NEEDS, and that in ADDITION to their having SEEN God's MANY MIRACLES exhibited to DELIVER them from EGYPT** (cf. Num. 14:22-23, 29 in view of Ex. 14:11-12; 15:23-24; 16:2, 20 and 27; 17:1-3; 32:7; Num. 11:1, 4; ch. 14)!
- D. What actually happened by way of the record of what was contributed for the tabernacle's construction reveals the power and ability of God to work through His people to provide via their freewill offerings:
 - 1. The people of Israel gave 1.4 tons of gold, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to Exodus 38:24!
 - 2. They supplied nearly 4.8 tons of silver, Ibid., fn. to Exodus 38:25!
 - 3. The people gave about 3.35 tons of bronze, Ibid., fn. to Exodus 38:29!
 - 4. In today's markets of precious metals (not including the value of the gifts of gems, wood, perfumes and condiments, etc.), the gold was worth over \$13,000,000, the silver over \$700,000 and the bronze possibly \$300,000 depending on the market value.
 - 5. Indeed, so much was given in every area that Moses had to tell the people to cease their giving:
 - a. When the people began bringing their items to the skilled workmen who were to construct God's tabernacle, they gave every morning as their hearts motivated them to give, Exodus 36:3b.
 - b. This giving at this time shows their motivation to give came from God's work in their hearts during the previous evening and night to supply these materials much as we are motivated upon waking with a strong motivation to get busy with a certain project or function!
 - c. So much was given that every worker on the project met with Moses to report that in each of their departments, be it the area of gold, silver, bronze, precious wood, perfumes and their condiments, cloth or precious gems, they had "much more than enough" materials for their use, Exodus 36:4-5!
 - d. Accordingly, Moses sent word out throughout the entire camp of Israel, commanding all individuals to cease bringing their freewill offerings for the tabernacle construction project, Exodus 36:6-7!

Lesson: *In view of all these facts, we conclude that when GOD wants to supply for His ministries through the freewill offerings of His people, HE will EQUIP and MOTIVATE them to DO MORE than ENOUGH REGARDLESS of their maturity levels or EVEN the threat of CARNALITY in the givers!*

Application: *"God's work done in God's way will not lack God's supply" to cite the missionary Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission. So, instead of WORRYING if God's people who are told to give FREELY will actually give ENOUGH, instead of PRESSURING them, may we TRUST GOD!*