

"And to **Bring The Firstfruits** of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the House of the LORD:" *Nehemiah 10:35 KJV*



There is a story of a fellow who would not allow withholding from his paycheck, but set aside the amount himself after he had tithed so God would get the "firstfruits" of his wages. That may not be necessary, but I applaud his faith and integrity.

The wages of the average Israelite were his crops and herds. Perhaps you're a plumber, carpenter, bricklayer, accountant, secretary, or a business owner. How would God define your "firstfruits?" What about your time? In God's economy the day begins at even. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." How soon Satan's whispers begin each morning! Even before our feet hit the floor we are plagued with thoughts of lethargy and complaint. We think of the day as beginning at sunrise, but if we give God our evening time, our rest would be sweeter and our rising more joyous. How you feel when you rise sets the tone for the day. "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these Words, which I Command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Notice the order of sleeping and rising. Lying down is first in the order. We think of rest as the end of our day but it is actually the beginning. What occupies our thoughts at our lying down sets the tone of our dreams and day. The secret of true Joy is nighness to God. It's His Joy that strengthens us, not our own. With the Sovereign of Eternity at my side, what imp, demon, nay, or even Satan, himself, would dare approach? "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." How could faith falter at the very side of Omnipotence? When we stray from the path of obedience, we raise a signal flag, and every demon within striking distance takes deadly aim with fiery darts of doubt and temptation. They lurk in the darkness just off the path of Light to devour the slightest misstep. Obedience is our hazard protection, our shield, the proof of our faith. God's Commands are His blessings and obedience to them brings us along the Path of Provision and Bounty. "Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and ALL these things shall be added unto you." It's just good sense to be obedient, but faith in God must precede it, or the Peace and Joy of faithfulness will become the bondage of religious works. I can obey your father, but until I'm adopted, he's still not my Dad! Faith makes me a child of God. "As many as received Him, to them Gave He Power to become the sons of God." Do you give God the firstfruits of your love?

If provisions we would keep,
God's commandments we must meet,
Give Him first of ev'ry thing,
And your heart with joy will sing! –CGP

Which "firstfruit" of your life are you withholding from God? Are you wandering and wondering, "Why me, Lord?" God will never share His Bounty with unfaithful stewards. Give God what He asks, your love, and you'll find that you can never outgive Him. We withhold our affections for ourselves and our own desires not realizing this: "Delight thyself also in the Lord and He Shall Give thee the desires of thine heart." In other words, if God is your delight, He will be your heart's desire!

"Now unto Him that is Able to Do Exceeding Abundantly Above All that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us, unto Him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." *Ephesians 3:20-21 KJV*