

Offertory Reading for . . .

January 2, 2010

Local Church Budget

(**Personal Giving Plan** suggests 3%-5% of income)

“The earth is the LORD’s, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1).

“. . . Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy. For **special occasions** there were **freewill offerings**. . . The **gleanings** and the corners of the field were reserved for **the poor**. . . The **first fruits** were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary and were then devoted to **the use of the priests**.

“By this system of benevolence **the Lord sought to teach Israel that in everything He must be first**. Thus they were reminded that God was the proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that it was He who sent them the sunshine and the rain that developed and ripened the harvest. **Everything that they possessed was His; they were but the stewards of His goods**.

“**It is not God's purpose that Christians, whose privileges far exceed those of the Jewish nation, shall give less freely than they gave**. ‘Unto whomsoever much is given,’ the Saviour declared, ‘of him shall be much required.’ Luke 12:48. The liberality required of the Hebrews was largely to benefit their own nation; today the work of God extends over all the earth. **In the hands of His followers, Christ has placed the treasures of the gospel, and upon them He has laid the responsibility of giving the glad tidings of salvation to the world. Surely our obligations are much greater than were those of ancient Israel.**” (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 336-337)

Today’s offering is for local church budget.

Let’s pray.