

Deuteronomy 16:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

Analysis

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee—This principle governs feast offerings after describing the three pilgrimage feasts (Passover/Unleavened Bread, Weeks, Tabernacles). The Hebrew *ish kematnat yado* (אִישׁ כִּמְתַּנַּת יָדוֹ, 'each man according to the gift of his hand') means proportional giving based on ability, not fixed amounts. The phrase 'as he is able' prevents both pride (the wealthy) and shame (the poor).

The standard is 'according to the blessing of the LORD thy God' (*kebirkat YHWH elohecha*, כְּבִרְכַּת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ). Giving measures blessing received, making generosity a worship response to divine provision. This proportional principle anticipates New Testament teaching: 'Every man according as he purposeth in his heart...for God loveth a cheerful giver' (2 Corinthians 9:7). Paul also cites proportional giving: 'Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him' (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Historical Context

Pilgrimage feasts required male Israelites to 'appear before the LORD' at the central sanctuary (v. 16), bringing offerings from harvest abundance. This command prevented empty-handed worship (Exodus 23:15) while accommodating economic differences. The principle balanced obligation (everyone brings something) with equity (amount varies by blessing). This economic wisdom

prevented both exploitation of the poor (by demanding fixed amounts) and enabling of the wealthy (by allowing token gifts). The system assumed God's varied but real blessing on all covenant members.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does proportional giving 'as God has prospered you' differ from percentage-based tithing or fixed-amount offerings?
2. In what ways should recognizing all wealth as God's blessing shape both the amount and attitude of your giving?

Interlinear Text

אֵשׁ	כִּמְתֵּן ת	יְד ו	כְּבִרְכָּת	יְהוָה
Every man	shall give as he is able	H3027	according to the blessing	of the LORD
H376	H4979		H1293	H3068
אֱלֹהֵי יְיָ	אֲשֶׁר ר	נָתַן	לָּהּ:	
thy God	H834	which he hath given	H0	
H430		H5414		

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 8:12 (Parallel theme): For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

Deuteronomy 16:10 (Blessing): And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

Leviticus 27:8 (Parallel theme): But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.

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