

# Deuteronomy 18:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

## Analysis

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**The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep** (רֵאשִׁית דְּגָנְךָ תִּירְשָׁךְ וַיִּצְהָרְךָ וְרֵאשִׁית גֶּזַע צֹאנֶךָ)—reshit (firstfruit) appears twice, emphasizing priority. God claims the first and best, not leftovers. The agricultural triad—grain (dagan), new wine (tirosh), and oil (yitshar)—represents Canaan's staple crops, while fleece (gez) represents pastoral wealth.

Giving firstfruits required faith: farmers gave before seeing the full harvest's yield. This trust acknowledged God as provider and owner of all. Exodus 23:19 and Numbers 18:12-13 establish firstfruits as holy to the LORD, given to priests who represented Him. The principle extends beyond agriculture—Proverbs 3:9 commands honoring God "with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase."

New Testament application: Jesus is aparche (firstfruits) of resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20,23); believers are firstfruits of God's creatures (James 1:18); the church's generous giving should follow firstfruit priority (1 Corinthians 16:2). Withholding firstfruits was covenant violation—Haggai 1:4-11 shows the consequence of putting personal comfort before sacred obligation.

## Historical Context

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This law governed Israel's agricultural economy throughout their history in Canaan. Firstfruits festivals (Feast of Firstfruits, Pentecost) celebrated harvest and

acknowledged God's provision. Nehemiah 10:35-37 records post-exilic Israel renewing commitment to firstfruits after neglecting them. The law assumes Canaanite settlement and agricultural lifestyle, showing Deuteronomy's preparation for life in the Promised Land rather than wilderness wandering.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. Do you give God your 'firstfruits'—the first and best—or leftovers from what remains after your needs are met?
2. How does prioritizing God financially demonstrate trust that He will provide for the rest of your needs?

## Interlinear Text

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וְרֵאשִׁית יֵת	דְּגָנְךָ	תִּירְשֶׁךָ	וְיִצְהָרְךָ	וְרֵאשִׁית יֵת
The firstfruit	also of thy corn	of thy wine	and of thine oil	The firstfruit
H7225	H1715	H8492	H3323	H7225
גֵּז	צֹאֲנֶךָ	תֵּתֶנּוּ	לִי:	
of the fleece	of thy sheep	shalt thou give		
H1488	H6629	H5414	H0	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 22:29** (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

**Exodus 23:19** (Parallel theme): The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

**Leviticus 23:10** (Parallel theme): Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:

**Leviticus 23:17** (Parallel theme): Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.

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