

tithe is referred to in Deut. xiv. 28, for the Levite, stranger, fatherless and widow.—The Hebrews were not by any means impoverished by these large demands upon their resources. The more they gave the more they had to give. And thus it will always be.

Under the New Testament we do not indeed find tithes insisted on, but we find demands still greater. The following and similar passages may help us to know our duty in this particular. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." It is not a tithe that is now required but the *whole*, if the cause of our Saviour need it. The christian must be prepared to give up all and follow Christ, if he should call for such a sacrifice. How many there were who did so,—who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, who even "counted all things loss that they might win Christ." Whoever gives his body a living sacrifice to God will not scruple to give his worldly goods also, if necessary.

See also 1 Cor. xvi. 1. "Now concerning the collection for the saints as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." "See that ye abound in this grace also."—2 Cor. viii. 7, 8. "Let him who is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Gal. vi. 6; see also Philip. iv. 10-17, and Heb. xiii. 16.

When we consider how this poor widow, and Barnabas the son of consolation, and the poor Macedonians, were all commended for their liberality,—and how the inhabitants of Meroz, and Nabal, and the Israelites in the time of Haggai, were cursed for their neglect, indifference or penuriousness, we need no longer hesitate as to the path of duty. But the acceptableness of our offering depends on our motives. The Saviour graciously receives the smallest contribution given from right motives. The Lord cares not for offerings merely. "His is the silver and the gold," also "the cattle on a thousand hills." Therefore the hypocritical Jews were told, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me;

the new-moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." Is. i. 13. To the same effect is the language of the apostle, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

#### THE RIGHT SPIRIT.

In giving to the cause of God all ostentation, selfishness and vanity must be avoided, and the glory of God and the prosperity of his cause must be our only aim. Such motives would render our offerings *liberal*. The poor, even the poorest, may be liberal supporters. This poor widow was eminently liberal, while the rich who offered before were not, for though they gave largely it was but little out of their abundance. They did not deny themselves; whereas she gave up all, even her whole living. It would seem then, that our offerings must bear as large a proportion as possible to our income. The Lord desires no forced, unmeaning sacrifice, but he desires that our love to him should bear its full measure of fruit. What a tremendous curse is pronounced against sordid, penurious professors! "But cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing." Mal. i. 14.

#### THE RIGHT TIME.

Our offerings must not only be liberal but *seasonable*. How often are the wants of the church forgotten for months, if not for years. Not until repeated appeals for help are made, is a tardy response given. And yet if God were to hold back their daily allowance from such people, for a single day, they would think they were hardly dealt with. This painful state of things is, perhaps, mainly owing to the want of a right system. The apostolic rule was to lay by every sabbath as the Lord prospered.—1 Cor. xvi. 1. Those to whom this injunction was given were not the rich or noble, but the poor. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called."—1 Cor. i. 26. Yet when the love of God regulated their hearts they could bring seasonable offerings to his altar.