

When are Tithes and Offerings Proper?

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[18] And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought out bread and wine; and He was the priest of the Most High El. And He (Melchizedek) blessed him and said, "Blessed be Avraham of the Most High El, possessor of heaven and earth! And blessed be the Most High El, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave Him a tenth of all. [Brisheet (Genesis) 14:18]

There is a great deal of confusion regarding tithing and offering in Renewed Covenant times. It need not be so. When we step back and take a look at the bigger picture, we can see why tithes and offerings can be proper:

The Bigger Picture: YHWH is growing something

The Mosaic Law (the Torah Moshe) spells out a variety of tithes and offerings that were considered acceptable sacrifices in 'Old' Covenant times. Although the details of these offerings are outside the scope of this article, the reader should be able to see that the purpose of tithes and offerings in the Tanach was basically to provide for the physical needs of two groups of people:

1. Those who did the service of YHWH (the Priests and the Levites); and
2. Those who were unable to help themselves (including the poor, the widows, the crippled, and the orphans.)

When we meditate on the above list, we should be able to see that these two groups are actually one group: Those who are unable to help themselves.

“How are Priests and the Levites ‘Unable to help them selves’?”

The duty of the Priest and the Levite was to minister the Word. If they took this calling seriously (and carried out the duty to the best of their ability) then there would be no time left to provide for their own needs. To have deviated from this calling to serve YHWH would have been tantamount to sin.

To supply the physical needs of the Priests and the Levites, YHWH's Instruction (Torah) told the other twelve tribes (counting Ephraim and Manasseh as separate tribes) to give tithes of their increase (e.g. Leviticus 27:32), and also indicated that it was a sweet savor to give additional voluntary offerings. And as the Torah never changes, this pattern is still in effect today.

“But I thought Paul wrote against giving tithes and offerings.”

The Brit Chadasha (the Renewed Covenant) shows us that the apostle Shaul did ask for financial support; and that he even defended his decision when he was taken to task over it. What the apostles was teaching (and what is so popularly misunderstood) is that Shaul

considered the attitudes of the parties to be of the utmost importance in determining whether an offering was set-apart, or profane (common.)

What Shaul teaches is that it is essential for a minister to do what he does out of a desire to help and to serve Elohim's people. Any other attitude makes a mere job out of the ministry, profaning it, and making it non-set-apart:

[3] If anyone teaches differently, and does not consent to sound words, those of our Adon Yeshua HaMashiach and the doctrine according to (set-apartness), [4] he has been puffed up, understanding nothing; but is sick concerning doubts and arguments, out of which comes envy, strife, lashon hara, evil suspicions, [5] (and) idle usefulness; of men whose mind has been corrupted and deprived of the truth, supposing (financial) gain to be (set-apartness.) Withdraw from such!

[6] But (set-apartness) with contentment is great gain! [7] For we have brought nothing into this world, (and it is) plain that neither can we carry anything out; [8] but when we have food and clothing, we shall be satisfied with these.

[9] But those purposing to be rich [from the Good News] fall into temptation, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which plunge men into ruin and destruction: [10] For the love of money is the root of all evils, by means of which some, having lusted after it, were seduced from the faith, and they themselves (were) pierced through with many pains. [11] But you, O man of Elohim, flee these things! And pursue righteousness, (set apartness), faith, love, patience, and meekness. [Tima Theus Aleph (First Timothy) 6:3-11]

Shaul is not, as is commonly supposed, suggesting that ministers should not have adequate, middle-class incomes (like the Levites did.) What he suggests here is that those who profess a desire to serve in the ministry must actually have the desire to serve; and to love those they serve. In other words, they must impart more than mere intellectual head-knowledge; but must set an example of patience and love, so that others may follow:

[17] For we are not as the many, hawking the Word of Elohim: But as of sincerity: But as of Elohim. We speak in Messiah; in the sight of Elohim.
[Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 2:17]

In other words, love must remain the center of the equation.

Yeshua and the Tanach; and the New Jerusalem to come:

Some may say that because prophecy tells us that we are all to know Elohim, from the least of us to the greatest of us (Jeremiah 31:34), or that because we in Ephraim are a royal priesthood (1 Kefa 2:9), that there is no longer any call for the tithe and the offering. However popular this misconception may be, the Scripture does not support it.

Hear a parable:

[12] “A certain wellborn Man (Yeshua) went to a distant country to receive a Kingdom for Himself, and to return. [13] And calling ten of his slaves (referring to the Lost Ten Tribes) He gave to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Trade until I return!’

[14] “But His citizens hated Him, and sent a delegation after Him saying, ‘We do not desire this One (the Spirit) to reign over us!’

[15] “And it happened that at His (Yeshua’s) returning, having returned to the Kingdom, He even said for those slaves to be called to Him, those to whom He gave the silver, that He might know what each had gained by his trading.

[16] “And the first came to Him and said, ‘Master, Your mina has gained ten minas!’ And He said to him, ‘Well done, good slave! Because you were faithful in small matters, you will have authority over ten cities (in the Kingdom)!’

[18] “And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has made five minas!’ And He said to this one also, ‘And you shall be over five cities!’

[20] “And another came, saying, ‘Master, behold your mina; which I stored up in a wash-cloth, for I feared You; because You are an exacting man, taking what you do not lay down, and reaping what you do not sow!’

[22] And He said to him, ‘I will judge you out of your own mouth, wicked slave! You knew that I am an exacting man, taking what I have not laid down, and reaping what I have not sown! But why did you not give My silver on the bank table; so having come I might (at least) have exacted it with interest?

[24] “And to those standing by He said, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to the one having ten minas!’

[25] “But they said to Him, ‘Adon, he (already) has ten minas!’”

[26] “For I say to you, to everyone who has, (more) will be given; and from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken from him! But to these hostile to Me, the ones not desiring Me to reign over them, bring them here and execute them before Me!” [Luqa (Luke) 19:12-27]

“What are you saying?”

The parable of the Minas is not about money: Rather, it is about our lives. Each of us has been given one singular Mina (called “Salvation”); and what we choose to do with our Mina bespeaks a great deal about the love we feel for our Master.

The first two Ephraimite slaves loved their Master very much. They were wise: They traded with their lives, and gained more servants for their Master; and they were rewarded accordingly.

The Third Ephraimite slave was wicked, and foolish. He did not do anything with the new spiritual life that he had been given. And worse: he did not even put his mina on interest ‘on the bank table,’ signifying that he did not want Yeshua to rule over him.

“What does it mean, ‘The bank table’?”

[22] And He said to him, 'I will judge you out of your own mouth, wicked slave! You knew that I am an exacting man, taking what I have not laid down, and reaping what I have not sown! But why did you not give My silver on the bank table; so having come I might (at least) have exacted it with interest?
[Luqa (Luke) 19:22]

It is division of labor that makes advanced technological civilization possible: And that is why we know that division of labor is a good thing: Because it first arose in Judeo-Christian society, and still thrives best within Judeo-Christian societies.

Contrary to some Christian denominational speculations, the Book of Revelation informs us that we are not going back to the Garden of Eden; but that we are headed onward, toward a New Jerusalem. There will also likely be such a division of labor within the New Jerusalem.

“What are you saying?”

This division of labor is analogous to the fact that there are many different parts to the Body; and that while all of the parts of the Body are different, all are necessary:

[18] But Elohim set the members, each one of them in the Body, even as He desired. [19] But if all was one (in the same) member, then where would the Body be? [20] But now indeed, many are the members, but one Body.

[21] And the eye is not able to say to the hand, "I have no need of you;" or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." [22] But much rather the members of the body seeming to be weaker are necessary.

[23] And those of the Body we think to be less honorable, to these we put more abundant honor about them; and our unrepresentable members have more abundant propriety: [24] But our presentable members have no need. But Elohim tempered the Body together, having given more abundant honor to the member having need, [25] that there might not be division in the Body; but that the members might have the same care for one another.

[26] And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. If one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it. [27] And you are (all) Messiah's Body, and members in part. [Qurintaus Aleph (First Corinthians) 12:18-27]

All of the parts of the Body must work together in a coordinated way, helping one another, and not fighting against one another. While those who desire to do the work of a minister desire a good work (1st Timothy 3:1), we as a society can no more do without doctors and lawyers and businessmen, and nurses and bakers and home-makers, than we can do without lungs or bones.

We all have a requirement to witness, and we all have a requirement to live our lives as a light to the world. However, just as society becomes more advanced when we have division of

labor, and specialists in every field, so too is the Body well served, when those called to ministry are able to spend their full time in the Word.

“But is that the apostles’ example? Did they spend full time in the Word?”

[1] But in these days, the disciples being multiplied, a murmuring of the Hellenists (the ‘Greeks’ of the Renewed Covenant; i.e. the Christians) towards the Hebrews (meaning Torah-zealous Nazarene Jews, like Kefa and Yochanan and Ya’akov) occurred, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily service. [2] And having called near the multitude of the disciples, the Twelve said (to them) “It is not pleasing to us to have left the Word of Elohim, to serve tables. [3] There-fore, brethren, seek out men among you having been witnessed to; seven (men) full of the Set-apart Spirit and Wisdom, whom we will appoint over this need: [4] But we shall continue in steadfast prayer, and in the service of the Word. [Ma’aseh (Acts) 6:1-4]

Needing to spend their full time in the Word, the apostles did collect funds; and astonishingly, we see that the apostle Shaul even collected for them:

[25] But now I am going to Jerusalem, doing service to the saints. [26] For Macedonia and Achaia thought it good to make certain gifts to the poor of the saints in Jerusalem; [27] for they thought it good, also being debtors of them: For if the nations shared in their spiritual things, they ought also to minister to them in the fleshly things. [Romaya (Romans) 15:25-27]

“You mean that the apostles were trying to get rich!”

It is exceedingly doubtful that any of the apostles were rich. It is also doubtful, judging from Kefa’s (Peter’s) words, that the apostles had any great excess of wealth. Trying to sponsor emissaries to all the various parts of the world would have been very expensive, and so Kefa and the twelve would not have kept a lot of cash for their own use:

[6] But Kefa said, “There is no silver and gold to me, but what I have, this I give to you! In the Name of Yeshua HaMashiach HaNatsari, rise up and walk!” [7] And taking him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones were made firm. [Ma’aseh (Acts) 3:1-7]

Although it takes money to survive (and to sponsor missionaries, and take care of orphans), it is very doubtful that any of the apostles placed any great deal of importance on material wealth. They did have some money; but this was only a means to a set-apart end.

Further, the apostles kept the Torah, which specifies that while the priests were supposed to receive a steady income, none of them were supposed to have an inheritance in the Land (i.e., acreage.) In this context, then, read what the apostles did:

[32] And of the multitude of those who had believed, the heart and the soul were one. And no one said any of the possessions to be his own; but all things were common to them. [33] And with great power the apostles gave the testimony of the resurrection of the Adon Yeshua, and great grace was upon them all; [34] for neither was anyone needy among them; for as many as

were owners of lands or houses, having sold them, they bore the value of the things being sold, [35] and placed them at the feet of the apostles: And it was distributed to each according as any may have had need. [Ma'aseh (Acts) 4:32-35]

[As an interesting aside, one can argue whether the lands that were sold were primary houses and residences, or whether they were secondary (rental) houses and lands; for if the apostles and taught ones sold their primary dwellings, then the multitude of disciples would have had no place to live.

[However, a converse argument can be made that all the houses and lands that were owned by the taught ones were sold; and that the apostles carried on either in common quarters (like a kibbutz), or in rentals. This would make some sense, in that Yeshua had warned the apostles that there would come a time when they would have to flee Judea without notice (Matti 24:15-17.) That being the case, it would have made sense for them to live in rented property, using the money from their own sales (actually leases) of lands, to finance the Nazarene movement.

[However, whether the apostles owned some properties, or lived in leased dwellings, we see that the apostles did keep the Levitical pattern of having an income sufficient to keep them in prayer and the Word, but without having an inheritance (acreage) in the Land. This is entirely consonant with the focus on doing the work of Elohim without distraction, while not being focused on material things.]

“How can we be sure that they did not get corrupted over the money?”

No one held up as an example in the Renewed Covenant sought material wealth for its own sake. In fact, Kefa strongly rebuked a Samaritan man named Shimon, who was hoping to purchase spiritual gifts, with money:

[14] And the apostles in Jerusalem having heard that Samaria had received the Word of Elohim (Yeshua), they sent Kefa and Yochanan to them, [15] who going down prayed concerning them, so that they might receive the Ruach haQodesh (the Set-apart Spirit.) [16] For (the Spirit) was not yet fallen on any one of them; but they were only being immersed in the Name of the Master Yeshua. [17] Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Ruach HaQodesh.

[18] But (another man named) Shimon, having seen that the Ruach HaQodesh is given through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money, [19] saying, “Also give to me this authority, that to whomever I may lay on the hands, he may receive the Ruach HaQodesh!

[20] But Kefa said to him, “May your silver go with you to destruction, because you thought to get the gift of Elohim through money! There is neither part nor lot to you in this matter, for your heart is not upright before the face of Elohim! [22] Repent, then, from this wickedness of yours; and petition Elohim, if perhaps you will be forgiven the thought of your heart.” [Ma'aseh (Acts) 8:14-22]

Thus it is fairly clear that at least Kefa was able to resist temptation.

Shaul's Excellent Example

Shaul's writings tend to indicate that he believed it was fair for those who serve others spiritually to receive financial support, to assist them in their service:

[\[11\] If we have sowed spiritual things to you, is it \(such\) a great thing if we shall reap of your fleshly things? \[12\] If others have a share of the authority over you, should not rather we? But we did not use this authority; but we endured all things, so that we might not give a hindrance to the Good News of the Messiah. \[Qurintaus Aleph \(First Corinthians\) 9:11-12\]](#)

What is so endearing about Shaul (and what makes him such a good example) is that while Shaul clearly sees himself as being entitled to support in exchange for his service, Shaul never demands this support. Instead, he urges, exhorts and cajoles people lovingly, to help them to understand that it is really in their best interest to serve those serving them.

Shaul never demands anything. Instead, he is at all times willing to place himself last, rather than demand any kind of support from the people, or even do any thing that might cause them to stumble; and he considered that his reward was much greater, because of this (correct) attitude:

[\[18\] What, then, is my reward? That preaching the Good News I may make the Good News of Messiah without \(set\) charge, so as not to use fully my authority in the Good News. \[19\] For being free of all, I enslaved myself to all, that I might gain the more. \[Qurintaus Aleph \(First Corinthians\) 9:18-19\]](#)

“What do you mean, ‘Without (set) Charge’?”

It is clear that Shaul considered himself (and the apostles in Jerusalem) to be worthy of compensation for the life's energy they poured into the service. However, it cannot be stressed highly enough, that the ministry was not just a job to Shaul.

Like the noble and honest country doctor, Shaul served those in need of service, irrespective of their ability to pay. And, like a country doctor, it was perhaps his hope that those who had a little bit extra would give just a little bit extra, to make up for those who either could not, or would not, contribute.

Consider attitude of Shaul's in this light the example of the poor widow who threw in the two lepta (two mites) to the treasury: Although she gave less in material terms than the other Israelites, Yeshua reckoned her contribution to be more than the contributions of all of the others, because she gave out of her need (and by extension here, 'out of a sincere heart,' which would be the point.)

[41] And sitting down opposite the treasury, Yeshua watched how the crowd threw copper coins into the treasury; and many rich ones threw in much. [42] And coming, one poor widow threw in two lepta (which is a quadrans.) [43] And having called the taught ones near, He said to them, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has thrown in more than all of those casting into the treasury, [44] for all threw in out of that abounding to them; but she out of her poverty threw in all, as much as she had, her whole livelihood." [Marqaus (Mark) 12:41-44]

This attitude of 'sliding scale donations' also fits the Torah with regards to offerings. Yosef and Miriam, the earthly parents of Yeshua, were poor. They were only able to offer up two pigeons as a sacrifice (Luke 2:24; Leviticus 12:8); and yet this was obviously an acceptable sacrifice before the face of YHWH.

This brings us to a very interesting point, which many that have come out of Christendom recently may have a difficult time accepting:

Money is not evil, in and of itself!

There is a line of thinking in Christendom that tells us that money is inherently evil: However, as pervasive and entrenched as this attitude has become in Christendom, this attitude is not really supported by Scripture.

This is a fine point, which may be difficult for some to understand. Notice, however, that Shaul does not say that it is money itself that is evil: Rather, Shaul tells us that it is the love of money that is evil:

[10] For the love of money is the root of all evils, by means of which, some having lusted after it, were seduced from the faith, and they themselves (were) pierced through with many pains. [Tima Theus Aleph (First Timothy) 6:10]

And while a minister should perhaps limit himself to a more-or-less middle-class income (in keeping with the role of the Levites in the Torah) King Solomon tells us that (at least for the average man) honestly-earned wealth is the crown of the wise; and elsewhere he tells us that wealth is given to the wise, by YHWH:

[24] The crown of the wise is their wealth:
But the foolishness of fools is but foolishness.
[Mishle (Proverbs) 14:24]

The Jar of Ointment, Revisited:

Although Yeshua was a celibate Nazirite, owning nothing but the clothes on his back (see "Was Yeshua a Celibate Nazirite?" online at the free studies section, www.nazareneisrael.org/freestudies.htm) even He allowed a bottle of expensive ointment to be broken over His head (in preparation for His burial), despite the protestations of the apostles against the woman doing this act:

[6] And Yeshua being in Beit Anyah, in the house of Shimon the jar merchant, (Aramaic) ('leper' in the Greek), [7] a woman came to Him having an alabaster vial of ointment, very costly; and she poured it on His head as He reclined. [8] But seeing this, His disciples were indignant, saying, "For what is this waste?" [9] For this ointment could have been sold for much, and be given to the poor." [10] But knowing, Yeshua said to them, "Why do you cause trouble to the woman? For she worked a good work toward Me; [12] for in pouring this ointment on My body, she did it in order to bury Me. [13] Truly, I say to you, wherever this Good News is preached in all the world, there shall be told what she has done (for her name), and for her remembrance. [Matti (Matthew) 26:6-13]

Attitude is Everything

Neither Yeshua HaMashiach, nor Shaul, nor Yochanan HaMatbil (John the Immerser) sought material wealth. Rather, all sought after spiritual riches:

[19] "Do not treasure up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust cause to perish, and where thieves dig through and steal: [20] But treasure up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust cause to perish, and where thieves do not break through and steal; [21] for where your treasure is (i.e., in heaven), there the heart will be also." [Matti (Matthew) 6:19-21]

Money has nothing to do with spirituality. However, once we have come into the Kingdom of heaven (with upright hearts), riches are not denied the average man:

[31] "Then do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What may clothe us?'" [32] For all these things the nations seek; but your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. [33] But seek you first the Kingdom of Elohim, and His righteousness, and (then) all these things will be added to you." [Matti (Matthew) 6:31-33]

Shaul knew that even if it called for physical hardship and poverty at times, and even if he had to fall back on his skills at saddle/tent/tallit making, that it is only spiritual riches that all true shepherds of Elohim should seek after:

[9] For you know the grace of our Adon Yeshua HaMashiach; that being rich, yet for your sakes He became poor; that you might be made rich, as a result of His poverty. [Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 8:9]

Shaul's Selfless Example

It may surprise the reader that Shaul lovingly encouraged the people to donate, reminding them that YHWH is well able to bless the lives of those who supply His servants with what is needed for His work:

[5] Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brothers, that they go forward to you and arrange beforehand your promised blessing: to be ready; thus as a blessing, and not as greediness! [6] And this: The one sowing sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one sowing

on (hope of) blessings will also reap on blessings! [7] Each one as he purposes out of his own heart, for Elohim loves a cheerful giver.

[8] And Elohim is able to make all grace abound toward you, that in everything, always having all self-sufficiency, you may abound to every good work; [9] even as it has been written, “He scattered, he gave to the poor: His righteousness abides forever! [Tehillim (Psalm) 112:9.] [Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 9:5-9]

“But we were told that Paul made tents for a living; and that he only ministered to the people in his spare time!”

If Shaul is the most beloved of all the apostles, it is perhaps because whenever he was unable to get his needs met through voluntary offerings, rather than pressing the issue with anyone, he simply fell back on his own skills, working by day to minister the Word, and then slaving by night to supply his own needs. Yet as a Nazirite, though he was always willing to undertake whatever hardship was required of him, it was not what he hoped for himself, or his people.

[As another interesting aside, the Textus Receptus (the Greek translation of the Hebrew/Aramaic originals) tell us that Shaul supplemented his income by making tents. This would not make a whole lot of sense, considering that Shaul’s ministry was to synagogues in urban areas, where the people dwelt in houses (rather than tents.)

[The Peshitta Aramaic texts tell us that Shaul worked as a saddle maker (Acts 18:3.) This would make much more sense, as those in the pre-automotive era still had need of saddles for their animals, even in urban areas.

[There is also an argument that the word ‘tents’ might actually be a euphemism for tallits (Israelite ritual prayer shawls.) The argument goes that it would have made more sense for Shaul to supplement his income by selling Israeli religious paraphernalia, than by selling tents to those who lived in cities. And indeed it does make more sense; but requires euphemizing the Text; whereas the Peshitta Aramaic does not.]

Whatever means Shaul used to supplement his income in those times the people he served did not serve him in return, what we see is that Shaul did in fact solicit donations (not only for himself, but also for the apostles in Jerusalem); and that when he had to, he even borrowed donations from assemblies in far-away places (like Macedonia, in which Thessalonica lies), in order to carry out his apostolic duties full-time:

[7] Or did I commit sin, humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the Good News of Elohim to you without (set) charge? [8] I stripped other kehillot (assemblies), receiving wages for the serving of you. [9] And being present with you and lacking, I was not a burden to any one (of you, but) the brothers from Macedonia completely made up for my lack. And in every way I kept myself without burden (to you); and will keep myself (from being a burden to you.) [Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 11:7-9]

Shaul had the Right Attitude: Love those you serve, and do not cause them to stumble:

The thing that is so excellent about Shaul's example is that he loved the people he served. Although we read about him soliciting, exhorting, and cajoling tithes and donations, he never pressured anyone. Rather, he simply gave freely of that which he had been given, and hoped that others would feel moved to give as freely to him, in return; for that would be the fruit of the right Spirit.

What Shaul wanted was for people to learn to give freely in return, whenever they had been blessed by what he freely gave. However, notice that when his practice of asking for donations came under attack, Shaul defended his right to ask for help, both by quoting the Master, and the Torah:

[3] My defense to those examining me is this: [4] Have we no authority to eat and to drink? [5] Have we no authority to lead about a sister, a wife; as the rest of the apostles do also; and as Kefa, and our Adon's brothers (James and John) do?

[6] Or is it only Bar Nabba (Barnabas) and I who have no authority to quit work?

[7] Who serves as a soldier at (his) own wages, at any time? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat of its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock, and does not eat of the milk of the flock? [Meaning: "Why do you treat me like this?"]

[8] Do I speak these things according to man? Or does not the Law say these things also? [9] For it has been written in the Law of Moshe (Moses): "You shall not muzzle an ox threshing grain." (Deuteronomy 25:4.) (Yet) Is it about oxen that Elohim is concerned, or does He say it altogether because of us? (Yea,) It is written because of us, so that the one plowing ought to plow in hope; and the one threshing in hope, to partake on hope.

[11] If we have sowed spiritual things to you, is it (such) a great thing if we shall reap of your fleshly things? [12] (And) if others have a share of the authority over you, should not rather we? But we did not use this authority! But we endured all things, so that we might not give a hindrance to the Good News of the Messiah.

[13] Do you not know that those laboring about set-apart things of the Temple (also have to) eat? (Therefore) those attending (to) the altar partake with the altar. [14] So also our Adon (Yeshua) ordained that those proclaiming the Good News should (be permitted to) live from the (administration of the) Good News.

[Next Shaul implies that although the Torah gives him the authority to demand such compensation, out of love, he declines to use his power.]

[15] But I have not used one of these (justifications with you). And I do not write these things that (you must feel guilty, that) it should be so with me; for necessity is laid upon me; and it is woe to me if I do not preach the Good News! [17] For if I do this willingly, I have a reward: but if unwillingly, I am entrusted with a stewardship.

[18] What, then, is my reward? That preaching the Good News I may make the Good News of Messiah without (set) charge, so as not to use fully my authority in the Good News. [19] For being free of all, I enslaved myself to all, that I might gain the more. [Because Elohim, being Love itself, is a rewarder of love.]

[20] And I became as a Jew to the Jews, that I might gain the Jews; to those under Law (the Orthodox) that I might gain those under Law (the Orthodox); [21] to those without Law (the Hellenists/Christians) as without Law; (not being without the Law of Elohim, but under the Law of Messiah), that I might gain those without the Law (i.e., to convert Christians to Nazarene Israelite worship.)

[22] I became to the weak as weak, that I might gain the weak. To all I have become all things, that by all means I might save some.
[Qurintaus Aleph (First Corinthians) 9:3-22]

Indeed it has been remarked that one of the reasons that Shaul is so oftentimes misunderstood is that he tries so hard to be 'all things to all people.'

All people, trying to read something that was written in a loving tone, can quite often misunderstand Shaul's words for something other than what they really are. Hence, Shaul's statement that he never pressured anyone into giving, or tried to make them feel guilty in any way, has been misinterpreted to mean that he never wanted financial support, and never asked for financial support. And yet, Shaul clearly both needed this support, and asked for this support, to further him in his ministry and service.

The Right Attitude for Shepherds:

The Israelite faith is more of an Eastern faith than a Western one, just as the Land of Israel lies in the Middle East; and not in the Mid-West. One of the classic Eastern (and Middle-Eastern) concepts is that of detachment from objects in the material world.

Yeshua, Shaul, and Yochanan HaMatbil (John the Immerser) gave us examples of men that were:

[10] As grieved, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet enriching many: As having nothing, yet possessing all things. [Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 6:10]

Shaul, our Adon, and the apostles were all in possession of that same kind of spiritual wealth that King Solomon writes about:

There is one who makes himself rich; (and) yet has none at all:
And one who makes himself poor; yet has great riches.
[Mishle (Proverbs) 13:7]

But in all things, while the apostles certainly desired enough financial support to spend their time focused purely on the ministry, it was never their focus. Rather, their focus was always on service to others, and to Elohim, no matter what the cost to themselves:

[9] For you know the grace of our Adon Yeshua HaMashiach; that being rich, yet for your sakes He became poor; that you might be made rich as a result of His poverty. [Qurintaus Bet (Second Corinthians) 8:9]

There Are Many Ways to Serve

We need to walk the walk to which Eloah calls us, whether this walk be that of a minister, a salesman, an aeronautical engineer, a computer technician, a baker, a cab-driver, a housewife, a missionary, an inventory control specialist, or what ever other path our Elohim should call us to. To hear and obey His voice (to Shema): That is true righteousness.

[1] I call upon you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Elohim; that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, set apart, acceptable unto Elohim, (which is) your reasonable service. [Romaya (Romans) 12:1.]

Whatever walk or way of life to which you have been called, you must walk it to the best of your ability, always seeking to do better, day by day, moment by moment, and breath by breath.

If you are called to the ministry, then you should minister. However, if you are not so led, then you still have a requirement to use your Mina wisely; and so you might want to pray about using your time, money and energy to assist those who have been called, helping to amplify their ministry. Teamwork is a Scriptural concept, and Elohim is a rewarder of those who seek after righteousness.

May the Most High bless you, and deliver your enemies into your hand.

Shalom in the Name of Yeshua.

Norman B. Willis
A servant of our Master
The Israelite sect of the Nazarenes
Re-establishing the original faith of the apostles

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When Yahuwah our Elohim is with you,
Then do all that is in your heart.

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