

# Dancing with God in First Fruits – Informing the Future

## I. Thinking Like God - Love and Generosity

### A. Our Father Has Good Planned for Our Future

**Jer 29:11 NIV** For I know the **plans I have for you,**" declares the LORD, "plans to **prosper (SHALOM)** you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

**3 John 2 NAS** Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as **your soul prospers.**

Prosper — Go in a good way

It's a **wholesome way of thinking, feeling, deciding** about life, health, money, ... It reflects **Who** He Is and **How** He Is.

### B. RELATIONSHIP is the Essence of Righteousness —

The **Essence of Sin is Separation** from our Good Father!

We can mistake an opportunity for a demand.

**The Beggar & the King** - "Give me something." Resentfully, the beggar gave the king 2 grains of rice. Then the king reached into a pouch within his robes and with a smile, dropped 2 small diamonds into the beggars bowl.

*If we could instruct the future how to treat us, how we would want to live, what we would hope for our children, **would we do it?***

*The beggar could have, but he didn't.*

### Gideon & the prepared offering

**Judges 6.11 NLT** Then the angel of the LORD came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat **at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites.** **12** The

angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, “**Mighty hero, the LORD is with you!**”

- 13 “Sir,” Gideon replied, “**if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us?** And **where** are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? ... But **now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over** to the Midianites.”
- 14 Then the LORD turned to him and said, “**Go with the strength you have,** and **rescue** Israel from the Midianites. I am **sending** you!”
- 15 “**But Lord,**” Gideon replied, “**how can I** rescue Israel? My clan is **the weakest** in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am **the least** in my entire family!”
- 16 The LORD said to him, “**I will be with you.** And you will destroy the Midianites **as if you were fighting against one man.**”
- 18 Don’t go away until I come back and **bring my offering** to you.”
- 19 Gideon hurried home. He cooked a **young goat**, and ... he baked some **bread** without yeast... and the **broth** in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel...
- 21 ... tip of staff... fire                      24 **Jehovah SHALOM!**

Gideon **could**, and he **did... change** personal, national, & global **history**

*\*One of the harvests LM “miraculous **healing** for her eyes.”*

*\*W&T believed for a **promotion and raise** so T could be a stay-at-home mom.*

***Randy & Kathy Sheaffer video...***

## II. The Potential of a Renewed Mind

Rom 12.2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the **renewal<sup>1</sup> of your mind**, that **by testing** you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable (well pleasing) and perfect.

Psa. 139:17 How **precious** to me are **your thoughts**, O God!  
How **vast** is the **sum** of them!  
18 If I would count them, they are **more than the sand**.  
I awake, and I am still with you.

PT Every single moment you are thinking of me!  
How precious and wonderful to consider  
that **you cherish me** constantly in your every thought!  
O God, **your desires toward me** are more  
than the grains of sand on every shore!  
When I awake each morning, you're still with me.

Ps 35:27 NKJV Let them shout for joy and be glad, ...  
And let them say **continually**,  
“Let the LORD be magnified, (exalted, made huge)  
Who **has pleasure<sup>2</sup> in the prosperity<sup>3</sup> of His servant.**”

— God is dancing over us! Looking for ways to BLESS

Zeph 3:17 The LORD your God is in your midst,  
a mighty one who will save;

NJB He will rejoice **over** you with happy song, he will renew you  
by his love, **he will dance with shouts of joy** for you,

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<sup>1</sup> anakainosis— return to the new, superior, unheard of

<sup>2</sup> or DELIGHTS

<sup>3</sup> Heb. SHALOM

### III. 7 First Fruits Principles FF at the Beginning (Tithe after the Harvest)

1. Given at the Beginning – Through FF we **sanctify** our whole life and all we love.

Rom 11:16 NIV If the part of the dough offered as **firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy**; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

2. It's a **Pattern not Legalism** - We honor the King of Kings with the First and the Best — and He honors us

Heb 11:4 *By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice* than Cain did...And *by faith he still speaks*, even though he is dead.

3. Generosity Indicates **Grace and Love** at Work in our lives

2 Cor 8:7 NIV But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — **see that you also excel in this grace of giving.**  
8 I am not commanding you, but **I want to test the sincerity of your love** by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

***Grace flows from Joy***

***Do you want this GRACE of GIVING?***

4. We Give **According to What We Have**. In offerings give part of ourselves— **our offerings take us beyond our present circumstances. FEAR NOT!**

2 Cor 8:12 NIV For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to **what one has**, not according to **what he does not have**.

Sometimes we think we have nothing, but we actually do

**Elijah & the Widow** 1 Kgs 17:12 ... I do not have bread

Our last can be a new FIRST

### **Elisha & the Widow**

Sometimes we aren't aware of the potential to INCREASE

2 Kgs 4:1 ... **"Your servant my husband is dead, ... the creditor has come.."** 2 And Elisha said to her, **"What shall I do for you? Tell me; what have you in the house?"** And she said, ... **nothing ... except a jar of oil."** 3 Then he said, **"Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not too few.** 4 Then **go in** and **shut the door** behind yourself and your sons and **pour into** all these vessels. And when one is **full**, set it aside." 6 ...And he said to her, **"There is not another."** Then **the oil stopped flowing.** 7 She came and told the man of God, and he said, **"Go, sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on the rest."**

## **5. Giving is Analogous to Planting Seeds**

2 Cor 9:6 NIV Remember this: Whoever **sows...** 7 Each man should **give** what he has decided in his heart to **give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

PT Let giving flow from your heart, not from a sense of religious duty. Let it spring up freely from the joy of giving—all because God loves hilarious generosity!

**The seed we sow connects our lives to the soil of God's love — and His Great and Precious Promises**

SEED - embryonic information capsule, **carrying** all the **instructions needed for increase.** A seed is packed with limitless potential.

Seeds are God's "**future containers.**" Seeds contain God's blueprint for the future. Apple seed -- not just an apple, but a tree that gives for years and years!

- a. **Our children are seeds.** The *Creator Himself became a seed and as a seed broke the bondage of decay* and released the power of an endless life!
- b. **Words are Seeds**, containing a potential future. **Every word contains in a future reality in an immature form:**  
Luke 8:11 NKJ "... *The seed is the word of God.*
- c. **Offerings are Seeds** Every offering contains in a future reality in an immature form.

## 6. Receiving is **PROPORTIONAL.**

Luke 6:38 NKJ Give, and it will be given to you:... good...pressed, shaken, running over... put into your lap. For with the **same measure** that you use, it will be **measured back** to you."

This is very personal. When I use a teaspoon... 100 Wheelbarrow... 10 Ton Truck ...

You can **deeply move** the Creator!

Gen 22:16 NKJ and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, **because you have done this thing**, and have not withheld ..., your only son— 17 **blessing** I will **bless** you, and **multiplying** I will **multiply** your descendants ...stars... sand; and your descendants shall **possess the gate** of their enemies. 18 **In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed**, because **you** have **obeyed** My **voice.**"

## 7. Our Giving **Releases God's Creative Ability**

2 Cor 9:8 NKJ And **God is able** to make **all grace abound** toward **you**, that **you**, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance **for every good work.**

**God works with what we have! Don't let what you don't have **overrule** what you do have!**

Mustard Seed has all the instructions. Faith

Our sowing can *initiate the Miracle*

**OUR TESTIMONY** — 1977 starving ... increased our giving...  
change began to overtake us. By 1984 built a house w/o  
debt

**Be thankful and begin to **joyfully** use what you do have!**

#### **IV. 4 Keys to First Fruits:**

1. **Cyclical** —Annual basis or at the beginning of a new endeavor.
2. **In Faith** –
  - a) **Comfort** – you just do it, in the budget, etc.
  - b) **Faith** – a stretch to that which is beyond our ability. We increase our “measure”
  - c) **Presumption**— trying to manipulate God
3. **Sacrificial** – if it doesn't move you, it probably won't move God.  
[2 Sam 24:24](#) ...I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen...
4. **Focused** — create a list of the areas you are sowing in for breakthrough.
  - a. **Reflects the godly passions of your heart**
  - b. **Based on God's Word.**
  - c. **Pray, Believe, Decree, Stand. You will reap if you don't faint. You have seed in the ground!**

d. This is a time to sow, to **consecrate the dreams for our lives and the promises of God we hold in our hearts.**

*(Dec 31 - Victor P's testimony. Debt free, business and ministry)*

## V. Instructions for First Fruits Offering

1. Pray for God's Direction (desire discipline delight)

**Pray for hearing hearts.**

2. Have a Target, or Ask God for One (Gates held by the enemy)

3. Set an amount, or ask for one.

4. Write a check or a pledge (next two months)

**No Fear — Refunds for 2 weeks!**

5. Bring it on First Fruits Sunday

**Phil 4:19 NKJ** And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

There are **NO LIMITS** on the effects of even a **SMALL CHANGE** in our thinking and behavior.

**What we contribute to life today can fill eternity.**