

II Corinthians

Chapter 8:1-24

¹Now, brothers and sisters, we make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of **Macedonia**, ² that in a great **ordeal** of affliction their abundance of joy and their **deep poverty** overflowed in the wealth of their **liberality**.

Macedonia > Included in these churches would be those of Philippi, Thessaloniki, and Berea

Ordeal > (Strong's) (the process or result of) trial, proving, approval

Wuest Translation > *in the midst of a severe testing which was in the form of afflictions, the test being for the purpose of approving them in their reaction to trials*

Utley > There are two Greek words that are translated "trial," "test," or "tempt" (here "ordeal"). One refers to a test with the view toward destruction, while the other (*dokime*) refers to a test with a view toward approval (cf. **2 Cor. 8:2,8,22; 9:13**)

2 Cor. 8:2 > ² that in a great **ordeal** (*dokime*) of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

2 Cor. 8:8 > ⁸ I am not saying this as a command, but as **proving** (*dokimazo*), through the earnestness of others, the sincerity of your love as well.

2 Cor. 8:22 > ²² We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often **tested** (*dokimazo*) and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you.

Deep poverty > (Strong's) beggary, destitution

Luke 21:2-4 > **21** ² And He saw a poor widow putting in **two lepta coins**. ³ And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; ⁴ for they all contributed to the offering from their surplus; but she, from her poverty, put in all that she had to live on."



A bronze *mite*, also known as a *Lepton* (meaning *small*), minted by Alexander Jannaeus, King of Judaea, 103 - 76 B.C. and still in circulation at the time of Jesus

Liberality > (Strong's) *"singleness, without folds, like a piece of cloth unfolded"*

Strong's > From a word meaning > singleness, i.e. (subjectively) sincerity (without dissimulation or self-seeking), or (objectively) generosity (copious bestowal)

II Corinthians 9:7 > ⁷ *Each one must do just as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a **cheerful** giver*

Cheerful > (Strong's) *hilaros* > From the same as hileos; propitious or merry ("hilarious"),

³ *For I testify that according to their **ability**, and beyond their **ability**, they gave **voluntarily**, ⁴ begging us with much urging for the **favor** of **participation** in the **support** of the saints,*

Ability > (Strong's) *dunamis* > power, might, strength

Voluntarily > (in some versions the word is translated as *accord*) (Swindoll) The Greek word for "*accord*" is used in the entire New Testament only here and in **2 Corinthians 8:17**. It comes from two Greek words for "self" and "choice," referring to a purely voluntary, free-will decision to commit oneself to a particular course of action.

2 Corinthians 8:17 > *For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.*

Favor > (Strong's) *charis* > faith, kindness

Participation > (Strong's) *koinonia* > fellowship

Support > (Strong's) *diakonia* > service, ministry

Robertson > Literally, "with much entreaty begging of us the favor and the partnership in the ministry to the saints."

⁵ *and this, not as we had **expected**, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. ⁶ So we urged **Titus** that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.*

Expected > (Strong's) to expect, to hope (for)

Titus in the scriptures

Titus 1:4 > ⁴ *To Titus, my true son in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.*

Galatians 2:3 > ³ But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised (This was at the Council at Jerusalem)

II Corinthians 8:6 (this passage) > ⁶ So we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning, so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.

Titus 1:5 > ⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

Titus 3:12 > ¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.

II Timothy 4:10 > ¹⁰ for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

⁷ But just as you excel in everything, in faith, speaking, knowledge, and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you also excel in this gracious work.

Barnett > "The Corinthians were strong in activities that are local to and centered upon them (miracle-working faith, charismatic speech, and theological understanding), but weak on those that are for the benefit of those outside, in this case the 'saints of Jerusalem.'"

Gracious work > (Swindoll) Paul never uses the word "money" in 2 Corinthians 8–9. Instead, he uses a number of other descriptive terms to refer to financial gifts or the act of giving: Grace of God (8:1) Wealth of liberality (8:2) Participation (8:4) Support (8:4) Gracious work (8:6, 7, 19) Generous gift (8:20) Ministry (9:1, 12, 13) Bountiful gift (9:5) Contribution (9:13)

⁸ I am not saying this as a command, but as proving, through the earnestness of others, the sincerity of your love as well.

Proving > (we saw this in the first verse) > (Utley) There are two Greek words that are translated "trial," "test," or "tempt". One refers to a test with the view toward destruction, while the other (*dokime* – used here) refers to a test with a view toward approval.

Sincerity > Interesting Greek word! Unexpected! (Strong's) *gnesios* > lawfully begotten, genuine. Usage > (lit: born in wedlock), hence: real, true, genuine; with definite article: the true, genuine element.

I Timothy 1:2 > ² To Timothy, my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

True > (Strong's) *gnesios* > lawfully begotten, genuine.

>

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

Became poor > (Strong's) to be a beggar, be destitute

Though He was rich, yet ... > **Philippians 2:5-8** > ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, as He already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross.

¹⁰ I give my opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do this, but also to desire to do it.

Who were the first ... > Tying this to verse 6 above it appears that they started this collection under Titus a year ago ... but didn't complete it.

¹¹ But now finish doing it also, so that just as there was the willingness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability. ¹² For if the willingness is present, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.

For if the willingness is present > (Utley) The key to Christian stewardship is our attitude and motive, not the amount or percentage

Francis Dixon > No gift is acceptable to God until we have given Him our hearts; even if we pray, or give our money, He will not accept these unless we have first given ourselves to Him (**Proverbs 15:8; 28:9**). God wants our hearts, He wants us.

Proverbs 15:8 > The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.

Proverbs 28:9 > One who turns his ear away from listening to the Law, even his prayer is an abomination.

¹³ For this is not for the relief of others and for your hardship, but by way of equality— ¹⁴ at this present time your abundance will serve as assistance for their need, so that their abundance also may serve as assistance for your need, so that there may be equality; ¹⁵ as it is written: "The one who had gathered much did not have too much, and the one who had gathered little did not have too little."

Verses 13-15 in the **Wuest Translation** > *For the collection is not being made in order that to others there might be relief from stress and strain and that pressure might be brought to bear upon you. But, out of fairness to all, at the present season your superfluity may be a supply for that which they lack, in order that their superfluity may become a supply for your lack, so that there might be an equitable arrangement in this matter, even as it stands written, **He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered the little, did not lack.***

Exodus 16:16-18 > ¹⁶ *This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Everyone gather as much as he will eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of people each of you has in his tent.'* ¹⁷ *The sons of Israel did so, and some gathered much and some little. ¹⁸ When they measured it by the omer, the one who had gathered much did not have too much, and the one who had gathered little did not have too little; everyone gathered as much as he would eat.*

¹⁶ **But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness in your behalf in the heart of Titus.** ¹⁷ *For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.*

But thanks be to God ... > **Philippians 2:13** > ¹³ *for it is God who is at work in you, both to desire and to work for His good pleasure.*

¹⁸ **We have sent along with him the brother** *whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches;* ¹⁹ *and not only that, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,*

We have sent along with him the brother >

Barnes > It has been generally supposed that this anonymous brother was **Luke**.

Utley > Church tradition has asserted that this could be Paul's co-worker, **Luke**.

Ramsey > "One explanation of Luke's silence about one who was such a trusted lieutenant of Paul's is that Titus was **Luke's** brother;

Robertson > This may be, probably is, **Luke** who may also be the brother of Titus

²⁰ *taking precaution so that no one will **discredit** us in our **administration** of this **generous gift**;* ²¹ *for we have regard for what is honorable, **not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of other people.***

Discredit > (Strong's) to find fault with

Robertson > Literally, "lest anyone blame us"

MacArthur > The unnamed preacher would act as an objective, outside auditor, ensuring that no valid criticism about the handling of the money could be made.

Administration > (Strong's) to serve, minister

Generous gift > (MacArthur) Paul's caution was all the more justified because he expected the Corinthians' gift to be a large one. *Hadrotēs* (generous gift), which appears only here in the New Testament, refers to an abundance.

Not only in the sight of the Lord ... > (Contable) Doing what was correct was not enough for Paul. He wanted to make sure that everyone perceived what he did as honest and above board as well. Paul had learned to anticipate the suspicions or accusations of those who viewed his ministry critically, and to take necessary precautions.

²² *We have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you.*

²³ *As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brothers, they are **messengers** of the churches, a glory to Christ.*

Messengers > (Strong's) *Apostolos* > a messenger, one sent on a mission, an apostle

²⁴ *Therefore, openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.*