

He's Promised to Provide

BY DAVID B. STUART

Very soon after I was baptized into the Adventist faith, I became a tithing Christian. For years since that time, I have been consistent in returning tithes and offerings to the Church. I have never accumulated any real debt, and have always had my financial needs met. It didn't matter whether I was making \$150 per week at my small business enterprise years ago, or currently making more. I've always felt my needs were being met, and have always believed the Lord was leading and providing in my life.

I often sense something special about the prosperity that accompanied my life's work. Sometimes I would think to myself, "Why me? Why am I doing so well?" I'm not the best at what I do, and, as they say, "He's not the sharpest knife in the drawer." I am not saying that I am wealthy or rich by any stretch of the imagination for sure, but I seem to have a sense of peace, contentment, and joy derived from the financial aspect of my journey with the Lord.

How many people in this life, rich and not so rich, are as happy about their personal finances as I am? I think I am enamored by it all because I truly see the hand of God in the midst of it; a faithful God who promises to bless those who will take Him at His Word. The consistency of the Lord's promise to provide and bless, is very real to me.

But I do want to tell you of one particular incident where you might say... my faith was challenged.

There was one time in many years of tithing where there seemed to be a glitch in the process. It is a ritual for me to gather my monthly

bills on a Friday near the end of the month, and sit at my office desk and pay them. The first thing I do is calculate my net income for the month from the business, and write out my tithe and offering check. I place the check in a tithe envelope, put it in my Bible for Sabbath the following day, and then write checks for the bills.

This month was different. This was the first month I truly did not have enough in my checking account to cover my bills. I prayed, "Lord, I do not have enough money in the account for the bills and tithes and offerings, I'm quite short." The checks are going to bounce if I pay the bills that are due, and if I return my tithes and offerings as well. The reason why I prayed was because I was tempted to hold the tithe and offering check for a week or two. "What's wrong with that? I thought, "The Lord won't mind." The second thought that came to me was, mail the bills, drop the tithe and offering check in the plate that Sabbath, and leave the rest to God. After all He's promised to provide. I did just that.

Monday rolled around and no money came in the mail from the business. Tuesday was the same. I was getting a little nervous. I prayed, "Lord, what do You want me to do? The checks are going to bounce," I said. "Lord, my only option seems to be to borrow the money on a credit card and transfer the funds into the checking account."

It was a quiet, mid-afternoon, as I prepared to leave the house for the bank to make the transfer. I was tying my shoes in the living room when a

knock came at the door. In frustration I said, "Oh no ... I've got to get to the bank."

I answered the door. There stood a young man with a white envelope in his hand. He handed it to me and simply said, "Hi Dave, how are you doing? Thanks so much. I got to run."

I closed the door and opened the envelope. There was enough cash to cover my bills and the tithes and offering check. The man was a friend who owed me money from months earlier.

I'll never forget it. The timing was uncanny. I broke down with shivers running up and down my spine. Hard cold cash, just when I needed it most. In the middle of the afternoon, whatever it takes, God will come through.

Malachi 3:10 is as real to me as the nose on my face, "... prove me now here-with, saith the Lord ... if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."



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