

a Bible Lesson from LEVITICUS 27:30:

TITHE THE FIRST TENTH TO GOD'S HOUSE!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. A SCRIPTURE ON TITHING
- II. WHAT IS A TITHE AND TO WHAT IS IT APPLIED?
- III. TO WHOM DOES THE TITHE BELONG?
- IV. GOD FORBID THAT WE SHOULD ROB GOD!
- V. WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE TITHE?
- VI. IN CONCLUSION
- VII. REFERENCES

## I. A SCRIPTURE ON TITHING

Moses writes in LEVITICUS 27:30, “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is The LORD’S: it is holy unto The LORD.”<sup>1</sup> This raises a few basic questions: 1. What is a tithe and to what is it applied? 3. To Whom does the tithe belong? 3. Is the tithe therefore voluntary or mandatory for the Christian? 4. What happens in our lives when we joyfully obey The Commandment to tithe?

## II. WHAT IS A TITHE AND TO WHAT IS IT APPLIED?

The Hebrew Word for “tithe” is - **מַעֲשֵׂר** - MA”ASER, meaning “tithe, tenth part 1a) tenth part 1b) tithe, payment of a tenth part.”<sup>2</sup> Fausset defines “tithes” as “Tenths of produce, property or spoils dedicated to sacred use.”<sup>3</sup> The clear meaning of “tithe,” is a “tenth part” of all that we have. The meaning is clear.

So why this Bible lesson? Because today many Christians think “tithing” means voluntary “giving” within The Church, when in fact it does not!<sup>4</sup> To mislabel tithing as “voluntary giving” is a great error and an affront to GOD.

Sacrificial giving is offering to GOD’s work what is over and above our tithing to The Church of 10% from what GOD blesses us with. The first 10% goes to our own local Church, which is mandatory. Anything above that is sacrificial giving, which is voluntary.

## III. TO WHOM DOES THE TITHE BELONG?

The tithe belongs, not to us, but to GOD. To therefore not give a tithe of our wealth, all of which comes from GOD’s hand, is to literally rob GOD. MALACHI 3:8-9, “Will a man rob GOD? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.”<sup>5</sup>

Randy Alcorn, in “Money, Possessions and Eternity,” comments, “GOD says, ‘Bring the whole tithe into The Storehouse [of GOD,] not just part of it. The obedient Israelite didn’t ask whether he could give 7 percent, or whether he could tithe on the ‘net’ rather than the ‘gross.’ Whatever GOD provided, 10 percent belonged to Him” – that is, to The Almighty.<sup>6</sup> Now let us be honest here and confess that all we have that is good – both in this life and in promise in the next – comes from our Loving Creator!

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<sup>1</sup> 1, KJV, LEVITICUS 27:30.

<sup>2</sup> 2, Strong’s Data, 4643 - **מַעֲשֵׂר** - MA”ASER or rf;[]m; MA”ASAR, meaning “tithe, tenth part 1a) tenth part 1b) tithe, payment of a tenth part.”

<sup>3</sup> 3, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, “tithes,” 3599.01.

<sup>4</sup> 4, Alcorn, “Money, Possessions and Eternity,” p 174, paragraph 3. “The Meaning of Tithing.”

<sup>5</sup> 1, KJV, MALACHI 3:8-9.

<sup>6</sup> 4, Alcorn, “Money, Possessions and Eternity,” p 174, paragraph 5. “The Meaning of Tithing.”

None of the possessions and wealth that we possess is in truth ours. GOD blesses us and enables us to obtain these things. And dare we grudge Him the first tenth for the work of His Church on earth? What then will we offer as excuse for robbing Him when, by His Grace, we enter into His Church in Heaven?

#### IV. GOD FORBID THAT WE SHOULD ROB GOD!

Matthew Henry puts The Words of the prophet Malachi into frightful perspective, for hey were not only for Old Testament Israel, but just as much – even more so – for The New Testament Church! So he observes, “The prophet's high charge exhibited, in GOD's Name, against the people. They stand indicted for robbery, for sacrilege, the worst of robberies: You have robbed me. He ...[reasons] with them upon it: Will a man be so daringly impudent as to rob GOD?”<sup>7</sup>

Henry continues, “Man, who is a weak creature, and cannot contend with GOD's power, will he think to rob Him...? Man, who lies open to GOD's knowledge, and cannot conceal himself from that, will he think to rob Him... [thinking GOD does not see]? Man, who depends upon GOD, and derives his all from him, will he rob him that is his benefactor?”<sup>8</sup> Shall a man rob GOD? Even more so, His saints? GOD forbid!

Now we need to ask ourselves some hard questions here: Are we thankful to GOD for what He blesses us with? Do we not realize that all that we have comes from His hand? If we disobey The Commandments of The LORD, do we think He doesn't see? If we excuse ourselves from obeying one Commandment, which other Commandments do we pick and choose not to obey? Do we claim to love our Lord JESUS CHRIST? Then should we not obey The Word of GOD in matters of tithing and giving?

#### V. WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE TITHE?

MALACHI 3:10 declares, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine House, and prove Me now herewith, saith The LORD of Hosts, 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.”<sup>9</sup>

First, if we obey The King of the universe with our tithes and so honor Him, He will crown us with an overflow of blessings – according to His Providence – so much so that the abundance of whatever forms He sends will overwhelm us in joy! So The Geneva Bible rephrases The Words of The LORD from His very mouth to us here, “Not having respect how much you need, but I will give you in all abundance, so that you will lack place to put My blessings in!”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 5, Matthew Henry Notes, MALACHI 3:7-12, II., 1.

<sup>8</sup> 5, Matthew Henry Notes, MALACHI 3:7-12, II., 1.

<sup>9</sup> 1, KJV, MALACHI 3:10.

<sup>10</sup> 6, Geneva Bible Notes, MALACHI 3:10.

Second, the more the number of faithful tithing Christians in a congregation, the greater the resources for the work of The Kingdom of GOD to work in that community. If we serve GOD first, He will care for our souls – as well as our bodies – and call us to be His servants in ministering to others in His Name! As Matthew Henry says here, “GOD must be served in the first place, and our quota must be contributed for the support of religion in the place where we live, that GOD’s Name may be sanctified, and His Kingdom may come, and His will be done, even before we provide our daily bread; for the interests of our souls ought to be preferred before those of our bodies.”<sup>11</sup>

Third, the joy of obedience to The LORD in one area makes us more open to joyfully obeying Him in other areas of our lives. And such joy in The LORD is contagious! It speaks of a living Faith which calls the suffering and the lost to seek His face at The Cross! ISAIAH 29:19, “The meek also shall increase their joy in The LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”<sup>12</sup> It uplifts our brethren in CHRIST! ISAIAH 51:11, “Therefore the redeemed of The LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”<sup>13</sup>

## VI. IN CONCLUSION

Let us not think to rob GOD. Let us gladly obey The Biblical Command to tithe to The Church: That The House of GOD may have the resources it needs to shine The Light of CHRIST into this dark world. That we may grow in obedience to The Word of GOD in other areas of our lives. That we may better take hold of the joy of The LORD offered to us. That the suffering and lost might see The Light of CHRIST in our communities and seek His face. That the brethren may be encouraged.

For as our Lord JESUS CHRIST Himself declares to us in MATTHEW 5:14-16, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.”<sup>14</sup> In The Name of GOD The Father, Son and Holy Ghost. AMEN!

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<sup>11</sup> 5, Matthew Henry Notes, MALACHI 3:7-12, II., 4., (4).

<sup>12</sup> 1, KJV, ISAIAH 29:19.

<sup>13</sup> 1, KJV, ISAIAH 51:11.

<sup>14</sup> 1, KJV, MATTHEW 5:14-16.

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