

## Malachi 06 – Tithes or Offerings

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Malachi 3:6-15

### Tithe – Tenth

- Hebrew (תעשר) – Means Tenth
- Greek (ἀποδεκατώω) – Means Tenth
- Indo-European (dekm) – Means Tenth
- English [Old/Middle English] (tythe) – Means Tenth
  - December – Tenth lunar month (Jan & Feb omitted)

<http://www.safonof.com/tythe/tythe.htm>

### Origins of Tithe – Unknown

- There are no explanations for the origin of giving a tenth of one's produce or spoils
  - First observed in the Bible when Abram gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchizedek [Ge 14:17-20](#)
  - Hypothesized that this was a common form of taxation to support government in the ancient world
  - Incorporated into the Torah [Le 27:30, De 14:22-27](#)

## Purpose of Tithes – Support Temple

- Levites: Priests and Support Staff supported by tithes [No specific tribal land inheritance] (De 14:27)
  - Supported the workings of the Temple (De 10:32-39)
  - Allowed the Levites to be supported doing God's work (De 13:12)
- This tied the people to the Temple which was the center of theocracy [Israel]; therefore, was a form of taxation [Postexile: Tithe reaffirmed via Nehemiah]

## Theocracy – Symbiosis

- Theocratic relationship between God and His people
  - Tithes a form of taxation supporting the government
  - When Jews demanded monarchy, theocracy remained
  - Jews in reality were demanding double taxation (Isa 8:12-18)
  - Monarchy subservient to God but priesthood to kings
- Postexilic: Separation of government from religion: Jew served both God and State (Lucifer) [Double-minded]

## Actual Temple Practice

- Postexilic Jews, as a province of Persia, were allowed to keep their Temple system (Torah)
  - Legalized both state taxes and Torah tithes and offerings
  - Jews sought to mitigate their burden by withholding or cheating on their tithes and offerings to God
  - Those offerings they did bring were often diseased or inferior compared to what they gave to the state (Mal 1:6-10)

## The Outward Reveals the Inward

### God's Perspective

- Man covets gain
- Man withholds from God
- God withholds blessings
- Man feels withholding *justified*, withholds more

### Man's Perspective

- Man produces less
- Man cuts expenses - *tithes*
- Output decline continues
- Man's withholding *justified*, withholds more

## Neglected in Malachi's Day

- God says these postexilic Jews were no different from their ancestors
  - It is His faithfulness to the covenant by which they are still His people - They have been consistently unfaithful
  - He implores them to return to Him - They ask how shall they return, implying that they never left Him
  - Their actions belie their *innocence* - They neglected the tithes for their own gain showing they did not love God

## They Murmured Against God

- Like their ancestors in the Wilderness, they tested God, finding Him unfaithful (Revealed their sin)
  - (Dt. 10: 6; Ac. 7:30-53)
  - They made themselves judges over God - Lucifer's sin (Is. 14:12-14; Ec. 28:34-37)
  - Rather than repent their sin: they found fault with God blaming their plight on Him (If God authors evil, He is sinful which makes man righteous: self-justification) (Is. 5:20-21)

## Tithes Reveal Their Sinfulness

- Issue is not about tithes per se, God does not need man's pittance; He owns all since He created all (Ps 50)
- Withholding tithes reveals their sinful hearts
  - Because God does not immediately condemn sinners the unrighteous claims God loves evil and are justified in condemning **Him** as unrighteous; this destroys His salvation message to the world

## Hypocrisy of Tithing (Mal 2:12-20)

- In Christ's day the Jews of power displayed *their* self-righteousness by tithing the insignificant while hoarding the riches they coveted
  - This gave them an undeserved piousness turning the people against God and His sacrificial salvation message
  - Neglecting the truths of the Law, which would have revealed their sinfulness, they wallowed in the precepts of the Law to cover their self-righteousness (sinfulness)

## Terror of Religious Tithing (Mal 12:41-44)

- Though frequently lauded as sacrificial giving, which all should emulate, Christ's highlighting of the widow who gave all she had to the Temple shows the tyranny of religious giving
  - Tithe is a tenth of *what you have*, she gave *everything* leaving herself *nothing* for subsistence; this is not of God
  - Religious bondage takes everything one has leaving only death in its wake; this is not godly but **Satanic** giving

## Fallacy of Storehouse Tithing

- These verses in Malachi have been used to justify what has come to be known as *storehouse tithing*
  - The concept of tithing came into churches post Reformation via the Puritans, and others, who used Old Testament terminology putting themselves under Law
  - Since Christians replaced the Jews, the promises of God to the Jews must apply to Christians; this was done haphazardly, inconsistently (Unscriptural) (Ac 15:10-11, 19-20)

## Error of Replacement Theology

- Replacement Theology is a false view of Scripture that applies God's promises to the Jews, to the churches (Ro 9:11)
  - This was a foreign concept in the early churches
  - This concept not found in Paul's or Peter's writings
  - It began with RCC and gain legitimacy in Reformation churches which kept many RCC errors in their theology

## Tithing is Theocratic Only

- Tithing is a fundamental aspect of theocracy alone
  - Israel has been the only theocracy (Govt linked to God)
  - Only the error of Replacement Theology links tithing to churches to enslave believers to ritualistic Law that only covers man's sinfulness with self-righteousness
  - There are no Scriptures linking tithing to church giving
  - In fact, Paul compares church giving to something quite different than tithing - offerings (freely giving)

## Oxen Treading the Grain (1Co 9:8-14)

- Paul had a perfect platform to link church giving to tithing; yet, he links giving to oxen treading grain being allowed to eat of the grain to continue their work
  - The workers of the ministry should be, but are not necessarily required to be, supported by the ministry
  - This turns Christian giving from obligatory (taxation) to voluntary giving

## Give From What One Has (2Co 9:6-12)

- Christian giving comes from the heart (freely), not from obligation (taxation)
  - One gives from what one has received
  - One gives based upon one's spiritual maturity in Christ
  - God blesses both the giver and the receiver
  - The returns are not necessarily material, which perish when this world perishes, but in imperishable treasures  
(1Co 9:24-27; 1Pe 1:3-5; 2Pe 3:9-13)

## Christian Giving is Our Sacrifice

- Christian giving is a two-fold sacrifice to God:
  - We give of ourselves to God first (Ps 2:14-18; 2Ti 4:6-8)
  - We give of our material possessions to the work of the ministry (1Pe 4:14-20)
- We offer ourselves to Him as a *reasonable* response to His sacrificing Himself for us (Heb 9:14; 12:1-2)

## Giving Reveals Spirituality

- Outward giving reveals inward spirituality: then as now
  - If we give sparingly, we receive sparingly (2Co 9:6)
  - If we grasp after the material, we relinquish the spiritual
  - If we do not give materially then we cannot give to Him spiritually which is our reasonable service
- The truth of tithing, and offerings, escaped both Jews and Christians becoming a source of worldly power

## Issue Is Not Money

- The truth of giving is not about money but a means of demonstrating one's inner source of truth
  - The lost and spiritually immature grasp after materiality
  - The spiritually mature trades the material for the spiritual wisely, according to the truth of Scripture
  - If one gives to receive then one missed the truth of giving: one gives because Christ gave first to us (2Co 5:14-15, 1Jo 4:19)

## Revelation of Giving (Mt 6:19-24)

- Jews tried to serve God and materiality: they failed
- Christendom emulates the Jew's: they fail also (2Ti 2:19-20, 1Jo 8:13)
- How do you demonstrate the truth within you?
  - By grasping the material?
  - By giving to others from what you have as called on by Christ? {Giving for reward/show is not true giving} (Mt 6:1-8)