

Malachi – Giving God our Best #6
“Stop Robbing Me”
Malachi 3:7-12

The people of Israel were not experiencing God’s blessings because they were unfaithful to the covenant. In fact, as we have seen throughout Malachi’s prophecy, things weren’t going very well for them because of their outright disobedience. One area in which they were neglectful was in presenting their tithes and offerings to the Lord. Because of this there were ramifications they had to face. This raises the question for today’s believer: What is the role of tithing in the body of Christ? Today’s teaching will address this issue and more.

#1. WITHHOLDING THE TITHE IS ROBBING GOD OF WHAT IS HIS,
vv. 7-9

- A. The need to repent for withholding the tithe, vv. 7-8
- B. The tithe belongs to God, Lev 27:30
- C. The tithe is holy to the Lord, Lev 27:30
- D. The tithe teaches us to revere the Lord, Deu 14:22
- E. The tithe teaches us to honor God, Pro 3:9-10
- F. The offerings were also withheld, v. 8
- G. The nation was under a covenantal curse, v. 9

#2. THERE WERE THREE TITHES FOR THE ISRAELITES

- A. There was a tithe for the priests, Nu 18:21
- B. One tenth of that went to the High Priest,
- C. There was a tithe for the festivals: Passover, unleavened bread, trumpets, weeks, Day of atonement, tabernacles, Lev 23
- D. There was a tithe for the poor every 3rd year, Deu 14:28

#3. THERE WAS OTHER GIVING REQUIRED OF THE ISRAELITES

- A. The firstfruits of the harvest, Pro 3:9, 1 Cor 15:20
- B. The redemption of the firstborn, Ex 13:12f
- C. The freewill offering, Ezra 1:5-6, 1 Ch 29:17
- D. The reapers left some for the poor, Lev 23:22
- E. Animal sacrifices and agricultural products
- F. The bottom line: somewhere around 40-45% went to God

#4. GOD’S PEOPLE CAN TEST THE LORD AND SEE IF HE IS FAITHFUL,
vv. 10-12

- A. They are to bring the tithe to the storehouse, v. 10
- B. The Lord challenges us to test him, v. 10
- C. The Lord will open the floodgates of heaven, v. 10
- D. The Lord will bless their crops, v. 11
- E. The nations will call you blessed, v. 12

#5. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT TITHING – IS IT FOR TODAY?

- A. The tithe was the foundation of giving not the ceiling
- B. The tithe is law and was fulfilled in Christ, Mat 5:17
- C. The tithe was affirmed by Jesus, Mat 23:23
- D. The tithe is prior to law & is still binding, Gen 14:20

#6. PRINCIPLES OF GIVING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The principle of sacrificial giving, Acts 4:32-35
- B. The principle of grace giving, Acts 4:32-35, 2 Cor 8:1-2
- C. The principle of Spirit-led giving, 2 Cor 9:7

TODAY’S SCRIPTURE

Malachi 3:7-12

Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. ⁹You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. ¹¹I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. ¹²"Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

Leviticus 27:30: A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.

Numbers 18:19-21: Whatever is set aside from the holy offerings the Israelites present to the LORD I give to you and your sons and daughters as your regular share. ²¹"I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23: Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. ²³Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always.

Proverbs 3:9-10: Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Deuteronomy 4:5-8: See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." ⁷What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

Deuteronomy 28:11: The LORD will grant you abundant prosperity-- in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground-- in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you.

Deuteronomy 28:18: The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.

Acts 4:32-37: All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. ³⁴There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales

³⁵and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. ³⁶Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), ³⁷sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5: And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ²Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. ⁵And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8: Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- #1. How should Christians view the concept of stewardship?
- #2. Why was the nation of Israel under a curse? (Deu 28:11 & 18)
- #3. In what way(s) would the obedience of Israel demonstrate the greatness of God to the nations? (Deu 4:5-8, Malachi 3:12)
- #4. What conclusions can you make about Leviticus 27:30?
- #5. If the people weren't tithing correctly how did that effect the Levites?
- #6. What conclusions can you make about Proverbs 3:9-10?
- #7. In what way(s) do prosperity teachers use vv. 10-12? Do you agree or disagree with their theology?

#8. State your observations about the other levels of giving in point #3 in the outline.

#9. What observations can you make about the principle of sacrificial giving as demonstrated in Acts 4:32-37?

#10. What observations can you make about principle of grace giving in Acts 4:32-35, 2 Cor 8:1-5?

#11. What observations can you make about Spirit-led giving in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8?

#12. What spiritual benefits are realized through the practice of tithing?

#13. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday night Bible Study at 6:30, which is a discussion of the previous Sunday sermon. Download the outline from the website.

Wednesday night prayer meeting at 6:30. Access by clicking the zoom link on the home page of the website.

STEWARDSHIP

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