

The Offering of the Spirit



**What the Bible says about
tithes and offerings.**

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Man, in his effort to please God, sometimes goes to great lengths and in devious paths which take him away from God, instead of bringing him nearer to his Creator. It is indeed paradoxical that one's concept of God becomes the focal point of one's motivation and dictates his actions whether it be on the main-line or off on a sideline in the things of God.

In view of this concept we can clearly see motivation as divided into three basic categories:

Spiritual – Moved by the Holy Spirit

Soulish – Mental or Emotional

Carnal – Worldly, fleshy, sinful

A man with a concept of God as a hard taskmaster exacting hard tasks upon His children and bringing down heavy punishment on the errant, will drive himself and others very hard thinking that he will please the Lord by so doing. He will respond to every word of God emotionally and will only have peace within himself when by his own laws of behavior he is satisfied that he has pleased God. Actually, he has pleased himself and the standard he has set within

his own soul. Emotionally he is at ease, but before God he is spiritually unfruitful.

On the other hand, a man with a concept of God as soft and allowing any kind of slackness, even putting sinners and the devil back into heaven, will allow himself to be so liberal that he will live in any kind of sin and still have the hope of living eternally with God.

We can be sincerely wrong, therefore there must be some sure and absolute criterion outside of the human being himself. Of course, this criterion is the Spirit of God, and He moves upon our spirit to motivate us to the will of God. How do I know when I am motivated by the Spirit; or when it is soulish; or when it is just plain old flesh. It takes much practice in the Spirit to be able to discern that which is spiritual as being different and apart from that which is soulish or carnal. The spiritual always glorifies God and is without self desire or aggrandizement. The real problem in discerning is in the fact that as human beings we do not always see ourselves clearly and sometimes the soul will tell the soul that it is very spiritual. This

indeed would be a doleful prospect if we did not know that the Holy Spirit convicts of righteousness as well as of sin and judgment. In other words, this is where the beauty and confidence lies – the Holy Spirit of God will not allow us to be wrong for long if our spiritual attitude is right.

GIVING

Giving is the nature of God and He wants His children to have the same nature, but unless we give without the desire for reward or reciprocation, then our motivation will not be of God. If, therefore, there is a law or precept by which we give, then it robs the believer of the basic reason for which he should give, which is the desire to please God and to be like Him. We cannot be like God by limitation, but only by imbibing Christ and suffering a metamorphic change.

TWO BASIC TYPES OF GIVING

It is not surprising that God, in creating the Church, created a financial plan for its

support. This plan can be divided into two basic types:

1. Tithing
2. Offering

If TITHING is a law, then it would cancel out its usefulness to the Church. We cannot therefore consider tithing as a law but as a Godly instruction with a promise or incentive.

The word tithing means One Tenth. The first question to be answered is why do I give God One Tenth of my earnings, and why is it righteousness?

At the outset this must be made plain; that tithing is not a gift. The amount given to God as a tithe was never mine, therefore when I withhold it, I rob my Chief Partner of His rightful share of my prosperity. There is a scripture which supports this:

Malachi 3:8, *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offering.*

Now that I know that if I withhold my tithe I rob God, the next question in my mind is where is the scriptural proof that as my partner God requires a tenth of my natural

prosperity? There is quite a formidable array of scriptures to support this point:

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.*

In other words Leviticus 27:30 is saying that a tenth part of all that we have or own is the property of the Lord and we are only entrusted with keeping it.

Before the law was given, long before, about four hundred years before Moses and the law, Abraham paid tithes to God. This means that between God and Adam and all the men of God after Adam through Noah and Shem to Abraham, there was that understanding that God required a tenth of the earnings of all righteous men as His part of the partnership between them. However, the first mention of a tithe in scripture was in Genesis 14:18:

Genesis 14:18-20, *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. ¹⁹And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: ²⁰And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thy*

enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Here we see JESUS CHRIST manifesting Himself as Melchizedek in order to take tithes from Abraham and impressing on us that He, God, is the Possessor of Heaven and Earth.

This was further discussed by Paul in Hebrews 7. Tithes is not of the Law but before it – Abraham paid tithes to Christ – Abraham, as the father of the faithful, did indeed set an example for all of us.

JACOB PAID TITHES

Genesis 28:22, And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shall give me I will surely give the TENTH unto thee.

In the context to this passage we see Jacob making a covenant or contract with God. God's part of it was to be with him; to keep him in the way that he goes; to give him bread to eat; raiment to put on and to bring him again to his father's house in peace. Jacob's part of the deal is that he would give

a tenth part of all that the Lord would give him back to the Lord.

What happened to this contract after this is very interesting. Jacob was lead of the Lord to the house of his uncle, Laban, but Laban was a crooked person and robbed Jacob of his wages. He made a contract with Jacob to give him all the spotted animals as his wages. The catch in this contract was that he had a breed of sheep which were all white, and rarely produced spotted animals. This was where God intervened as Jacob's partner. Jacob was instructed to place a certain type of wood in the bottom of the pool where all the pregnant mothers would drink. When the water was stirred, it would look like a serpent and frighten the animals causing them to come spotted. It turned out that Jacob was well paid for his services. There was a certain advantage in this arrangement for God, in that wherever Jacob went, God had a man who was bound to Him by contract as a living representative who could deal with men on their level.

This brings us to the point of understanding that God blesses the different

localities by our presence and, in turn, blesses us for our obedience by giving us more strength to bless the localities.

Tithes therefore has to do with the local ministries unless, of course, otherwise ordered by God in exceptional cases.

Malachi 3:10-11, *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now therewith, 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. ¹¹And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

THE SHADOW REALIZED

Now that we understand the full meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures pertaining to tithing, we need to know what God is saying to us in the matter. Should we pay tithes in the same way that our brothers of the Old Testament did? First, we notice that tithing was before the law, but then we also

noticed that it was incorporated in the Levitical law so that even the Levites had to pay tithes themselves. From this then we must conclude that it is not just merely God's financial plan for his church, but that there is some deeper spiritual principle involved.

Matthew 23:23, Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Here we see Jesus Christ Himself speaking to the Pharisees that they should pay their tithes, but the judgment, mercy, and faith were the greater part of tithe paying which they omitted. In other words, if you pay tithes and yet miss these, you are just a hypocrite.

THE BASIC UNDERSTANDING

In the Tabernacle of Moses there is the Golden Candlestick or Lampstand as the third piece of furniture. It is made of gold and functions with oil and a wick. The

symbolism of this is that of man and God working together in a partnership. The gold is a type of the nature of God, the oil a type of the Holy Spirit, and the wick is a type of the human being. God and man, therefore, are partners in bringing righteousness in the earth. We must consider this partnership as our main purpose in life and, when we do, then we will turn back to God that tenth for the local ministry where we live and earn. It does not belong to us and the person to whom it belongs has the inalienable right as to where it goes.

WHERE MUST MY TITHE GO

There is such a diversity of spiritual activity and such a mixture in the various churches so that many are confused as to where they should send their tithes. Because of the blind giving of tithes (legalistic giving), many gospel programs are oversubscribed. This puts money into the hands of some who wantonly spend it not knowing they will have to answer to God for their stewardship. Thus many of the brethren are subscribing to

the destruction of some of the ministry by their giving.

The basic rule for tithing is that tithes must go to the place where the believer is fed spiritually and where his/her soul is being satisfied. Some are satisfied with very little, thus they are fed on soulish and carnal bread not showing spiritual growth. Growth is mostly shown in love and tolerance, patience and appetite for the things which pertain to godly living.

This therefore is the storehouse which Malachi speaks of. The believer should know what is happening to his tithes. Under the Levitical law surplus tithes should be distributed among the poor. The church of today should look into this.

OFFERING UNTO THE LORD

The children of God should give according to their ability to do so. New Testament giving should be according to the motivation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and should never be according to our feelings. As in the matter of tithing, it can be from the Spirit or

from the soul or just carnal.

A gift from the Spirit is one that is motivated by the Lord and all we need to do is obey.

A gift from the soul is one motivated by what we see or what we feel or think or desire.

A gift that is carnal is one which is motivated by a desire to get something in return or to exalt oneself among others who might know of our giving.

There is only one type of giving that God honors, and that is the spiritual giving. So much of that which is given to organizations will be just hay, wood, and stubble before the Lord. In other words, it is a total loss to the believer since God will give no credit for it. God wants to form the nature of giving in the hearts of His people because His heart is a giving heart. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.* The motivation for true giving must be the love of God. People give gifts at Christmas to their friends and others, but they expect to receive gifts also. This annual and traditional giving has nothing to do with God. I suspect that it is a

stench in His nostrils more than anything else. God wants sons who will give themselves without reserve to the saving of the life of others. GIVE YOUR OFFERINGS, but do not forget the weightier matter of giving yourselves. Some give offerings to religious groups as an appeasement to God. Let us give some pertinent scriptures dealing with offering:

Deuteronomy 16:17, *Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee.*

Matthew 5:42, *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

THE OFFERING OF A PERFECT HEART

I Chronicles 29:9, *Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.*

Exodus 35:21-22, *And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the*

congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. ²²And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold to the Lord.

II Corinthians 8:12, *For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

II Corinthians 9:6-7, *But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. ⁷Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Each believer must learn to respond to the Spirit of God in all things and not to the dictates of his own mind or the promptings of others. The Word of God uses the word *willing heart* very often to describe the motivation of the Spirit of God on the heart of the believer.

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heart is a giving heart. For God so loved
the world that He gave His only
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