

## Who Tithed in the Bible?

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Recently, some friends from Australia sent this material about the tithes from a website that addresses [errors of the Seventh Day Adventist sect](#). When discussing the tithes that God required of Israel during the time of the Mosaic Law, the author forwarded the list below. It is a side-by-side list of tithers and non-tithers by occupation. Look at this.

Must Pay Tithe	Do Not Pay Tithe
Farmers	Artists
Shepherds	Bakers
	Blacksmiths
	Boatbuilders
	Carpenters
	Chefs
	Child care workers
	Clothing Makers
	Construction Workers
	Doctors
	Doorkeepers
	Field Laborers
	Fishermen
	Foremen
	Fowlers
	Government leaders and administrative staff
	Hair cutters
	Horse drivers
	Horse smiths (Horse Tenders)
	Inn keepers
	Jewelers
	Judges
	Loggers
	Maids
	Masonites (Masons)
	Merchants
	Miners

	Musicians
	Nurses
	Perfume Makers
	Philosophers
	Potters
	Priests
	Prophets
	Rug makers
	Scribes
	Seamstresses and Weavers
	Ship Crews
	Shoe makers
	Soldiers
	Storehouse administrators and staff
	Tanners
	Tax Collectors
	Teachers
	Tent Makers
	Wagon Makers
	Well diggers
	Wild game Hunters
	All other non-farmer non-herder occupations

This visual arrested me. I then submitted it to the [Tithe Study Group](#) of which I am a part ... asking if we should link to this. One member objected vigorously, insisting that no *occupation* tithed. We went back and forth by email as I could not really understand his objection. Eventually, I asked if the owners of flocks and herds, or agricultural pursuits, were indeed engaged in an occupation. He did agree with that, but then made his objection more clear. Any *hireling* who worked the fields, flocks or herds were not to tithe from those gains. Wow! To offer a tithe from such *occupational* pursuits would have been sin. So, any *wage earner* from any phase of the agricultural food chain who was not the original owner *did not tithe*. Similarly, anyone earning income from any phase of animal husbandry who did not *own* those animals was not to tithe. Only *the owners* of the crops or herds, or flocks, tithed - and that from the yearly gains (**See Appendix 1**).

To be fair, the “*Do Not Pay Tithe*” list above does include “*Field Laborers*.” But, for several reasons, I decided to rework this list. *First*, you will find tithers more accurately defined. *Second*, I have listed the varied occupations with scripture references. In so doing, I found more than what was in the list above, but I am sure I still missed some. *Finally*, there were a few occupations in the original list that I could not find. But that does not mean the original author was wrong by inserting them. Just read any book on the daily life of people living when the Bible was written and you will find references

to dozens of trades, skills and varied income producing activities that were never biblically referenced. So, the catch all categories below, “*All other non-farmer, non-herder occupations*” and “*All other occupations involving tithable products which the wage earner did not own*” - would dwarf the list of occupations I have cited. Take a look.

Must Pay Tithe	Did Not Pay Tithe
Owners of the annual agricultural harvest	Artists SS 7:1
Owners of the flock or herd – but tithe only on yearly increase (See Appendix 1)	Blacksmiths - 1Sa 13:19 – before and after the Philistine oppression, Israel had blacksmiths
<b>See Appendix 2</b> - an enhancement by a reader	Boat builders (Ship builders) - 1Ki 9:26
	Builders and Craftsmen - 2Ki 22:6, 2Chrn 34:11, 1Ch 29:5
	Carpenters - 2Ki 22:6, 2Chrn 34:11, Mt 13:55 and Mk 6:3 – Jesus Himself as well as Joseph
	Chefs (?) - Cooks - 1Sa 8:13
	Clothing makers - Linen Garments (possibly belts and sashes too) Pr 31:24
	Construction workers - Ex 36:1 – all the trades in that area
	Counselors to the king - 1Ch 27:32,33
	Doctors/Physicians - 2Ch 16:12, Jer 8:22, Lk 4:24
	Doorkeepers - 2Ki 22:4
	Embalms - Gen 50:2
	Engravers - Ex 38:23
	Equipment makers for war chariots - 1Sa 8:12
	Fishermen - Mt 4:18 ... Peter, Andrew, etc.
	Foremen/Overseers - 2Chrn 34:12, 1Chrn 23:4
	Fowlers - Pr 6:5, Jer 5:26
	Gatekeepers - 1Chrn 23:4
	Goldsmiths - Ne 3:31
	Government leaders and administrative staff - Ezra 7:25
	Hair cutters - 2Sam 14:26 – doubt he did it himself
	Horse drivers - 1Sa 8:12 (?)

	Horse tenders - 1Ki 4:28
	Inn keepers - Lk 2:7
	Jewelers - Ex 39:8-14
	Judges - Jos 24:1, Ru 1:1, 1Chrn 23:4
	Loggers - Ec 10:9
	Magistrates - Ezr 7:25
	Maids, Maidens, Maidservants - 1Sa 25:41, Ps 123:2
	Masons - 2Ki 22:6
	Merchants - Ne 3:31
	Musicians - 1Chrn 23:4
	Nurses - 2Sa 4:4, 1Ki 1:4
	Officers - Jos 24:1, 1Chrn 23:4
	Overseers in charge of the camels - 1Ch 27:30
	Overseers in charge of the donkeys - 1Ch 27:30
	Perfume Makers - 1Sa 8:13
	Potters - Is 41:25, Jer 18:2-4
	Priests - Deut 19:17, Ne3:28
	Prophets and/or Dream Interpreters (if ever paid, or recompensed, no tithe - whole OT)
	Real Estate gains - Pr 31:16
	Scribes - Ezr 7:6
	Seamstresses and Weavers - Ex 26:36, Ex 38:23
	Servants - Ps 123:2
	Ship crews - 1Ki 9:26
	Soldiers and Commanders - 1Sa 8:12, 1Ch 27:34
	Storehouse administrators and staff - 1Ch 27:25
	Tax Collectors - Mt 10:3, Lk 5:27
	Teachers – 1Ch 27:32, Jn 3:10
	Temple servants - Ne 3:26

	Tent makers - Ac 18:3
	Weapons of War makers - 1Sa 8:12
	Well diggers - 2Sa 17:18, Jn 4:12
	Wild game hunters - Pr 6:5
	Workmen - 2Ch 34:10
	All other non-farmer, non-herder occupations (From the original list, I could not find Bible references for child care workers (nurse?), miners, philosophers, rug makers, shoe makers, tanners or wagon makers. None of them would tithe either)

The “*Did Not Pay Tithe*” list continues below, but I am separating it for a reason. These non-tithers were involved in agricultural and animal husbandry labors. But none of them *owned* the product at increase. Had any of these people offered 10% of their employment gains as a tithe to the God of Israel ... He might have struck the “*tither*” dead on the spot for such presumption (like Uzza in 1Ch 13:7-10). Man has never been in charge of how God is to be served or approached. He alone defines what is acceptable, and what is proper protocol for any activity toward Him. The tithe was His. No man had authority to invent any aspect of God's tithe. Do you think that still holds true?

#### Did Not Pay Tithe

	Bakers - 1Sa 8:13
	Field laborers - 1Sa 8:12
	Fruit pickers - Mi 7:1
	Grape gatherers - Jer 49:9
	Overseers in charge of the agricultural workers who tilled the soil - 1Ch 27:26
	Overseers in charge of the cattle - 1Ch 27:29
	Overseers in charge of the flocks - 1Ch 27:31
	Overseers in charge of the olive and sycamore trees - 1Ch 27:28
	Overseers in charge of the stores of oil - 1Ch 27:28
	Overseers in charge of the vineyards - 1Ch 27:27
	Overseers in charge of the wine and wine cellars - 1Ch 27:27
	Plowmen - Am 9:13
	Treader of Grapes - Am 9:13

	Wheat threshers - Jg 6:11
	All other occupations involving tithable products which the wage earner did not own

### An Example of This Dynamic

The passage below is a vivid example how God's tithe system worked in Israel. Let's read it and then ask a few questions.

*“Now, Azmaveth ... had charge of the king's storehouses. Jonathan ... had charge of the storehouses in the country, in the cities, in the villages and in the towers. Ezri ... had charge of the agricultural workers who tilled the soil. Shimei ... had charge of the vineyards, and Zabdi ... had charge of the produce of the vineyards stored in the wine cellars. Baal-hanan ... had charge of the olive and sycamore trees in the lowlands, and Joash had charge of the stores of oil. Shitrai ... had charge of the cattle which were grazing in Sharon, and Shaphat ... had charge of the cattle in the valleys. Obil ... had charge of the camels, and Jehdeiah ... had charge of the donkeys. Jaziz ... had charge of the flocks. All of these were **overseers** of the property which belonged to King David” (1Ch 27:25-31).*

So, of all the people named here, who were all engaged with agricultural/animal labors in Israel, how many of them tithed from their financial gains? But, don't stop here. Add in all the other workers under these overseers. We are quickly into *hundreds* of people, maybe *thousands*. So, of this great throng of Jews under Mosaic Law, how many of them were to tithe? You know the answer. Only one ... David. He was the sole owner of all the property. Isn't this stunning? How many today, who are proclaiming this new “*tithe*” teaching ... tell their hearers this? This is even new to me :)

As another example, I just finished an article on the biblical role of women (May of 2013). In this, I spent some time on the Virtuous Woman of Proverbs 31. Of all her income producing pursuits (real estate transactions, vineyards, linen garment sales and possibly belts) the only one requiring a tithe was her vineyard enterprise.

### One Other Note About the Owners Who Tithed

Here is one other point. If the owners of livestock or agricultural produce sold or bartered any of their livestock or agricultural produce *after* they had already appropriately tithed, any of those gains were non-tithable. In fact, it would be sin to present any of that as a tithe. (See **Appendix 3** – another enhancement by a reader).

And know this. During the 1,400 years of Mosaic Law, money was never tithed. If any Israelite had presented *money* as a tithe to the Levites at the Temple in Jerusalem on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year of the 7 year tithe cycle, they would have been soundly rebuked. Similarly, had an Israelite deposited cash as a tithe in the storehouse in their area on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year of that 7 year cycle, the needy widow, orphan, stranger or Levite would not know why cash was there. They had come to share in the tithe.

Quite honestly, I doubt this cash-as-tithe problem ever came up. Even with all the political and religious corruptions that plagued Israel over those 1,400 years (just read from Moses' time through Malachi), I know of no record, or even hint, that any Levite, prophet, priest or king declared that the tithe was to be money - from owners *or* wage earners. And I don't think any of the sects that arose over those centuries ever introduced such a teaching either. No Maccabean, no Pharisee, no scribe, no Sadducee, no Essene, no Herodian - nobody. Therefore, it is no surprise this issue did not even enter the thoughts of anyone on the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 as they gave Paul instructions for the well-being of the Gentiles under the New Covenant. “*God's tithe ... is now from the money of the Gentiles? And God requires this from owners and wage earners alike?*” Such a thought would have been laughed out of Jerusalem. We should laugh it out, too. It is alien to the Bible. But, it does reside in Satan's heart - as did “*Corban!*” Let's read that.

## **“Corban!”**

On one occasion, some Pharisees and scribes challenged Jesus about His disciples – as they did not wash their hands before eating. He responded, *“Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites ... ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ Neglecting the commandment of God, you adhere to the traditions of men.”* Jesus continued, *“You are experts at laying aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother is to be put to death’; but you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban’ (that is to say, given to God). You no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother, thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition ...”* (Mk 7:6-13). Just as these sons of the devil (Jn 8:42-47) set aside God's command for some pious sounding, false financial teaching, so Satan wants Christians to lay aside 1Timothy 5:8, Romans 13:8 and 2Corinthians 8:7-15 for this false, *“10% cash-to-the-local-church-every-week-for-life,”* new *“tithe”* teaching. God has never instructed any of His sons or daughters to teach such a thing in His name, by His authority – and He never will.

## **So, What Does He Teach for the Christian?**

*“If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”* (1Tim 5:8). God's number one requirement for each of His children's financial ministry is to have one's personal life-costs covered. This is a very simple truth. He established this the very moment *“the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom”* (Mt 27:51). This cash compliance charge will continue for the duration of the Church Age.

Obedience to this truth is a moving target as one passes through life. For example, these costs look much different when single, as opposed to having a house full of small children. Regular analysis and input from financially mature believers is a great call. Local churches should be offering advice on these matters. General outlines for cash compliance to God could be categorized by particular family groupings (single, married without children, married with children, single parents, empty nesters, married seniors, widowed seniors, etc.). Of necessity, such deliberations would include an honest evaluation of what constitutes true needs versus wants. These outlines should be deliberated by all the saints as wisdom in these matters can arise from very unexpected sources. And this should always be up for review and revision as societies do change. For example, when I was a boy, health insurance was not that critical. Medical costs were really quite low. But today, even a relatively minor incident can devastate the finances of many Christians. My point? *These* are the financial discussions that should be regular fare in the fellowship of believers – not the bills of the church.

## **Another Way to View This**

In a Bible study recently, this new *“tithe”* teaching came up. One of the fellows remarked that to give *first* to the church could not be a bad thing. The pastor had said in a sermon that he would be *“a bad pastor”* if he did not tell the congregation how important it was that they give to the church. He also told the brethren they could do the *“tithe”* as he had. He began by giving 2 or 3 percent of his *“tithe”* and gradually increased it until he eventually got it up to the *required* 10%. So, now was *fully* obeying God instead of *partially* obeying Him – no longer a *partial* robber of God, I guess. And God is pleased with one who *partially* obeys/robs Him. This creates a new category of the obey/disobey dynamic with God ... a *“partial obedience”* category. I guess it is also populated with partial blessings that increase in number as one gets closer and closer to the required 10% cash from one's gross earnings each week for life to support the local clergyite and his/her ministry.

Anyway I asked the fellows in our study, *“Some of you have children - and some of you hope to*

*one day. Now, when your children are grown, what is a primary thing you want them taking care of as they navigate through this life? How about ... paying their bills? If they have consumed goods or services from someone, don't you want them to pay those things first?"* They all shook their head yes. "God wants His children doing that very same thing." One fellow said, "Boy, that's an interesting way to look at this." I continued, "This honors Him, just as your children being current in the costs of life would honor you. And to have your children debt free and then secretly involved in all kinds of benevolences around them as they determine legitimate need – wouldn't you beam with pleasure?" This is exactly how God wants His children functioning in this age (also Ro 13:8 – no debt). This creates a great witness for Him as many of our financial transactions *are with unbelievers*. And if the opportunity opens so we can share what motivates us to be current on all the costs of life, we have added power to our witness. A wise God births wise children and many outside the faith acknowledge this and are impressed by this. I want you to know this firsthand.

### **On the Other Hand ...**

If I was an unbeliever, and you told me about God, and His provision and careful attention to each detail of our life – and then I learned you live in financial chaos (i.e., do not pay your bills and have unsecured debt) – do you expect me to commit myself to that "God" when it appears ... He has failed you? I can find a "God" like that anywhere.

Here is the worst part of such a scenario. Do you know when most people learn of a Christian's financial chaos? It is when that Christian declares bankruptcy. In reality, bankruptcy is the taking of goods and services from others and *never* paying the creditor his/her rightfully owed cash. It is a "legal" way to steal. Christian bankruptcy dishonors the God of the Bible on several fronts in the eyes of unbelievers. Just as David gave "occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme" Him (2Sa 12:14), so also the defaulting Christian. Israel, under Law, gave occasion for God's enemies to mock as well. "You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?" The answer? "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (Ro 2:23-24 with verse 24 coming from Isa 52: with Ezk 36:20-32 as a companion passage). And the current occasion? "So, your God ... owns everything? If He is so powerful and so loving, why didn't you get that big job so you could pay your bills? Ha! Ha! Ha!" God's first demand upon His children's cash is cost-of-life payments – not siphoned off by a new "tithing" scheme to support the local clergyite.

For Christians, I do make a distinction between "consumption debt" and "investment debt". Investment debt that has an extremely high chance of placing the borrowing Christian in a more productive place. That might include educational pursuits and possibly some business pursuits. But this should be as a *last resort* and with input from truly wise counsel. I discuss this possibility in greater detail in my [Cash Compliance](#) article. But, even in these exception scenarios (*assuming* my position on this is valid), the Christian still owns the debt in the event of a failure to produce (i.e., don't get the degree or the thoroughly vetted business venture fails). The overwhelming rule is that Christians are to pay as they go – not saddle their future with earlier economic decisions.

### **The Sad Tale Continues – and Multiplies**

Here is another story I shared with that night with my Bible study group. One day at work, I was in our owners' office (man and wife) along with our store manager. We were discussing an upcoming job and the need for half-payment before proceeding. I said, "Don't worry about it. He is a local pastor, a Christian fellow." The laughter was immediate. "Well, that settles it! We have to get at least half payment up front or we will never see our money!" Fifty years in local business had taught my owners ... that business truth. The worst people to trust with credit? Christians, and especially preachers. When they saw I was not sharing the belly laugh, it hit them that I had moved to the area – as a local pastor a few years earlier. The laughter stopped and they began back-peddling the statement,



trying to make sure I was not offended. “*Unfortunately,*” I told them, “*you're right.*” And you wonder why these owners attend no local church? Those same preachers, when behind their pulpit, would declare to these business owners that God requires 10% of their gross business profits to come to their church each week for life ... or they will be stealing from God and thus be cursed with some kind of curse. And the worst part of all this is ... you know what I am saying here is true. This is being repeated, with minor twists, all over the USA and anywhere else this new teaching has spread.

### **To Any Reader Outside the USA, Hear This**

Do you know the one area where American theologians have found their spot in the academic disciple of Systematic Theology? They have been credited for ... “*rediscovery of the tithe.*” Well, for all you Systematic Theologians, foreign and domestic, I am one who totally rejects this “*rediscovery.*” For “*standing*” with you, look at my theological education, academic awards, life ministry, writings and original Christian music. (Don't let it alarm you that I have no titles or appositions attached to my name. By choice, I am not “*ordained,*” as I declined such “*opportunities*” when presented. After all, I am already a priest in the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ after the order of Melchizedek. Why tarnish that with the barnacles of man? The reason I have cited “*credentials*” above is an attempt to preempt summary judgment by some theological, academic “*authority*” in dismissing this material.)

But, here's the good news. No *academic* credentials are needed for one to master God's will on this subject. These are not deep truths He hides. All that is required is a teachable spirit. No one who has sought God's will concerning the Christian's cash has come away teaching this new cash “*tithe.*” He does not impart error to those who seek Him on this - or any other any matter.

### **And the Second Demand on our Cash-in-Hand?**

So, God requires that His children pay their own life expenses first. And what is the second financial order from the King? Christians are to meet the needs of qualifying widows in their family. Why? So that the local church will not be burdened with those needs. With this as a major part of the reasoning behind 1Timothy 5:3-16. One may also suspect that He may want a Christian to be available to assist with other *legitimate needs* in one's extended family so as to not burden the local church. Perhaps siblings, their families ... maybe even cousins, etc., especially those who are professing Christians. We are to do good to all men, but particularly to those “*of the household of the faith*” (Ga 6:10). Spiritually mature counsel is critical in such situations as family emotions often cloud objective evaluation. For example, many who are *unemployed* actually are ... true professionals. They have become professionals ... at “*working around work*” (literal rendering of 2Th 3:11). And if that one is a professing Christian, we are to let that one starve (2Th 3:10). Of course, one skilled in the occupation of “*working around work*” will never tell you that. Such a one will give you very detailed reasons for his/her victim status. That is why mature, objective, spiritual evaluation is invaluable as “*a plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out*” (Pr 20:5).

### **A Vivid New Testament Example of One's Financial Responsibilities**

A situation arose in the infancy of the church that can instruct us on God's view about a Christian's cash. In the infancy of the Church, the Corinthian *Gentiles* came up with the idea of getting a contribution together for their starving Jewish brethren beset by famine *in Israel*. What a fantastic opportunity to show how God had “*broken out*” of Israel and was now unleashing life changing mercy upon the Gentiles ... now coming to the aid of starving Jews. This obviously impressed the Apostle Paul as he told other churches about it – and many of them jumped on board. But for some reason, Paul began having doubts that the Corinthians, who had generated the idea, were going to follow through. Here is the relevant part for us in this remarkable exchange. He appealed to them, “*now finish the doing. Just as there was the readiness to desire it (a year earlier), so may there be also the completion*”

of it by your ability. For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have” (2Co 8:11,12). Wow! He was saying that if they could not get past meeting the necessities of their own household (as asserted in 1Ti 5:8) – yet they still had *the desire* to give – God would find that intention honorable! This is amazing. I can't think of another time where just *the desire* to do something good, *and yet not doing it*, pleases God. Can you? Obviously, if there was some mandatory, weekly, cash “*tithe*” from all gross earnings of each believer in Corinth - that would have meant that *some* cash would come from *everyone* for this collection. Obviously, this Pharisee of Pharisees (Paul) never even imagined the existence of a cash “*tithe*” from God.

### Time to Plagiarize ... Myself

Having read the material above, if you are one who proclaims that God has changed the tithe from the owners of agricultural gain inside the borders of Israel to the cash earnings of everyone on the globe (well, maybe just God's sons and daughters), then I have some simple questions for you to answer. The following is a one page article I wrote a while back, so, I will now ... plagiarize myself.

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## Urgent Inquiry to All Who Teach Tithing for Christians Today!

Robin Calamaio Copyright 2012

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1. How is it that Jesus, as a Jew under the Law, never tithed, and yet I, as a Gentile, having never been under the Law, am now required to “*tithe*” cash to the local church, every week for life, from all gross wages ... or be “*cursed with a curse*”? (Mal 3:9). Under Law, carpenters did not tithe. Peter never tithed as a fisherman, nor Matthew as a tax collector, nor Paul as a tent-maker. In fact, if Jesus had given 10% of His carpentry earnings as a tithe, we would not be having this conversation. He would have sinned and we would all be doomed (1Ch 13:1-14 with 1Ch 15:13-15).
2. Who changed the Biblical tithe from animals and agriculture ... to money? Please give the name. Also, when and where did that person live?
3. How did God reveal that the Biblical tithe was to be changed ... to money? From Genesis through The Revelation ... the tithe was **never** cash.
4. Most importantly, did God authorize **you** to change His tithe ... to cash money? If so, when did He do that? How did He do that?

If someone has submitted these questions to you for your response, don't initially give those responses to that person. In this matter, that person is nobody. You will not account to him/her. Look up to heaven and give your answers to your eternal Creator. Before Him you are soon appointed to answer ... so, you might as well give Him your answers now. Consider this “*a dress rehearsal*.”

And since you are talking to Him anyway, explain how your new teaching compliments Paul's declaration in this pastoral epistle; “*If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever*” (1Tim 5:8).

Also explain why the Jerusalem Council “*forgot*” this when instructing the Gentiles about Christianity (Acts 15:1-31). These Jewish Christians/elders told the Gentiles they would “*do well*” - but failed to instruct them on this required, new, cash, “*tithe*” or be cursed. How did that happen?

I am not saying the person who gave you this inquiry is uninterested in your responses. I know I am. I really do want to know if God told you to redefine His tithe. I want to know when He did that ... but, of more interest - **how** He did that? Did you hear His voice (like 1Sam 3:1-18)? Did this new truth come through a dream (like Job 33:14-18)? Did He give you a vision (like Isa 6:1-11)? Also, did He tell you to take the word, “*tithe*” - and place it on this new teaching? And finally, did He instruct you to declare, in His name, and by His authority, that His children are required to give 10% of their cash to the local church for life (or wherever else He informed you it should go)?

So, why is this urgent? Well, I too will soon account for my representation on this matter (Ro 14:10-12). Here are four documents I have written on this. Read them ... and let me know where I have gone astray.

[No Tithe for the Christian](#) (36 pages).

[Compliance Directives For the Christian's Cash and the Bible](#) (13 pages).

[The Tithe Test](#) (4 pages).

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### **Back to this Article**

For those of you participating in this new “*tithe*” teaching, you are in exceedingly dangerous territory. You are proclaiming in the Name, and by the authority, of Jesus Christ that He requires this cash extraction from each Christian. If this is true, and He indeed made all these changes to His tithe, then He will commend and reward you for your faithful activity on His behalf. Go get that cash! If, on the other hand, this is your invention, then you will be found as an extortioner – an extortioner of His own brethren and His Father's very own children. I am certain you have no idea, at this time, the gravity of such a sin. But, you soon will. Bear with me on this next story. There is a relevant point.

Recently, my daughter Claire, was given this traffic ticket. *“I observed Calamaio operating a red Honda CRV at Main Street and Kentucky. Calamaio and her two passengers were not wearing their seat belts. Upon stop, Calamaio and the rear passenger were wearing their seat belt and the front passenger had his seat belt on improperly.”* All three of these young people came to me quite angry - insisting they had their seat belts on the whole time. They said the police car was initially behind them, turned off on another street and reappeared some blocks later ... to then pull them over. They never denied the front seat passenger had the seat belt on wrong (it *was* buckled, but he had the shoulder strap *under* his arm rather than across his chest). She decided to take this to court so the erroneous part of the ticket could be removed from her record (that all three “were not wearing their seat belts”). By pleading “not guilty” in the first appearance, a second court appearance was required (for a \$25 ticket!). The policeman appeared at this with the county attorney representing him. It was a trial. A few days before this trial, I called the judge's office to ask if I would be allowed to approach the bench with Claire as she is a minor. I was allowed, but as soon as I came forward, the judge informed me that I would not be allowed to speak as he was not going to have me act in his court as an attorney as I was not licensed. I said, *“I am just here as her Dad.”* The ordeal was intimidating – especially for a high school junior and her improperly buckled 16 year old witness. That's why I wanted to be present.

The county attorney was quite aggressive, but my daughter stood her ground well. After being sworn in, she was able to ask the officer some questions. She asked, *“Why didn't you pull us over when first behind us rather than turning away and then reappearing?”* This forced him to correct his story as he had left out the part that he was initially behind them – and had turned away. So, he said it was rush hour and to pull them over might have caused trouble on the street. After some other exchanges, the judge completely changed the topic. He asked my daughter about her grades from the previous school year. She told him *“all A's.”* He then asked if she had a job. She replied, *“Yes, at Zaxby's”* (a local

chicken restaurant). He then asked of her plans after high school. She told him she was planning on attending the local vocational college to become an ultrasound technician. He then said to the county attorney, *“I know your position on this, but here is what I am going to do. Ms. Calamaio, I want you back in this courtroom a year from now, and if you have graduated, show proof of enrollment in higher education, and have had no other seat belt violations, I will dismiss this.”*

Here is why I have recited all this. That judge was in full control of everything in that courtroom. Everything inside those four walls was his turf, and he let that be known to all. He was direct, clear-eyed, no nonsense, and beyond being challenged by anyone who came before him (By the way, a year later the ticket was dropped, and four years after that Claire became an RN at Vanderbilt Children's hospital). :)

So, what do you think it will be like when standing before Jesus Christ? Just on this *“tithe”* issue alone, how do you think it will unfold? He made it clear that each Christian's first responsibility was to pay his/her own bills and then assist the qualifying widow in the family – and, possibly, other legitimate needs in one's extended family. The local church was not to be burdened. He also made it clear He did not want those, for whom He had bled and died, to be in debt. *“Be in debt to no one”* because *“the borrower becomes the lender's slave”* (Ro 13:8 and Pr 22:7). He did not die for those who had been enslaved to various lusts and pleasures (including financial slavery) so they might continue, or go deeper into, those bondages. Indeed, Christians are to become His slaves and *“slaves to righteousness”* (Eph 6:6 and Ro 6:18). This slavery ends in moral freedom ... and financial freedom. That is His will.

### **Your Time Has Come**

This is now addressed to all who leave this life having taught and/or enforced this new *“tithe.”* So, there you are before Him – at the Judgment Seat. You have exited this life and have entered some area that is foreign to you, but not to Him. Whatever this area is going to be – He made. And not only does He control every subatomic particle, He also controls the proceeding. I'm not sure we will even be given the opportunity to speak. And why should we? Our view, or opinion, at that moment on any matter will have no substantive relevance to the proceeding about to occur. The purpose of this appointed, fixed court date (to which you are now closer than when you first began reading this sentence) is to be judged *by Him* – according to what He has decided is true. He will simply judge by what the truth is. If you are saved, rebuke (with your resultant *“fruit”* burning up) or reward is what awaits – in all matters great and small.

But, let's assume you are able to present your case on this new *“tithe”* teaching and practice. There you are, before the King of all the kings and Judge of all the judges - One with eyes like *“a flame of fire”* (Re 19:12). As you stand on His turf, you tell Him ... you had a better idea for the financial ministry of those whom He purchased via a Roman cross. First, the tithe should be changed to cash money. Next, the local church became the new *“storehouse”* (supplanting the storehouses of Israel) as the depository for this new cash *“tithe.”* But you nixed the idea that these new storehouses would only get these deposits on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year of a 7 year cycle. And you had no use for a 7<sup>th</sup> year (and 50<sup>th</sup> year) ... of no tithe at all! No, this *“tithe cycle”* thing had to go. These new storehouses were to be infused with cash money every week by all who attended, for their entire lifespan – no breaks. Also, while the clergy/lay system supplanted the Levite/eleven tribes system, this new clergyite order was free of the land-owning restrictions of the Levites (Num 35:1-8). Also, there were to be no cash diversions to some *“parachurch”* entity either. In your wisdom, the Biblical tithe expired at the cross.

But your spiritual insights do not end there. You proceed to tell the Judge that the Holy Spirit, and the Jews of the Jerusalem Council, erred as to what Gentile converts had to do if they were to *“do well”* (Ac 15:23-29). That cash *“tithe”* must be brought into the new storehouses lest these Gentiles *“be cursed with a curse”* for stealing from God (Mal 3:8-12). Well, maybe they would just lose out on

blessings, or maybe just be less spiritual (not “*fully disciplined*”) than the faithful, new “*tithers*.” Yes, the frown of this Judge, and His Father, hovered over the disobedient “*layman*” – with His strike coming at the time and place of His choosing. But, that frown would vanish, and may even turn into a divine smile, the instant that layman's cash “*tithe*” started flowing into the new “*storehouse*.” And if you really love God, you will joyously release this cash to us. This action is not just a mark of your obedience to Him – but a public demonstration of *your love* for Him. “*Lord Jesus, it wasn't just me. A whole bunch of us agreed ... even entire denominations with our academic theologians. This was a much better idea than what You presented. And we told everyone – You were behind this. It was Your will ... or at least needed to be. Otherwise, You know how tight all those lay people were with their cash. They just spent it on themselves. They wouldn't give it to us – at least not enough. How were we supposed to pay the bills of the church and do all our mission work?*” Good luck.

### **But, Quite Honestly ...**

... this discussion, this scene, is never going to occur. Jesus Christ is not going to contend with anyone at the Judgment. He is simply going to judge. While there are *some* similarities between the traffic court judge (referenced earlier) and our Eternal Judge (i.e., total control of the courtroom and its proceedings), there are some phenomenally huge differences. The traffic judge did not write the law used in his courtroom. Jesus has written **all** the law in His courtroom. Another difference is the policeman had an attorney with him and my daughter also could have had one. In Jesus' presence there will be no one to plead your case. You will stand butt-naked and alone in front of Him. “*For we have brought nothing into the world, so we can not take anything out of it either*” and “*There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid **bare** to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do*” (1Ti 6:7 and He 4:13). I realize this last verse is talking about one's deeds, schemes, plans and motives ... and maybe the saints will immediately be “*clothed in fine linen white and clean*” upon exit from this age (Re 19:14) ... but if Jesus Himself was hung naked on a Roman cross for six hours, don't be surprised if this proceeding is a bit ... uncomfortable. Oh, and one other difference - there will be no possibility of reprieve a year later. At the conclusion of this proceeding, eternal determinations will be levied. Eternal destinies with reward or punishment will immediately be meted out.

If you think any of this new “*tithe*” stubble has any hope of prevailing in any way, you really need to rethink this. “*If anyone thinks he is something, being nothing, he deceives himself*” (Ga 6:3).

### **The Gentile Tithe and Christian Priesthood**

There is no place in the Bible where Gentiles ever tithed anything to God ... whether produce, herds, possessions or cash. Not pre-Law, during Law, or post-Law. God never *even hinted* at such a thing for the Gentiles anywhere in the Bible. And the first record of a tithe involved the first Jew – Abraham. But even in that case, Abraham *never* gave anything of his own to Melchizedek. He was bringing back recovered goods (and people) that had been seized by warring kings. He never intended upon keeping any of it – so, Abraham gave Melchizedek 10% of a bunch of stuff he did not want. He never went home and brought back anything of his own to offer Melchizedek. And this was a one time event – not some weekly duty for life (read Genesis 14 the whole chapter). Fast forwarding to the present, the Bible instructs us that one of the blood-bought positions Jesus has granted each Christian is that each one is now a priest - a member of the royal priesthood with Jesus Himself as the High Priest. This is a priesthood in the order of Melchizedek - who received this tithe from Abraham and, by extension, the entire Levitical priesthood in Abraham's loins. (1Pe 2:5, 9 and Heb 7 whole chapter). Melchizedek paid no tithes to anyone, and as priest of this order, neither do we. And it is beyond ridiculous to teach that we are to “*tithe*” to each other in cash - as fellow royal priests – because of an artificial clergy/lay religious fabrication that has been superimposed upon God's royal priesthood. Such teaching is heading directly into the fire of God as it should. The fate of those promoting this will be

determined by Him on a case-by-case basis. If you are involved in any of this, and have the courage, I will now speak to you in direct terms.

### **Abandon This New “Tithe” Teaching Now**

It is extortion. And it presents God as the One behind the demands. The consequences for putting Him in this position – I don't even want to think about. The reason I can so confidently call this extortion is because ... it is. Here is the dictionary definition. *“To get (money, etc.) by violence, threats, misuse of authority, etc.”* You already can see the last two parts of this definition applies. But what about *“violence”*? Well, I know of many brothers and sisters who have been asked to leave a church for even *asking* about and/or challenging this new teaching. One brother, who had been in contact with me as he walked through this process, called to report this development. *“The church just voted and revoked my church membership. I guess my family and I have been ... dismembered.”* He was serious, injured, and trying to sort all this out. After a second, I couldn't help myself. I started laughing. My dear brother in the Lord *“dismembered”* from Jesus Christ ... for learning, knowing and respectfully standing in the truth? I didn't even have to explain my laughter. Within seconds, he started laughing and we were soon at different ends of a long distance phone call rolling on the floor. Violence is not just the use of physical force. It is also the *“unjust or callous use of force or power; as in violating another's right ... the harm done by this.”* Check out your own dictionary. Jesus Christ is the Head of the church (Eph 5:23). That means, “Boss.” If He is not behind the new, cash *“tithe”* ... if He is not its Author ... dire consequences await all its perpetrators. They will know ... violence. *“Who understands the power of Thine anger, for your wrath is as great as the fear that is due Thee”* (Ps 90:11). Incidentally, that brother and his family are doing fine. Of course, you already knew that.

### **But, There is More Violence**

Another reason I am so aggressive against this teaching is because of the havoc it creates in a Christian's relationship with his/her Father. If Christians have been duped into believing this heresy - and are not *“tithing”* - they proceed through life thinking God is angry with them, displeased with them, frowning upon them, withholding blessings from them (whatever threats their *“leaders”* levied for this disobedience) for this robbing of God. This is debilitating. They are always looking over their shoulders for His attack – and want to stay away from Him. This obviously hampers, or even stops, my brethren from what they should be doing. And ***one day*** of living under this divine meat cleaver ... is one day too long. So, I will continue to attack this teaching.

If you looked at the Southern Baptist's *“tithe”* declaration linked to earlier, you will see the seventh, *“Whereas”* of this fire-bound document is the complaint that members give just 2.5% of their annual income to the local church. Rather than question their own teaching on this matter (including secret giving; see Mt 6:1-4), the call is for pulpits to double down and demand obedience to this heresy. They believe their pews are filled with stingy, disobedient, *“lay people”* and they must correct this. Doubt me? [Read the document](#). These *“leaders”* will not even entertain the truth that priests in Melchizedek's order populate those pews and each of them have a direct line to God – and that God has His own designs for their cash. This aggression, by the errant, makes me sick. This subject is not that complicated. All it takes is honest reading, and teaching, of the Bible.

Of course, the other reason I want to crush this teaching is because it damages God's witness and reputation with unbelievers. So, His children are late in bill paying or default through bankruptcy ... stiffing unbelievers? *“Corban to you, O unbelievers, from whom I consumed your goods and services! Corban! My money has been devoted to God – cash 'tithe' first to my local church! Become a Christian and be like me!”* I hope this ... makes you sick. Cross Him at your peril. Local churches should be working with those who attend to make sure they are current in all life expenses. They should be instructing ***not*** to give to the local church until one's house is in financial order ... and



remains so. Can you imagine the impact that such a church would have on the local area?

### **My Pleasure**

For me, the greatest beauty in exposing all this is that I know none of the teachers and preachers behind this new teaching, who actually are brethren, will account to me. Each one will soon stand before the Boss and account for this – and all the individual repercussions for it. Part of what that means is that *all* the dishonored purchases they themselves made *and* all the dishonored debts made by those who listened to them – the false teacher will share in both. And how I praise God for my part in this. My job is to expose, reason and persuade. But, to open understandings, create repentance, or motivate so as to obey God's word ... all of that lies in His domain. So also the meting out of justice and/or rewards. I am very happy about this. So, I will continue to do my job ... and will now discuss your repentance – if needed and if you are so inclined. It is going to happen sooner or later. *“Do well,”* O Gentile, by making it sooner.

### **Some of the Elements of Your Repentance**

Here are some elements to your repentance, but you may come up with more.

First, all attempts to salvage some aspect of this will vanish. No, *“10% is a starting point.”* No, *“Since we are under grace, we should be giving more than 10%.”* No, *“The tithe, or 10%, is a biblical principle.”* No, *“If I don't teach this, they won't give, so how will the bills of the church be paid?”* I could write several pages on the rationales behind this extortion, but, you get the idea.

Second, as an ex-extortioner, you will need to inform your brothers and sisters of your reform, and may even need to seek avenues for restitution. As far as the extortion of unbelievers who may have come into your realm, I don't know what you should do about that. You might consider some public ads or community notices ... out of your own pocket.

If this last statement causes you to cringe, as such an act would be embarrassing and/or humiliating (or expensive), that proves a lack of a proper fear of God. *“The fear of man brings a snare, be he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted”* (Pr 29:25). Genuine spirituality before God means one is ultimately concerned about what He thinks - not what people think.

Third, you will commit yourself to learning what God actually does want us to do with our cash. Start by asking Him about this and who knows, He may direct you to [this article](#) for starters. Fear not, it will be a great journey. Wading into God's truth on any subject finds the adventurer in an ocean of opportunities, pleasant surprises and great benefits. You will find the energy of life in any of God's areas of truth. That is just the way it is. Come on in.

So, while I do not know exactly what your repentance will look like, I do know this: it will be total. And it will involve confession and restitution as far as possible. Otherwise, as an extortioner, you will not have repented. True repentance takes no heed of personal consequence or care what other colleagues might say or do. There will no concern for career or personal income (Read about Zacchaeus - Luke 19:1-10). No concern for denominational loyalty or hierarchical censure. Fear of man, and its snare, will be irrelevant - replaced by a righteous fear of God in representing His word, will and ways accurately. *“If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth”* (1Pe 1:17). After all, the worst thing that can happen is that they kill you for your repentance. *“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!”* (Lk 12:4,5). Jesus always puts things in the right perspective, doesn't He?

### **Merchandising By False Words**

There is one rendering of the King James translation I have always loved. When Peter warned of false teachers among Christians, a character trait of such a one is that *“in their greed they will exploit you – make merchandise of you (KJV) – with false words”* (2Pe 2:3). In this new teaching, each Christian merchandised - a money tree to be shaken. And the shaking tool? *“Dire consequences will come your way from God for robbing Him of His tithe.”* This shakedown is going to backfire. These are false words. Indeed, this entire new cash *“tithe,”* and the support system attached to it, has been invented with false words, perpetuated by false words, and is propagated with more false words. But, it does not stop with these. It also forwards false words about *promised blessings* for *“obedience”* to this cash *“tithe”* toward those He deems *“faithful in their giving.”* These false words, and all the other false words associated with this new teaching, have no chance of prevailing before ... The Word.

### **Not All Refutations of This Heresy are Created Equal**

I just received notice that an academic released a new book that refutes this new *“tithe”* invention. While I do appreciate the effort, and hope God will use it (his sect just issued a denomination wide call for this new *“tithe”* at their [annual convention](#)), when reading endorsement remarks by fellow academics who praised this new book, a common theme that jumped out. One's giving should be freewill, joyous, and in many instances more than 10% ... it should be *sacrificial*. This chorus ... sickened me. It's as though the Christian's *first* responsibility with his/her cash is to give it away - the only question is where and how much. This whitewashes the extreme sin of this teaching and gives room for a *“converted”* pro-tither to use this as a call for *more cash* than even the 10%. *“I have been sinning by calling for just a measly 10%. I have been short-changing God. After all, we are now under grace and should want to give more than what the Law system required.”* Of course, they never mention that 10% was never money. They then assert the cash should go where you are being fed, or where you sprouted, etc. It *appears* from these reviews, and even the author's own synopsis of his work, that what is still not addressed is the simple truth of God's design for the Christian's cash: one's life costs *first* and qualified widows needs (and possibly other legitimate needs in the extended family) *just behind this*. **Then**, one is free to give wherever he/she feels God is directing. He may not want one penny of yours going to the local church as it may be *“fully funded”* according to His intention. He may have tapped others in the fellowship for that full funding. He may want your extra cash going to some mission enterprise at home or abroad ... or your next door neighbor in crisis. This is a fluid target to be worked out between each saint and the Boss. It is all His anyway ... and He has double claims on our cash - first, by creation rights and second, by blood-bought rights.

I have not cited the author above, or his book, because I have not read the actual contents. And his book is not my point here anyway. You got the point above. Maybe he does address God's actual requirements for our cash. I hope so. If so, all the reviews failed to mention that – including his own.

When a false teaching is dissected, exposed and dispatched, this should be followed by presenting the correct position on the matter. People should not be called to turn away from something and then turn ... to nothing. This is particularly important in this instance because of the extreme practical nature of the subject. Money is a big deal for most of us on a daily basis. Many of life's pressures involve money. We need to know God's will concerning our cash. I have always tried to do that in everything I have written on this heresy.

### **So, To Whom Am I Really Writing?**

This article is for those who are interested in knowing the things of God. While you may want to warn and correct those *who teach* this new *“tithe,”* most likely, your best results will be with people *under* this teaching ... and delivering them from it. Most who teach this will not repent until they stand before the Boss. And for many of them, it will be shown ... Jesus never was their Boss. Every person in the *“many”* of Matthew 7:21-23 left this age convinced they had served Jesus Christ in this life. Each



one of that “many” will be shocked they are part of that group. And when He says, “Many will say to Me on that day ...” - I am sure, “Many” means a whole lot. The Bible is clear that no “extortioner will inherit the kingdom of God” (1Co 6:9,10). This new teaching is a classic case of extortion. It presents God as the enforcer behind this teaching – complete with warnings of negative action by Him toward those not in compliance. Warnings directed (falsely) ... *at His very own children!* His response to this is going to be something to see.

### **Conclusion**

The Holy Spirit has never directed anyone to teach this new cash “*tithe.*” It is clear, those forwarding this new teaching have no fear of God. They have assured themselves they are in right standing with Him, and can pretty much teach whatever they want ... and He will be pleased. Most of them are certain God has given them rights to your cash because of their ministry labors (not muzzling the ox, 1Ti 5:18), or ordination rites, or theological degrees, or denominational teachings, or church bylaws, etc. They are also convinced they know the best way to use your cash - this “*required giving*” oxymoron. But this confidence will end the moment they exit this life.

So, deliver who you can - and do not fret over the incorrigible. Persuade the persuadable. And get your cash flowing as God directs you. He does have designs for your cash but this is between you and Him. It always has been and always will be. This is the case for all His children for the duration of this “*present evil age*” (Ga 1:4).

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### **Appendix 1**

It is also worth noting that the tithe came from *the yearly increase* – not from one's total holdings (Deut 14:28). That is pretty easy to understand concerning agricultural produce as this was from yearly harvests. It probably never entered anyone's mind to tithe another tenth from any store-housed grains, oils, wines, etc., from previous years. And concerning animals, the tithe came from the increase of the animals – not 10% of all animals owned. I am pretty sure I am correct on this. For example, if you had a flock of 100 sheep, and that flock increased by 10 in a given year (thus the flock numbered 110), you only tithed one animal (equal to 1 of the 10 new ones – that year's increase). God did not require a tithe of the entire flock as that would mean 11 would be tithed (of the 110) – and the flock, after tithe, would stand at 99 – smaller than when the year started. So that year, God would get the equivalent of all the newborn sheep plus one more! After a few years of returns like that, everyone would become fishermen, bakers, tentmakers, carpenters, realtors, inn keepers ... some kind of labor not subject to the tithe of God.

### **Appendix 2 – an enhancement by a reader**

Check this out!

*“The list of who tithed should read:*

*Farmers who lived inside Israel*

*Herdsmen of clean animals raised inside Israel*

*The HOLY tithe could only be clean food miraculously produced by God off His own holy land of Israel and harvested or grown by Hebrews. Gentiles could not tithe food they produced inside Israel.*

*Who did not tithe:*

*Farmers (Hebrew or others) outside Israel*

*Herdsmen (Hebrew or others) who lived outside Israel”*

He also added this note in a follow-up email:

*“The only reason the tithe was holy is because God Himself miraculously increased it from inside His own holy land. Gentile land was defiled and unclean.”*

This was from Russell Kelly – Here is his [website](#) and his email is [russkellyphd@yahoo.com](mailto:russkellyphd@yahoo.com) .

There are several extremely important points here, but the one that really struck me was that Hebrews living **outside** Israel (farming or herdsmen) **did not tithe either!** Wow! By the time Jesus came on the scene, all kinds of Jewish communities were outside the Holy Land. As an example, Saul (who became the apostle Paul) was from Tarsus (Ac 9:11). He described himself as *“a Hebrew of Hebrews”* (Php 3:5). Yet none of his family, none of his friends, none of his fellow Hebrews in that community were subject to the tithe – including farmers or herdsmen of *clean* animals. It would be sin to present any gain as a tithe and they would have been rebuked by anyone who knew the Law. Yet as Hebrews they were still under the Law! What a great point this is! The truth is – I doubt such a tithe ever enter the mind of any Jew. They knew what it was – and why. This current *“tithe”* teaching is truly absurd ... as well as evil.

And even Gentiles living **inside** Israel engaged in tithable activities were not to tithe! Wow!

### Appendix 3 – another enhancement by a reader

I have great readers.

*“One note (NOT a correction, but a note): You correctly state, “If the owners of livestock or agricultural produce sold or bartered any of their livestock or agricultural produce after they had already appropriately tithed, any of those gains were non-tithable.”*

*Even if the owners of livestock or agricultural produce sold or bartered any of their livestock or agricultural produce BEFORE they had already appropriately tithed, those gains also were non-tithable.”*

This was from Gary Arnold. Here is his [website](#). His email is [preacher@tithingtoday.com](mailto:preacher@tithingtoday.com) .

It is nice to surround oneself with Christians who seek God on matters, search the scriptures honestly on matters, and grow in truth on matters. What else matters? *“Iron sharpens iron. So one man sharpens another”* (Pr 27:17).

Thanks, brothers.

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