

# The Sacred Duty of Giving God His Tithe

*Rev. B. Elshout*

## Malachi 3:6-12

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7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?  
8 **Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.**  
9 **Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.**  
10 **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.  
11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he 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.  
12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

## I. THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR TITHING

### A. *The Context of the Lord's Exhortation to Israel*

1. **Malachi(jah): Jehovah's final messenger to a backsliding & unfaithful people**
2. **The sins prevalent among the returned exiles:**
  - The priests were marrying alien wives
  - God's temple and service were neglected & dishonored
  - Sabbath desecration
  - Unlawful divorces
  - *Withholding of the full tithe God required*
3. **The common denominator: No genuine regard for God & His service**  
*Mal 1:13* *Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.*
4. **God's assessment of the withholding of the full tithe: Ye have robbed ME! (vss. 8-9)**
5. **God's judgment upon this sin: Ye are cursed with a curse!**  
*Mal 1:14* *But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts*
6. **The amazing truth of our text: God offers abundant mercy to His disobedient people who have robbed Him.**

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6. **The amazing truth of our text: God offers abundant mercy to His disobedient people who have robbed Him.**



4. **The sacred duty of the Christian: To honor God with the firstfruits of ALL his substance**  
*Prov 3:9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:*
5. **Tithing: The Christian's expression of love for & trust in God**

## II. THE SACRED PURPOSE OF TITHING

### A. To Provide the Financial Resources for God's Service

1. **"...that there may be meat in mine house": That there may be provision for My house & the service I have ordained**
2. **Clearly spelled out by the Levitical Law**  
*Num 18:21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve.*
3. **Reinforced by Hezekiah during his great reformation**  
*2 Chr 31:4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.*
4. **Clearly spelled out by the apostle Paul**  
*1 Cor 9:13-14 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? {14} Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*
5. **The faithful giving of the tithe**
  - **yields the financial resources for the service of the Lord—for the ministry of redemption**
  - **even required from the Levites who lived from the tithe**  
*Neh 10:38 And the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.*
  - **a gift of gratitude for God's unspeakable Gift of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ!**

### B. To Provide for the Needs of the Needy and Destitute

1. **The Levites had to use part of the tithe for the stranger, the fatherless, & the widows**  
*Deu 14:28-29 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: {29} And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied*
2. **Tithing yields the resources for the ministry of mercy**
3. **Our sacred duty: To provide the deacons with the resources to minister mercy to the needy**

### C. To Provide an Antidote Against Covetousness

1. **The Christian needs continually to be reminded that the purpose of his life is to love God & his neighbor**
2. **The inclination of the flesh: to covet the goods & riches of this present world**
3. **The giving of the tithe: An ongoing reminder**
  - **that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world**
  - **that we cannot serve two masters—God & mammon**  
*Mat 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*
  - **that we must first seek the Kingdom of God & His righteousness!**  
*Mat 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

### III. THE DIVINE BLESSING PROMISED UPON TITHING

#### A. Jehovah Issues a Challenge to Israel

1. The Lord challenges Israel to put Him to the test!
2. This challenge: Given by the LORD of Hosts
3. The Levitical law:
  - **God would bless those who would honor Him with His firstfruits**  
*Deu 14:22,29* Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year....that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.  
*Deu 28:12* The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand
  - **directed Israel, by God's direction, to ask for this blessing!**  
*Deu 26:13,15* Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me...Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.
4. **God's blessing: experienced during Hezekiah's reformation**  
*2 Chr 31:10* And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.

#### B. Jehovah Promises Abundant Blessing to Israel

1. The God who has cursed is ready to bless abundantly!  
*Gen 7:11* In the six hundredth year of Noah's life...the windows of heaven were opened.
2. "Open the windows of heaven": A phrase well understood
3. God here promises to bless them with far more than they give
4. The forcefulness of the language: I will empty out my reservoirs of mercy!  
*Deu 11:14* That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.  
*Zec 8:12* For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.
5. The essence of this promise: Jehovah is very gracious and delights in mercy
6. The bottom line: God will abundantly bless those who honor & obey His precepts  
*Prov 3:9-10* Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: {10}  
So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

### IV. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING OUR TITHING

#### A. Specific Applications for our Present Situation

1. **10% of our income is holy unto the LORD!**
2. **God requires that we give at least 10% of our personal and business income (of our profit!)**  
*1 Cor 16:2* Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him  
*Neh 10:35* And to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD:  
*Neh 13:12* Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.



3. **The tithe must be paid from our GROSS income—before taxes**  
*1 Sam 8:15* And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.  
*1 Sam 8:17* He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.  
*Mat 22:21* Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.
4. **The tithe must be paid before all other financial obligations are met—it is the Lord's money!**
5. **Payment of tuition for Christian education is NOT part of our tithe**
6. **Real giving begins AFTER we have paid our tithe!**  
*2 Cor 9:6* But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.
7. **We must pay our tithe with a cheerful & thankful heart**

### ***B. Failure to Tithe: A Robbing of God***

1. **A question for all of us: Will a man rob God?**
2. **To rob God = to defraud God, Possessor of Heaven & Earth!**
3. **Anything less than a full tithe is robbery in God's sight**
4. **Robbing God: A grievous sin toward the God who daily loads us with benefits**
5. **The result of robbing God: God's disfavor will rest upon us.**  
*Amos 4:9* I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.  
*Mal 2:2* If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

### ***C. The Duty of a Guilty People: To Repent of our Sin of Ignorance***

1. **A sin of ignorance: A sin worthy of divine judgment**
2. **Proof: God required a bloody sacrifice to atone for it**  
*Lev 5:15-16* If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering: {16} And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him.
3. **A blessed gospel for transgressors of God's law: There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared**
4. **Our duty today: Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ**
5. **A necessary component of this repentance: Our tithing may require a rearrangement of financial priorities**

### ***D. Conclusion***

1. **Therefore, trust and obey, for there is no other way!**  
*1 Ki 17:13,16* And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.  
*Psa 37:3* Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

**2. Our attitude toward giving God His tithe: A barometer of our heart & spiritual life**

*Deu 15:10* Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

*Rom 14:23* And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin

**3. A truth also applicable toward tithing: If you love me, keep my commandments**

**4. Therefore: “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.”**