

Tithing, Offerings and Alms-Giving (Abridged)

Let me first say: We believe and support the scriptural teaching on tithing, offerings and alms-giving.

Many people believe we do not have to tithe because it is a part of the law given to Moses and we are not under the law. But, if you look closely at scripture, the first mention of tithing is found in Genesis 14:20 involving Abraham which was before the Law of Moses. It can, also, be assumed that what Cain and Abel were doing in Genesis 4:3-4 was tithing of the first fruits of their labor to God.

Tithing is ten percent (10%) of our income, time, crops, etc. to be given to a minister for his support so he can spend time doing the Lord's work. The following are a few scripture references on tithing:

Malachi 3:8-12

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.

2 Chronicles 31:4-6

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.

5 And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and all increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.

6 And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God, and laid them by heaps.

Hebrew 7:1-10

1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him;

2 To who also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of who it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Offerings are over and above the tithes to be given for the upkeep, expenses and needs of the church and/or ministry. The following are a few scripture references concerning offering:

Exodus 36:3

3 And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning.

Exodus 35:21-22

21 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.

22 And 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 unto the Lord.

2 Chronicles 24:8-13

8 And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord.

9 And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness.

10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

11 Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

12 And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord.

13 So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

Alms are to be given, after the tithes and offerings, to help those in need. The following are a few scripture references concerning alms-giving:

Deuteronomy 15:7-8

7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Matthew 6:3-4

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

Luke 12:33

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

As shown in the above scripture references, all three, tithes, offerings and alms, are equally important. Since the tithe is the first 10% of everything, it must be given first to have the others recognized and accepted by the Lord. The amount of the offerings and alms are left up to you.

As we read in Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:21, Luke 12:33 and Luke 18:22, Jesus asked some people to sell all they had, give it to the poor and follow him. In Acts 4:34-35, members of the first church who owned houses and land, sold them and brought the money to the apostles for distribution among the members who had needs. Not everyone is called to do this and is not required or commanded by this ministry to do so. Only the Lord can command the giving of everything, so this is a personal decision between you and the Lord.

In closing, one thing we must keep in mind is:

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Giving to the Lord, whether money, time, crops, etc, must be done with the right attitude. Our giving must be done because we love Him, not for what we will get out of it. When the attitude is right, the Lord can then bless us mightily beyond anything we can imagine.

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P.S. " You can always tell a man's heart by where his money is." Anonymous