

Q. With times being so tough, does God actually expect us to tithe? Are we being legalistic? What does the Bible teach?

A. Well, that's quite an ask. Sadly this Mag can't give a full-length study on your subject; however, full notes are available upon request.

For the serious enquirer, the main Scriptures to consider are Gen 14:15-24, Deut 26:1-4, Mal 3:8-12 and Heb 7:1-10.

In Gen 14 Abraham met Melchizedek as King of Righteousness, King of Peace and Priest of the Most High God. It was the custom that when a conqueror met one he acknowledged as his superior or king, he would give him 'tithes of all'. Abraham saw great King Melchizedek representing his God, so he tithed to the God he represented.

At Bethel Jacob promised to tithe to the Lord – Gen 28:22.

In Heb 7:8-10, the Word tells that even Jacob, yet in the loins of Abraham, tithed to Melchizedek, a picture of Christ.

Tithing is not a 'legalistic' matter since Abraham, 430 years before Moses, and Jacob, 270 years before Moses, paid tithes well before the Mosaic Law. Without doubt, tithing is for today Jesus supported it – Matt 23:23, Lk 11:42 – and Paul confirmed it – Heb 7:8.

All too often Christians are robbed of the grace of tithing and I venture that, more than being willfully disobedient to God's Word, it's a matter of either no passion for the support of the Work of the Lord, a fear of not coming out with what they have or, and most probably, ignorance arising from not having been taught to tithe.

God is a gracious giver. Being born of Him, generosity is a characteristic that should develop early in His children. That crucial step of giving away a large part of his income actually kick-starts the believer's walk of faith. Depending fully on God, he begins to enjoy tithing as grace developing in his life!

What is Tithing?

- Giving of your income to God – not to the Church or the Elders!
- It is a tenth part of your income or increase
- Honoring God with your first-fruits – Prov 3:9-10

- Putting God first on your monthly budget
- It is God's way of financing His Kingdom on earth
- A method by which God brings you into blessing – Luke 6:38
- It enlarges the Grace of God in our hearts – 2 Cor 9:8
- As with Abraham, it is an act of homage, reverence, love, faith
- He established tithing as an essential part of faith – Heb 7:5
- It is a symbol of Jesus' total possession of all I am and have.
- Abraham before Melchizedek is so significant to us! He met Melchizedek; we met Jesus. Melchizedek gave him bread and wine; Jesus gave us His Body and Blood. Abraham tithed; we respond to Jesus with faith, love, honor, and Tithes. Melchizedek blessed Abraham; Jesus eternally blesses us – the very essence of the Breaking of Bread!

Is There Material Benefit in Tithing?

Yes, as with every other step we take with God. But we give because we love Him and recognize our tithes belong to Him. It's never to buy His blessing. But see what we receive:

- Spiritual Nourishment – Meat in my House – Mal 3:10, Bread – Luke 4:4, Milk -1 Peter 2:1, Meat – Heb 5:14
- Equipping – Storehouse, for equipping and training – Mal 3:10
- Excessive Blessing – No room to contain it – Mal 3:10
- Divine Protection – I will rebuke the devourer – Mal 3:11
- Abundant Provision – Luke 6:38

How Should I Tithe?

- Bring your tithes to God's place of Bread and Wine – Mal 3:10
- As an act of worship and joy to Jesus

Read these wonderful examples to guide your giving:

- The Example of Deut 26:1-4
- The Corinthian Example -1 Cor 16:22, 2 Cor 9:7-8
- The Macedonian Example – 2 Cor 8:1-4

To Whom Shall I Tithe?

- We tithe to Christ Himself – Heb 7:10
- The tithe belongs to God – Lev. 27:3, Mal 3:8

- Bring your tithe to the storehouse – Mal 3:10, where you worship, receive spiritual food, are under authority, cared for, and where God has set you. The Breaking of Bread is a good place to tithe.
- Not to sundry local and overseas works; that's for Offerings.
- Tithe where you eat; don't eat at the Spur and pay at the Wimpy!