

No New Commandment Tithing From a Biblical Point of View

Due to the numerous inquiries, I decided to illuminate the subject of “tithing” from the viewpoint of the Holy Scripture. In the New Testament there is no explicit commandment given to the church for tithing; however, there are references made therein that should not be disregarded. The LORD Jesus said, *“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.”* (Mt. 23:23).

With this the LORD expressed in all clarity that one should practice righteousness, mercy, and faithfulness, but one should not overlook giving. According to Lev. 27:30 and other Scriptures in the Old Testament, it was self-evident for the devout Jews to consecrate a tenth of all things to the LORD. Even as early as over 400 years before the introduction of the law, Abraham gave tithes out of gratitude. So tithing does not go back to the law, but was later adopted into the law.

The following is written in Gen. 14:18-20: *“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”*

As King and Priest, the faithful LORD met Abraham with bread and wine to sup with him after He had given him the victory over the heathen kings. Out of thankfulness, Abraham gave Him a tenth part of all. Melchizedek was the King of righteousness and the King of peace in person (Heb. 7:1-4).

Tithes were already paid voluntarily before the law was given; with the law it became mandatory so that the priestly tribe of Levi could conduct the services in the temple. The *offering* was a special contribution of ev-

everything the people had; in this case, it was designated for extra expenditures in connection with furnishing the temple (Ex. 25:1-4; Ex. 35:4-5; Ex. 36:3-7). The tribe of Levi did not get land as an inheritance like the other tribes; instead, they received tithes from the other tribes as their inheritance. The Levitical priests had to then tender the tenth part of the tithes they had received as an offering (Num. 18).

In the New Testament it is no longer mandatory. Therefore, no one should make a law and command the people what they should do. Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Philippians (4:10-20) about giving and receiving: “*Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*” In 2. Cor. 9:7 he stated, “*Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*” A special offering is something different. In that regard, the instruction was as follows: “*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him ...*”

Whoever reads the first chapters in the Book of Acts, in particular chapter 2:43-47 and chapter 4:32-37, gains a deep insight into the devotion of the believers in the early Church. They were of one heart and one soul; no one considered the things he possessed to be his exclusive property. There we read, “*... for as many as were possessors of lands (not a vegetable garden) or houses (not a little home) sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet ...*” Also in this case we must pay close attention to every word.

People are mistaken when they say, “Every believer at that time sold his house and all that he possessed.” That is absolutely not the truth, for they gathered in the houses for the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42+46). Therefore, it literally states, “*... for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them ...*” It was clear to them that one needs only **one** house and not several houses to live in it. So they sold all the things that were not needed for their personal use. It has to be empha-

sised that the apostles did not force anyone to do so. Incidentally, the expectation of the promised Return of Jesus Christ was so great and alive that the earthly realm was not their main focus; instead, they were freeing themselves from it.

Therefore, it also says in Acts 20:35, *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”* In 2. Cor. 9:8 we read, *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work ...”* Children of God have a desire to express their gratitude to the LORD for all that He has done for them in a very practical way so that still others can be reached through the proclamation.

Abraham was blessed because he was in possession of the promise. There is a direct connection between giving, possessing the promise, and the blessing. The sequence is promise, faith, blessing. Abraham had received the promise and experienced the victory of God over the heathen kings. Then followed the communion with bread and wine, the blessing, and the giving of the tithe.

In this regard, the Scripture says, *“And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.”* (Heb. 7:8-9). *“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* (Gal. 3:29). Although the people who receive the tithes here are mortal, as we just read, it is nevertheless the LORD God to Whom they are given. HE has placed the ministries into the church, and His servants are also supposed to be sustained thereby: *“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? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”* (1. Cor. 9:13-14).

Even Brother Branham pointed out several times in his sermons that ministers of God should receive their

living expenses from tithes. He further mentioned that he personally was also paying tithes unto the LORD and that true believers are still doing it today. When it comes to his divine ministry, it is very remarkable and certainly no coincidence that especially in Mal. 3 we find mention of tithes and offerings. Therein we at first read about the promise of the preparer of the way and prophet who was to appear before the first coming of the LORD, as we see it fulfilled in the four gospels through the ministry of John the Baptist. At the end, we find the announcement for the prophet who was to come before the great and dreadful day of the LORD and through whom all things were to be restored to their rightful order. It was further confirmed by our LORD and Saviour in Mt. 17:11 and Mk. 9:12. By His grace, all of us have been granted the opportunity to directly partake in this ministry and its continuation.

Every individual should, with prayer, read Mal. 3 and let it speak to him. In reference to tithing and offering, it states therein: *“For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. 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? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 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.”* (Vv. 6-10).

In the Scripture cited above, the “THUS SAITH THE LORD” occurs twice. For us it is not about what people have to say on this subject, but about the “THUS SAITH THE LORD.” Every time we come across this phrase, we are made aware of the seriousness of the matter that is addressed. One can also not make the argument that this Word is written in the Old Testament. Many tend to appropriate only the promises from the Old Testament to themselves and leave the rest unto others. However,

the Word of God is not suitable for discussions or arguments. All things were, after all, announced by God in the Old Testament – the Redeemer and the entire Plan of salvation – and find their fulfilment in the course of the New Testament.

The LORD says, *“For I am the LORD, I change not ...”* Amen, God cannot change; He is the same for ever. HE reproaches His people, *“Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them.”* HE urges them, *“Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.”* The people ask, *“Wherein shall we return?”* God’s answer is this: *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?”* We notice the seriousness in these words. The LORD accuses His people of betraying Him. HE rebukes His Own who ignorantly ask, *“Wherein have we robbed thee?”* His answer follows, like an indictment: *“In tithes and offerings.”* It should move all of us deeply when God rebukes His children and accuses His people of betraying Him. The matter seems to be more serious than many assume at first glance. Then He utters the words that shake us to the core: *“Ye are cursed with a curse.”*

Who would ever want to be cursed? Yet the holy eyes of God were focused on those who deprived Him of tithes and offerings. All people wish to experience the blessing and want to see the promises fulfilled; however, it is possible that there is still an obstacle. Perhaps the root of all evil has not yet been uprooted (1. Tim. 6:10). They wonder why they are not making any real progress in their spiritual lives. Some think that the curse might date back to their ancestors. They start researching back to the third and fourth generation and do not recognise that it can actually be on them on account of their own disobedience. In the eyes of God, disobedience is as wicked as the sin of witchcraft (1. Sam. 15:23). In the same verse it states that self-will is as iniquity and idolatry. Nothing else is as imperative as submitting our own will into the Will of God. To simply pray, *“Thy will be done ...”* is of no use to anyone; we must strive for complete obedience in the Will of God.

Back then, the LORD had to reproach them: "... *ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*" Nevertheless, He immediately shows the way out: "*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.*"

Here the LORD extends the offer that we may put Him to the test to see whether He keeps His Word. God keeps His Word when we do what He says! In that passage He repeatedly emphasises LORD the seriousness of the matter with the "THUS SAITH THE LORD." The LORD ties the promise to the offer that we should put Him to the test and see if He then will not open the windows of heaven for us and pour out a blessing upon us that there shall not be room enough to receive it. After all, every one of us wants the blessing of God that is beyond all measure. The LORD Himself showed us the way also in this matter. Of course, obedience is a requirement for us in all other areas as well.

As the LORD God said Himself, the tithe belongs into the storehouse – always there, where the food, the living, revealed Word, is given out. That is how it is written. No one has the right to manage it at his own discretion. According to the Word of the LORD, the tithes do not belong solely to the pastor. The ministers of the Word give out the spiritual food and from that receive no more than they need for living expenses. Brother Branham did not say, "Pay your tithes to the pastor." On August 4, 1960, in the sermon "As an Eagle ...," he said, "Pay your tithes and the pastor will be paid." That is, indeed, a remarkable difference. He made the following statement on July 23, 1960, in the sermon "Speak ..." and also on other occasions: "I get a salary from my church: one hundred dollars a week." No preacher is entitled to open up a source of income for himself (1. Tim. 6:3-10), especially not with tithes, in order to get rich by it, because the storehouse will then be lacking those funds. When someone is truly given a calling and sent by the LORD, then the following words of the Master, which He addressed to His disciples when He sent them, are

equally applicable: *“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses ...”* (Mt. 10:9). Paul reminded Timothy of the sound doctrine of our LORD Jesus Christ and then wrote: *“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare ...”* (1. Tim. 6).

We believe that now, at the end of the time of grace, all things in everyone’s personal lives and in the Church are being brought back into their rightful order before God and that the complete restoration in all areas is, indeed, taking place. As it was with the first Christians who believed the pure Word of God and carried the divine love for the truth in their hearts, that is how it will be once again at the end among the true children of God. We belong to the LORD with everything that He has given us and are only stewards of what was entrusted unto us. Dear Brothers and Sisters, precious friends, we only have a very short time left on this earth. Let us first seek the kingdom of God, and all the other things we might have need of will be granted unto us. Let us give cheerfully and generously, not out of obligation, but simply because of gratitude to the LORD.

Since the beginning of the sixties, we have experienced how the ever-faithful God takes care of His Church and His Work through His Own. In over forty years of this missionary work, God has not only abundantly bestowed His blessings upon us in the spiritual realm, but has sufficiently supplied for our earthly needs as well. Our LORD has always provided for us – when we purchased the first piece of land in the early seventies, upon which we then built the simple sanctuary, and also when we had to acquire the neighbouring property in the mid-seventies in order to construct the mission buildings with offices, a print shop, mailrooms, etc. – HE has given in excess of our prayers and beyond our understanding. All of it was mainly accomplished by brothers and sisters from German-speaking countries. As for my part, I have carried out the commission that the LORD Jesus Himself gave me on April 2, 1962, throughout all those years, even until today; He has taken care of the

rest. Those acquainted with the end-time message, with the new beginning for the church which He Himself established, and with the missionary work all know that I never spoke about money. Not once in over forty years have I preached about tithing, and only one time did I call for a special offering in the local church in Krefeld for the construction of the sanctuary in 1973.

The entire Word for this end time is in the *storehouse* and is given out worldwide as the spiritual food. For those who genuinely love the LORD Jesus, it is a privilege to take part in the distribution of the food and the spreading of the end-time message. Whoever truly belongs to the Church partakes in all the things that are connected with a God-ordained ministry. By now, in co-operation with the responsible brethren in other places, we attend to people in more than 150 countries throughout the world, with free literature as well as audio- and videocassettes, CDs and DVDs, and even through TV programs in over 20 languages. By God's foreordination, it has become one of the farthest-reaching missionary works on earth, for this last message, the everlasting gospel, must reach the ends of the earth (Mt. 24:14; Rev. 14:6; a .o.).

I hope that everyone perceives this simple exposition, presented with a pure heart and based on the Word of God, in the right way. It was difficult for me to write about this subject, for many believers are giving to the LORD whatever they can, oftentimes far more than their tithes. May all take from this exposition what applies to them and then simply read the rest. May the blessing of the Almighty God rest upon all of you and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our God and Father, repay and reward you richly through Jesus Christ, our LORD. Above all, I ask you for your support by praying for me, for the elders, and for all the servants in His household.

By His commission

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bro. Frank". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.