

“PROVISION & PROSPERITY”

Malachi 3:7-11

7. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' 8. "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. 9. You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me. 10. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. 11. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.

What is a Tithe?

Tithe comes from the word tenth. So to give a tithe is to give 10 percent of one's income. (*Leviticus 27:32*)

What is an Offering?

An offering is anything above the 10 percent and that amount is determined by the giver. (*Luke 6:38*)

1) The first thing that we see in this scripture is that we can rob God in our giving.

You and I should give to support the work of the Lord.

Let's take a look at tithing.

So why does God ask us to give 10% to Him? First of all, God doesn't need our money, but what tithing does is teaches us how to keep God first in our lives and to be an unselfish people. Tithing was created for our benefit.

Tithing is a command that comes with a promise of blessing. God says He will open up the windows of heaven and pour out blessing upon our life. (*Malachi 3:10*)

You and I should honor God with the first fruits of our increase. (*Proverbs 3:9*)

“Tithe is an obligation to give and the offering is an opportunity to give.”

Let's take a look at the offering.

An offering is anything above the tithe. Not only did the people rob God in their tithes, but they also robbed Him in their offering. We should also set aside an offering to give unto the Lord.

The Apostle Paul encouraged voluntary giving or freewill offering and also described such giving as obedience.

II Corinthians 9:13 - Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke 1 out of every 6 verses deals with money. Of the 29 parables Christ told, 16 deal with a person and his money.

Quote - Martin Luther

"I have tried to keep things in my hands and lost them all, but what I have given into God's hands I still possess."

What are some things that can hinder you and I from giving?

a) **Financial Challenge** - Some people say they just can't afford to tithe. This is the most common reason that people will hold back on their tithe, but the truth of the matter is we cannot afford to not tithe.

b) **Faith Challenge** - In reality it is not a lack of finances that hold you and I back from giving, but it is a lack of faith. We wonder if I put God first will He really meet all my needs?

2) The second thing that we see is disobedience can bring a curse on our finances.

Malachi 3:9

"Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation."

Failure to honor God in our finances can also be a hindrance to our spiritual growth, so let's give so we can grow.

Many people with financial problems fail to do the right thing, and that is to put God first.

3) The third thing that this scripture points out is the blessings of obedience.

Malachi 3:10

“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].”

God has promised to pour out His blessing upon those that are obedient in their tithes and offerings.

He even said that we could test Him in this and see if He will not open up the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing upon our life.

God is Jehovah Jireh that means He is our provider.

Philippians 4:19

“says and my God will supply all your need according to His riches in Glory by Christ Jesus.”

Matthew 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

4) The fourth area this portion of scripture points out is the promise of protection.

Malachi 3:11

“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.”

Someone has wisely said, “You will either give your tithe to God or end up giving it to the doctor or the mechanic. God always gets His tithe!” The choice as to whom you give your tithes is yours.

Faithfulness to giving of our tithes and offerings arranges favorable circumstances upon our lives.

Psalms 37:25

“I have been young, and [now] am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”