

Q. You say that Christians don't need to tithe. But Malachi 3:7-12 says that not tithing is robbing God. How do you respond?

A. The question is whether this applies to Christians.

Malachi 3:7-12 says,

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. 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. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

This passage is often used to try to prove that Christians should tithe, that if they don't tithe they are robbing God, and that if they will tithe God will bless them and the nation. But to whom is this written? It is written to the Jews, the only people to whom tithing was given. As I point out in my article, "What the Bible Says About Tithing and Christian Giving" (<http://www.wordofhisgrace.org/giving.html>), the tithe laws were part of the Old Covenant. One of the places we read these laws stated is Leviticus 27:30-34. In the context of these tithe laws, in verse 34, we read, "These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai." The Bible never states that the tithe laws were given to anyone else. The

Old Covenant has vanished away (see Hebrews 8). Christians are under the New Covenant, and the New Covenant gives no tithing laws.

Looking again on the passage quoted from Malachi, notice that it says in verse 9, "Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." This is an obvious reference to the nation of the Jews. They were robbing God by not obeying the Old Covenant law of tithing that God had given them. The next verse says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house." What storehouse? This is talking about the place in the temple in Jerusalem where the tithe of the produce of the land was stored. It says, "that there may be meat [or food] in mine house." As Leviticus 27:30 says, they were to tithe "the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree." This was brought to the temple because it was the inheritance of the Levites: "But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance" (Numbers 18:24).

The Old Covenant was made only with the children of Israel. The temple was destroyed in AD 70. We have no Levites today. It is very wrong for people to lift passages from the Old Testament and indiscriminately try to apply them to Christians. Don't be deceived by people who either do not have a good understanding of the Scriptures or are trying to guarantee their income by claiming a percentage of yours. As I said in the article previously mentioned, the Bible tells Christians that they have a responsibility to provide for their families and God wants us to give to those who faithfully teach the truth, and to the poor in the Christian assembly, and to our neighbor in need. But we are to do so voluntarily, freely, and cheerfully.

It is common for people to think that if they have a trial, especially if it is a financial trial, it is because they have not tithed or given enough. But the Bible tells us, "There hath no temptation [the word means trial or testing] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13). We are tested, but God will see us through it. He gives us everything that He knows we need for our good. He does this freely. We cannot buy God's favor. Christians do not rob God by not tithing because tithing is not for Christians.

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