



SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 28, 2021 | PASTOR JONATHAN BARBER

MESSAGE TITLE: FAITHFUL IN THE WORK; MALACHI SERIES

MESSAGE SERIES/OCCASION: 2021 THEME: HAGGAI/ZECHARIAH/MALACHI

MESSAGE TEXT: MALACHI 3:7-12

THEME VERSE:

Haggai 2:4 *Yet now be strong... and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:*

TITLE: Will a Man Rob God?

TEXT:

Malachi 3:1-18 *Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. (2) But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: (3) And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. (4) Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.*

(5) And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. (6) For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

(7) 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?

(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 delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.

(13) Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? (14) Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? (15) And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. (16) Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. (17) And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (18) Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Overview:

INTRODUCTION:

Outline:

- **The Problem**—robbing God of tithes and offerings
- **The Penalty**—cursed by God
- **The Prerequisite**—bring the tithes to God
- **The Provision**—blessed beyond measure by God

SO THEN, IS TITHING BIBLICAL?

1) Tithing is for us

The word tithe(s) is mentioned in the Bible 38 times. The word is found in the following books:

Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, 2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Amos, Malachi, Matthew, Luke, and Hebrews

The word, “bring,” is used in every case except 3. The 2 instances of tithing that occurred “pre-Law” (Abram and Jacob), and the Pharisee in Luke 18. All other instances of tithing in the Bible refer to the tithes being “brought,” not “given.” Why? You cannot give what isn’t yours; you simply return it.

The Tithe and *The Principle of the First* go hand-in-hand. What is one of the major themes of Malachi? **God wants to be first!** Which lamb did His people tithe to Him? **The first!** How much faith did this require—to give the first lamb when you haven’t even gotten the other lamb yet!

Why did God accept Able’s offering and reject Cain’s?

- Perhaps it was because Able’s sacrifice was a blood-sacrifice as opposed to Cain’s. However, elsewhere in Scripture, God *does* accept tithes of grain, crops, and food.
- Perhaps it was the heart with which they offered. God sees the heart and can accept or reject an offering accordingly as we’ve already seen in Malachi and with other of the prophets.

- Or perhaps, it simply comes down to the principle of the first. Cain brought *an* offering, but Able is said to have brought his firstlings.

Genesis 4:3 *And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. (4) And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: (5) But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*

This brings up the question, Which tenth is the tithe?

- **The first and the best**
- **After all, anything else loses the picture.**

Tithing was around hundreds of years before the Law

Illustration – Abraham

Genesis 14.18-20 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.*

Illustration - Jacob

Genesis 28:22 *And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*

Tithing was commanded after the Law

Technically, the time of the Law was from Moses to John the Baptist:

John 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

Luke 16:16 *The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*

...yet Jesus, who came after John the Baptist in a clearly distinct time frame, instructed people to tithe

Luke 11:42 *But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave*

2) There is a biblical warning against not tithing

Malachi 3:8-9 *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.*

Explanation: Just as God blesses so He curses. His blessing is His favor, and includes many wonderful things. His cursing is His disfavor, and includes many awful things. Just as with God's blessing, so His cursing impacts your life far and wide.

Deuteronomy 28:15 *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: (16) Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. (17) Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. (18) Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. (19) Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*

3) There is great blessing in tithing

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.*

Compare with:

Luke 6:38 *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

a. God will rebuke the devourer

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.*

b. You will learn to fear the Lord

Deuteronomy 14. 22-23 *Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. (23) And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.*

c. You will learn to count your blessings

Leviticus 27:32 *And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.*

CONCLUSION:

What is the real reason people do not want to tithe?

- **Control**—they want absolute control of where their money goes, how much of it goes, and when it goes.
- **Fear/Unbelief**—they are afraid that they won't have enough; that God won't provide. They feel they can't afford to tithe.
- **Greed**—some just want a little bit more, and *then* they'll tithe.
- **Debt**—there are those who are so strapped financially, paying high-interest on multiple credit cards, auto loans, and student loans, that they don't have it. Again, they don't have it because they don't tithe first.
- **Theological misinterpretation**—They would conclude that “grace giving” is New Testament, and “tithing” is Old Testament.

This flies in the face of what stewardship is all about in the first place. I am not in control; He is!

Your Choice:

Malachi 3:10—*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 wants to *prove***
 - His sufficiency in your life
 - He can be trusted
 - He can bless and provide better than you can
- **God wants to *pour***
 - out His blessings so that you cannot even receive it all
 - blessings from heaven; not just manufacturings of earth

Review:

- **The Plea**—return to God and He'll return to you
- **The Problem**—robbing God of tithes and offerings
- **The Penalty**—cursed by God
- **The Prerequisite**—bring the tithes to God
- **The Provision**—blessed beyond measure by God

