

Shooting Straight With God

Malachi 1:1-14

Mk. 12:17

Intro? A.-Spiritual Climate Of Malachi's Time:

- 1-Last book of the Old Testament
- 2-400 years before Christ's birth
- 3-Remnant restored to Palestine
- 4-House of God re-established
- 5-Burden of Malachi---THE LOVE OF GOD
- 6-Scofield Note---"But their worship was formal & insincere."

(Giving)

I.-THE LOVE OF GOD FOR ISRAEL

A.-I Have Loved You (1:1-4):

The Love Of God

- 1-As proven by His care for them
- 2-As proven by His promises to Them
- 3-As proven by His preference of them over Esau & his heritage
- 4-As proven by His protection of them from Nebuchadnezzar's ravishing

B.-His Divine Favor (1:5):

The Favor Of God

- 1-They would see others suffer His indignation
- 2-They would say, "The Lord be magnified from the borders of Israel"

Grace Here; Judgment There

I I.*THE SINS OF GOD'S CHILDREN:(1:6-14):

A.-Rebel Hearts:

- 1-But their response was merely rote formalism
- 2-They had no HEART for God
- 3-Didn't recognize His grace, but abused it!
 - 1:2--"WHEREIN hast thou loved us?"
 - 1:6--"WHEREIN have we despised thy Name?"
 - 1:7--"WHEREIN have we polluted Thee?"
 - 2:11, 14--"dealt treacherously...profaned the holiness of the Lord"---"Yet ye say, WHEREFORE?"
 - 2:17--"Yet ye say, WHEREIN have we wearied Him?"
 - 3:8--"But ye say, WHEREIN have we robbed thee?"
- 4-Honor was not given to God:
 - a son honors his father
 - a servant honors his master
 - Since God is their Father; where is His honor?
 - Since God is their Master; where is His fear?
 - Prov. 1:7
 - Isa. 1:3
 - Why?????--Because their hearts were proud & rebellious
 - Because they lived for self & not God

B.-Rebel's Actions:

- 1-Despised the Name of God (1:6)
- 2-Offered polluted bread (meat or flesh) of peace offering to God (1:7-8)
 - considered the ordinances of God contemptible
 - offer blind, lame, & sick sacrifices
 - 1:12
- 3-Then expect priests to pray God to be gracious to them (1:9)
- 4-What a CONTRAST to Abraham---Gen. 14:17-20

3-WHEN--2 Chron. 31:5 "And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly."

--1 Cor. 16:2 "Upon the first day of the week..."

4-HOW--2 Cor. 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver"

5-WHAT--2 Cor. 8:12 "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

6-HOW MUCH--2 Cor. 9:6 "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

7-UNTO WHOM--Ex. 35:5 "Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord; Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of (or for) the Lord..."

--Mt. 2:11 "...And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

Concl 1:

"The Bible refers to PRAYER about 500 times, to FAITH less than 500 times, and to MATERIAL POSSESSIONS ABOUT 1000 TIMES. Sixteen of Jesus' 38 parables were clearly concerned with stewardship of material possessions. We wonder if anyone ever said to Jesus 'Lord, you emphasize money too much'? Since the love of money is the root of ALL EVIL God knew that leaving it up to the individual's 'WHAT I FEEL LIKE GIVING' would be most dangerous. That must be why He ordained that the first tenth was to be taken out for Him. And best of all God proves today that 9/10 plus GOD'S BLESSINGS do equal more and go farther than the whole ten-tenths. And TITHERS by the thousands will testify that they get along better financially than they did when they used the Devil's 'give-what-you-feel like giving' plan. DO YOU BELIEVE that Christ expects less of you than of Moses, that the New Testament of love expects less than the Old Testament of law; that a Christian can honestly give less for the salvation of the world than the Jew gave for the sake of Palestine; that a Christian can be more selfish under love than under law;

INTRO:

A. God Does NOT Need Your Help:

— But you need His!

①

1-THAT'S RIGHT

2-God has no need for anything from man; in fact, it is impossible to give to God except indirectly

→ by ministering to the needs of PEOPLE

3-Stanza 1 of # 248

My Father is rich in houses and lands;
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands;
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full--He has riches untold."

4-Giving is not for God's benefit, but FOR OUR OWN!

5-Paul says: "God that made the world and all thing therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven & earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He need any thing, seeing He giveth to all life, & breath, & all things." (Acts 17:24-25)

6-God knows that the only way to make His people like Himself is to develop in them HIS OWN UNSELFISHNESS. With longsuffering & patience He waits for His shortsighted people, his visionless children, to learn to give. Therefore, one of the primary processes of transforming men into His likeness is by STEWARDSHIP !!

7-As in every other phase of christian living, the Bible sets forth the principles by which we may govern our stewardship:

* --For Israel: The TITHES and offerings

* --For Church: GRACE GIVING (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9)

B.-The Matter Of 'Giving' & 'Money'?

1-Delicate & unpopular subject in most churches

--Preacher is "meddling" when he preaches on the subject of MONEY

--Or, maybe he is "bucking for a raise" for himself

2-Often the subject is disguised as "STEWARDSHIP", which is less innocuous and more "spiritual" in tone

* 3-Somehow christians feel this is not a proper subject for instruction and exhortation by their pastor

→ 4-PREACHER GETS AFFECTED with reluctance

5-Seen in my record of preaching on this area;

4 messages in 8 years at Westbrae. — One every Two years.

C.-Our Message Today — TITHING:

1-Outline--I.-Tithing Before The Law

II.-Tithing Under The Law

III.-Tithing Abused

IV.-Tithing Teaches Principles

2-PROP:--Know what the Bible teaches on the subject

--Learn some PRINCIPLES OF GIVING

• Lay a groundwork for the even-more-important message on GRACE GIVING next week.

CONCL

We need to learn principles of giving from God's word, to govern our practice by those principles.

3-DEF. == "Tenth"; "The tenth part of the annual produce of agriculture, etc., due or paid as a tax for the support of the priesthood, religious institutions, etc." (P. 2000, The New Century Dictionary)

4-Therefore in most people's view a TITHER is one who pays or gives a tenth of his income for religious purposes.

NOT SO!

I.-TITHING BEFORE THE LAW!

A.-Tithing's Origins!

1-Bible is SILENT on this---"Just when and where the idea arose of making the tenth the rate for paying tribute to rulers and of offering gifts as a religious duty cannot be determined." (Pictorial Dictionary Of The Bible, P. 857)

*2-Incorporated into the CODE OF HAMMURABI, a Babylonian ruler
-Some have dated him 200 to 300 years before Abraham until recently
-Now thought by many to have been 200 after Abraham ⁴¹⁵

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3-Tithing was a WIDELY KNOWN PRINCIPLE !!

4-HOW was it so known??



***-Not a strictly "Jewish" institution at all
-Part of the original revelation of God to man Perhaps
-Like the institutions of marriage & the Sabbath but not recorded in Scripture

B.-Tithing's Observances!

1-By Abraham -Gen. 14:17-20

- Over 4000 years ago
- Tithes given by Abraham to MELCHIZEDEK
- Given out of even that which was temporarily in Abraham's possession
- An ACT OF WORSHIP to the Lord
- "Tithes of all" == "1/10th off the top of the heap"
- Response of an obedient heart that realized his stewardship of all things
- Confirmed in Heb. 7 also

2-By Jacob -Grandson of Abraham

Gen. 28:20-22

- Aftermath of a dream: Jacob thought of it as a NIGHTMARE
- Vow of dedication of HIMSELF to God
- Visible evidence of that dedication was in "of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."
- Money (or giving) is such a practical thing that it reveals our willingness or unwillingness to trust God." William Ward Ayer

YES

C.-Tithes AND Offerings!

- 1-Tithe was basic and expected
- 2-Not called an "OFFERING", but a "PAYING OF TITHES"
- 3-Offerings were in addition!!
-Burnt offerings of dedication (Gen. 4:3; 8:20-21)
-Also as acts of worship
- 4-Evidence of LOVE for God was shown in going beyond the tithes. which were required

II. - TITHING UNDER THE LAW:

③

A. Areas Of The Tithe:

1-Lev. 27:30, 32

2-Included - Tithe of the land

- Tithe of the seed of the land

- Tithe of the fruit of the tree

- Tithe of the herd or of the flock

- Related to an agriculturally oriented society

3-"And all the tithe... is the LORD'S"

4-He is entitled to this

5-What had previously been practiced was now incorporated into the pronouncements of LAW by Moses as God revealed this to him - Now REQUIRED!

B. Amounts Of The Tithe:

1-Basic, or FIRST Tithe

-- 10% for the Levites & out of that 10% for priest

-- Num. 18:21, 24 (De. 12:19; 14:27)

* Comparable in N.T.

** 1 Cor. 9:14 - "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

** Luke 10:7 - "...for the laborer is worthy of his hire."

2-Two percent penalty if presented in money instead of in the goods (Lev. 27:31)

3-SECOND tithe - For feasts & care of the temple

- Deut. 14:22-26

4-THIRD tithe - Taken only every 3rd year

- 10% in 3 years

- 3 1/3% per year average

- This was for the POOR FUND

- Deut. 14:28-29

SUMMARY 5-TOTAL - 10% Tithe for Levites

10% Tithe for Temple

3 1/3% for POOR FUND

23 1/3% each year

2% penalty if not delivered as goods to Temple

25 1/3% ANNUAL GIVING

6-If one wants to be a TRUE TITHER, let him face that!

C. Abundance ABOVE The Tithe:

1-"AND offerings" (Mal. 3:8)

2-There were, under the Law of Moses, at least 12 other ADDITIONAL offerings to be brought on different occasions - FIRSTLINGS of the beasts (Lev. 27:26)

- Any DEVOTED THING (Lev. 27:28-29)

3-These could easily bring the total to 30% or more in a given year

D. Avenue Of The Tithe:

1-Not offered in one's own local community

2-Not even later when Synagogues were erected in the various communities

* → 3-ONLY ONE PLACE !!!!!--In the "Storehouse", or Granaries

-Associated with the **TEMPLE in JERUSALEM**

(4)

→ **2 Chron. 31:11-12**--"Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the LORD; & they prepared them, & brought in the offerings & the tithes & the dedicated things faithfully..."

→ **Neh. 10:38**--"And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God to the chambers, into the treasure house."

→ **Mal. 3:10** ^{bring ye all the tithes} ~~into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house...~~

4-Tithing as a matter of law was related to **ISRAEL** as a nation and to **PALESTINE** as their land

* 5-Only possible to truly tithe **"IN THE LAND"**, and **not** when in captivity for their disobediences

* 6-**Storehouse** and the **local Church** are **not synonymous**. This was a **"CONVENTION SYSTEM"** of centralized finance that only works in a **Theocracy** where **God** is in control !!

NB 7-No Scriptural text in the N.T. to lay this **"STOREHOUSE"** idea onto Christians.

E. Attitude Of The Tithe:

- 1-**"Freewill"** and **"voluntary"** - Some **25** different passages
- Ex. 25:2--"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering."

Materials for the TABERNACLE

→ **Ex. 35:4-5** (**TURN TO IT AND READ IT**)

- It is **commanded**
- It is from the **saved only** - **ISRAEL**
- It is **from the willing** - **"a willing heart"**
- It is for the Lord - **"a contribution to the LORD"**

→ **RESULT** - **Ex. 36:5-7**

- 4-Remember--It is **not lawful** to receive offerings from the **UNSAVED**
- Prov. 15:8--"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD:..."
- ILLUS** - Lamar & Joyce Elliot in Spring Branch

F. Antecedence Of The Tithe:

1-Matter of **PRIORITY**

* 2-God is to have **(first place)** in the believer's finances *

→ 3-Prov. 3:9--"Honor the LORD with thy substance, & with the **(firstfruits)** of all thine increase:"

4-Even though **God is not "PRESSING YOU"** like some of your creditors may be, the believer is to **"shoot straight"** with his Lord

5-F. O. SEAMANS QUOTE:

Some say, **"I will give all that I can afford."** What do they mean? They must mean **"all that I can afford AFTER something else is paid, after some other claim or claims are met. What claims, or whose claims, then are being put first?"**

Practically, it means that God will be given as much as is convenient **AFTER** every desire is gratified. It puts God after the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, the doctor, the tax collector, the showman, the school, the picnic, and even social entertainment.

* * **GOD DEMANDS FIRST PLACE.** He will have that place or no

place in the human life, leaving that person 'without God and without hope in the world.' **HIS PORTION** is to be the **FIRSTFRUITS** 'In the beginning God', or we are godless and ungodly. But the "ALL I CAN AFFORD" formula **puts God last.** ! **

(5)

G. Aftermaths Of The Tithe:

1- **Israel** under law was to receive **material blessings** as the evidence of spiritual vitality.

→ **Prov. 3:10** -- "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall **burst out** with new wine."

Mal. 3:10-12

* 2- The **christian** today has **NO SUCH PROMISED aftermath** of **prosperity** in this world's goods for his tithing

III. TITHING ABUSED:

A. Abused In O. T. Days:

1- **General accusation** - **Mal. 3:7**

2- **Specific example** - **Mal. 3:8-10a**

3- **Priests & Levites** had **no other means of support**, since God had not given them a landed inheritance

4- Decline in the people's faithfulness was considered to be a **ROBBERING OF GOD**, **GREATEST THEFT POSSIBLE!**

5- O.T. closes with a **castigation** of the people of God for their **FINANCIAL FAITHLESSNESS** **by ISRAEL**

* 6- Someone has wisely said: "You **can't keep right** with God **spiritually** if you don't keep right with Him **financially** **TRY IT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR !!** Cheat him out of a dollar and see what it will do to your friendship!"

B. Abused In Jesus' Day:

1- **Many** still were **tax** in their observance of **the tithe**

2- **PHARISEES**, by contrast, were **most scrupulous**

→ **MT. 23:23** -- "Woe unto you, scribes & Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye **pay tithe** of mint & of anise & cummin, **and have omitted** the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone."

→ **Jesus commended** their **tithing**

→ **But** He added that **other duties** were **not to be neglected !!**

→ **Tithe** without **LOVE** is without any profit before God

→ These Pharisees were **HYPOCRITES**

3- Jesus had **more** to say about **MONEY** than any other subject. **16** of Jesus' **38** parables deal with **STEWARDSHIP**

CONCLUSION — TITHING TEACHES PRINCIPLES:

A. Purposes Of Giving:

1- **Support** of Levites, **Priests**, **Temple** and the poor

2- To **show** a man's **dependence upon God**. **More giving** --- **less to live on**. **Less money** --- **More need of God's supply**.

3- Law of the **Tithe** taught **STEWARDSHIP** to God's people

4- Brought **God** into a person's **everyday affairs** of life.

B. - Priorities Of Giving:

1- **Workers** for God - **THEN**; Priests & Levites

- **NOW**; Pastors, Missionaries, Evangelists, Bible teachers

PERSONNEL

2- **WORKS** for God - **PROPERTY**

- **THEN**; Temple & Synagogue were all there were & they were in the land

- **NOW** ** **LOCAL CHURCH** should be **TOPS** on your list, as long as it is fundamental & vitally active

** Fundamental missions works

** Biblically rooted schools

** **Radio** Broadcasts (Back To The Bible, Radio Bible Cl

** Printing & Publishing

** Camps & conferences

** **WHERE YOU GET YOUR SPIRITUAL FOOD**, but be very careful for there are **doctrinally weak, compromisers** in practices and evangelical swindlers all about us!!!

3- The **poor & needy** - **THEN**; **Poor Fund** was divinely instituted

- **NOW**

** "Elders Fund" for those **in the Church**

** Largely this field has been **usurped by the government** (we support it by taxes) **WELFARE**

** Rescue Missions

** Rehabilitation centers for youths, narcotics, alcoholics, etc.

** **MAKE SURE YOUR GIFTS FOR WORKS OF THIS KIND BEAR A TESTIMONY FOR THE SAVIOR** & are not just "humanitarian"

4- Dare **not neglect** YOUR **OWN FAMILY** (1 Tim. 5:8)

5- Look at **ALL YOU ARE** and **ALL YOU HAVE** as a totality of your **stewardship**

- Your talents

- Your time

- Your treasure

- Your testimony

▷ **All elements**

ED MAHLER

- **1 Cor. 6:19-20** -- "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's!"

6- **THEUS** - When Queen Victoria asked a certain successful businessman to be her ambassador, he said: **"I'D LIKE TO, BUT WHAT ABOUT MY BUSINESS?"**

The Queens' answer was kindly, but firm: **"YOU LOOK AFTER THE BUSINESS OF ENGLAND, AND I WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOUR BUSINESS WILL NOT FAIL."**

Isn't that **what Jesus promised us in Matt. 6:33**?

7- In that light ask yourself **WHY** God chose the **23 1/3%** annual tithe as a **minimum**. Can you answer???

8- Because **LIFE** for the Israelites centered around the **things of God**, because they were the **PEOPLE OF GOD**.

C. - Practicalities Of Giving:

1- Giving is **BIBLICAL**, and it is expected of spiritual believers

2- Giving is **PROPORTIONATE** to your income

- Not a "flat & fixed amount"
 - Flexible as income increases
 - Increasing as income rises
 - ENLARGING as your responsibilities shrink over the years to a larger % of your income.
- 3-Giving is a **BAROMETER** for reading **your spiritual health**
- 4-**ILLUS**-Someone has said: "There are **3 kinds of givers**-- the **flint**, the **sponge**, and the **honeycomb**."
- To get anything out of a **FLINT**, you must hammer it and then you get only chips & sparks
 - To get anything out of a **SPONGE**, you must squeeze it, and the more you squeeze, the more you will get, but you'll never fully drain it.
 - BUT** the **HONEYCOMB** just overflows with its own sweetness
 - Some people are stingy & hard; they will give nothing away if they can help it. Others are good natured; they yield to pressure, and the more they are pressed, the more they will give. Oh, how few they be who **DELIGHT** in giving without being asked at all; and of them the Scripture says: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."
- 5-What does **YOUR GIVING RECORD** show of **your LOVE** for your Lord?
- 6-Matt. 10:8--"Freely ye have received, freely give."
2 Cor. 8:7-11 **TURN**
- 7-Can we **learn this**--Giving is the **FRUIT OF LOVE**, **not** the **PRODUCT OF THE LAW**!

Westbrae--2/21/71--#316--"All For Jesus"

OKBC - 10/26/86 --#248--"A Child Of The King"

Grace Gospel Ch. --#341--"I Gave My Life For Thee"

Hilltop Bapt. Ch. - SS - 2/1/04 + 9/27/09 - Men's Class

Harper Heights Bapt. Ch. - 2/4/07

the first, the second and the honeycomb.