

blessing to lose if you do not take Him at His word, but if you believe Him the windows of heaven will pour out a blessing upon you.

Stories from the Blessing of Tithing

There are many great businessmen who have ascribed their prosperity to being faithful in returning to God the tithe. John D. Rockefeller began tithing when he was earning only \$3.50 a week. H.J. Heinz of “57 varieties”, H.P. Crowell of Quaker Oats, J.L. Kraft of Kraft cheese, F.W. Woolworth of the well known Woolworth stores, William Wrigley of chewing gum, William Colgate of toothpaste fame all put God first in their finances and found themselves on the highway to prosperity.

There are times when God fulfils His promise and “rebukes the devourer” by caring for a faithful Christian’s harvest. One of countless examples occurred in California. A farmer there had beautiful crops but was in despair when he saw that the dreaded army beetle had settled into a corner of his property. He was struck with the fearful realisation that in a matter of hours his entire farm would be bare.

His little girl spoke with encouragement. “Daddy”, she said, “You pay your tithe don’t you? Then why not ask God to keep His promise and drive the beetles away?” They knelt together in prayer, and claimed the promise of Malachi 3:11.

As they looked up, they saw a number of blackbirds landing on the field where the beetles were. More and more kept coming, remained on the ground for a few minutes, then flew away. There wasn’t a beetle left. The blackbirds had devoured them all. The crops were saved.

Why not put Him to the test? He invites you to do so. If you lovingly and gratefully bring your tithe into the storehouse, not with the motive of protection of money, but with a thankful heart, you too may open the windows of heaven. Into your life may flow blessings so great and so many that there will not be room enough to receive them.

God says, “Test Me in This”. Is it your plan to step out in faith and return God’s tithe? _____



Life's VITAL ANSWERS

Discovering Financial Security.



We may not all be preachers or missionaries, but we can all support the spread of the gospel message by giving tithes and offerings. In actual fact, the tithing plan as outlined in the Bible, was divinely appointed by God for this very purpose. By following God’s plan, we become partners together with Him in His gospel work.

1 Timothy 6:7,10 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. _____ . Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

The world has a materialistic outlook on life, and success is often gauged by the abundance of one's possessions and wealth. But here we see that at death we can take nothing with us. The love of money has ruined the Christian experience of many.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

God rightfully claims our income and possessions, for in fact, everything belongs to Him. We are merely stewards of His gifts.

Psalms 50:10-12 _____ . I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

Haggai 2:8 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.

God's possessions include the animals, birds and precious materials. As Creator He is the rightful owner.

Deuteronomy 8:17,18 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember _____ , and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.



Some ask the question, "What about the years I have not returned tithe? Must I repay?" The answer is NO. God winks at the time of our ignorance, but when we know, we have a responsibility to do what we know is right.

Psalms 37:25 I was young and now I am old, yet _____ or their children begging bread.

We have no need to fear for our financial security when we return our tithe. God promises to supply our needs.

Proverbs 3:9,10 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then _____ , and your vats will brim over with new wine.

The tithe is the firstfruits. It is our first responsibility when we receive our income. If we faithfully give our tithe, the promise is "our barns shall be filled with plenty".

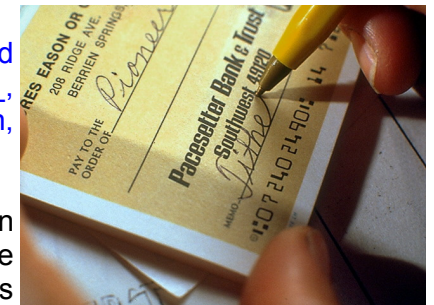
2 Corinthians 9:7 Each man should _____ , not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

God has done so much for us, we can indeed be cheerful in doing what He asks of us. Tithing is not a burden. It is a happy privilege. A partnership with God.

Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

We have no need to worry about our temporal needs such as food, drink and shelter. God's promises are sure. We will receive them. All He asks is that we put Him first.

It may require faith to take this step, but God is asking you to put Him to the test. "Test Me in this", He says. My friend, you have a great



When we are faithful to God – God is faithful to us.

bing me. 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 _____ that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.

To rob our fellow man is very bad, to rob God is infinitely worse, yet this is the case if we refuse to return the tithe. The result of such action is to be cursed.

Notice how tithes and offerings are separate. The tithe is 10%, whereas the offerings are freewill. These are to be given as we are able.

God promises to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing if we faithfully return the tithe – a blessing so great as to overflow. Some people say they cannot afford to pay tithe. Friend, you cannot afford not to. It is better to have nine tenths blessed than to have our whole income cursed. With the Lord's blessing on the remaining nine tenths, many have testified that it goes further than when they selfishly kept it all to themselves.

Notice too, the promise of the rebuke of the devourer. The great Devourer first of all is the devil. When we return our tithe it does something for us. It takes away the selfishness which dominates the carnal nature. In one way, God asks us to give for our own good. It helps develop Christian character. Also, the devourer is the pest responsible for destroying crops etc. Stories could be related by the score of God's special blessing of protection of crops and business interests. Hail storms have been held back, locusts have gone around the property of tithe payers. Fires have died out at boundary fences. Every tithe payer could relate stories of the blessings of God.

Tithe envelopes are available and can be placed in the offering bag at the church service. The church treasurer will issue a receipt. Because there is extra tithe coming in, the minister does not get a higher pay. As the tithe increases, more ministers can be employed, or more evangelistic outreaches can be planned. A minister's wage is not large, but adequate to meet his/her needs.

So many reason that because of their hard work, they take credit to self for their riches. What they fail to realise is that without God's gift of life and strength they could do nothing. Therefore, what they earn is in fact, rightfully God's.

Leviticus 27:30 A _____ of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, _____; it is holy to the LORD.

Although all belongs to God, He does not require us to return all – just the tithe or 10%. When we examine His plan; God is most generous. He does most of the work, and we get most of the pay. A good partnership, if such were a business deal. To return tithe, simply means giving God 10% of our increase. If wages are \$100 the tithe is \$10. In the case of a businessman, tithe is deducted after expenses incurred in his business have been accounted for. For e.g. if his profit is \$1,000 – expenses for materials, wages, rent, power etc. come to \$400. Increase is \$600 therefore tithe is \$60.



Abraham bringing tithes to the King of Salem.

Genesis 14:18-20 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then _____ of everything.

Some feel tithing was only for the Jews, but here we see Abraham giving tithe to Priest Melchizedek. The Israelite laws had not been given at this stage, but apparently Abraham was well aware of the tithing system. In Genesis 28:22 Jacob promised to give his tithe to God. The book of Genesis covers more than 2,000 years, it only contains 50 chapters. It deals with broad principles, and highlights, but not with minute details. However, it shows plainly that tithing was practised at this time.

Matthew 23:23 Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! _____ . But _____ of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

Did Jesus agree with tithe paying? Here He condemns the scribes and Pharisees for being so particular in paying tithe even on garden herbs, yet omitting matters of far greater importance – judgment, mercy and faith. He said, “These ought ye to have done.” In other words, “You should pay tithe, but not neglect other more important issues”. Jesus was in favour of returning tithe.

What Was Tithe Used For?

Numbers 18:20,21 The LORD said to Aaron, “You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites. “I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting.

The Levites possessed little or no land, ran no businesses, and did not work for wages. They were the ministers of the people and worked for God in caring for the temple and its services. God regarded this phase of Israel’s life as most important, and the Levites were to do this work on a full time basis. Their income was derived from the tithe, given by the other eleven tribes.



Tithe was used to support the priests attending to the Sanctuary service.

What About The New Testament

1 Corinthians 9:13,14 Don’t you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that _____

Verse 13 speaks of those who minister in the temple. These are none other than the Levites mentioned in our previous verse who “live on the things of the temple”, or whose income was derived from tithe. Paul compares them with the gospel ministers saying, “Those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel”. In other words, they derive their income from the tithe, even as the Levites did in Old Testament times. This is God’s ordained method of supporting the work of spreading the gospel message. While in Corinth Paul worked at his trade as a tent maker to supply his needs, but this was not so in other places. The critical attitude of the Corinthians concerning money made him do this, in order that he would be above criticism. Even his work in Corinth was made possible because of the church in other places. See 2 Corinthians 11:8. The workers of the gospel had every right to be fully supported by the church. This is how the disciples were supported. Matthew 10:9,10. Paul did not demand his rights in Corinth because of their wrong outlook.



Hebrews 7:1,2 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything.

First, his name means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means “king of peace.”

To Whom Should The Tithe Be Given?

Abraham gave tithe to Melchizedek, who was God’s representative on earth. Today God’s representative is the church. The church uses the tithe to pay ministers, and support evangelistic programs.

Malachi 3:8-11 Will a man rob God? Yet _____. “But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ “_____. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are rob-