

Supporting the Church

This tract has been created to introduce those who are searching for truth set forth in God's word, and not based on the traditions of men and pagan religions.

We believe that the churches tend to confuse the members on the issue of supporting the church. Those who teach tithing, we believe, do not do it in the spirit of New Testament teachings it is to be understood that we believe that the principal of tithing to support the church is correct, but it must be from the heart and not based on the Levitical law, or the precept of Jacob's vow. The common place to start is with Abraham.

Genesis 14:18-20

18 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.

Abram was under no oath in fact until now we have no record of a tithe, so as studiers of the Bible what should we be looking for here? For sure, we should be looking for an example, but of what? Well, firstly that one as great as Abram recognized the divinity of this King of Salem in so much that he paid him homage in giving him a tithe.

Hebrews 7:15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Hebrews 7:2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

We see that even the writer in Hebrews acknowledges this. The scriptures tell us that Jesus is after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 5:6-10

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

10 ¶ Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Let us now reconsider Genesis the example is futuristic for Jesus the Christ, and the support of his church. Abram comes back from the battle with his men, surely they are tired and hungry, and the King and high priest of Salem, the forerunner of Jesus the Christ and his priesthood, provide food and drink for Abram, just as Jesus provides us with our daily needs. Abram pays respect to this high Priest of the living God by paying a tithe of all. Abram paid nothing from an oath as with Jacob or a law as with Moses, but out of love as a servant of the living God. Then how much more love and respect should be shown to the chosen and last high priest of God Jesus the Christ. The tithe is a principal set down by the great patriarch Abraham. As Abraham is recognized for his faith so must we be in paying our tithe, if we pay a tithe because we believe we fall under either Jacob's vow or Moses written law, we then give in the wrong spirit because we give in the spirit of the law and not in faith.

Genesis 28:20-22

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

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.

You can see that this has nothing to do with faith, but in all truth was a contact with God, bring me home, provide for me in all things and I will give a tenth back to you. We find all through Exodus and Leviticus a tenth of this and a tenth of that.

Numbers 18:20, 21, 24, 26

20 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

24 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

26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe.

We see that the tribe of Levi the priestly tribe was to receive no land inheritance, but was to receive a tenth of all of Israel, and of that they were to offer a tenth. The New Testament church is neither under Jacob's vow or an obligation to the Levitical Priesthood. We are obligated to support the elders, and the principal set down as reasonable is ten percent of what God has blessed us with; leaving us 90 percent to live on. I must repeat myself we must give by faith and not under the law.

Malachi 3:3-9

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.

Those who have been preached this message from Malachi there is some of it that we should take to heart but we must not fail to realize this is being spoken to Israel for its wicked ways. Verse 6 "ye sons of Jacob". Verse 3 refers to the purification of the Priestly tribe of Levi which has been done away with the coming of Jesus the Christ. To not support the church is to cause a collapse of its ministry. The New Testament scriptures continue to teach that we have a responsibility to the church.

1 Corinthians 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

1 Timothy 5:17,18

17 ¶ Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

We see that the church has a responsibility to support the ministry and God through Abram exemplified that we should use the principle of the tithe, ten percent of our income; but it must be as Abram, from love of God and his church, that we do it and not from the law. As James says it is our works that prove our faith.

James 2:17,18

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

If we believe that God is our provider then we will give to God knowing that he will be faithful to replenish us all things as we have need. We are of Abraham not Jacob, we are of faith and not contracts.

Galatians 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Jesus is our living example and even in his chastisement of Israel he never discounted giving of the tithe as wrong, just that there were weightier matters.

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

Verse 23 is not truly an issue about tithing, but Israel's disobedience of what Jesus says is the weightier matter, God's law, fair judgment, mercy and faith; but it cannot be ignored that Jesus does clearly say they were to bring their tithes and if Jesus did it or commands it then we ought to do it.

As those of old times had promises of blessing we have also.

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.

Luke 12:33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

2 Corinthians 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.

Let us store our treasures in heaven, let us come to God with hearts of charity, with love for our God, and all his creation.

1 Corinthians 9:13, 14

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

Those who bring tithe to church out of concern for the law, or because it was promised by Jacob are acting in error. We must give from our heart believing God is, and rewards those who obey his word and support his work.

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