

The Tithe, the Offering and the Firstfruit

Poverty and lack does NOT glorify God!

➔ **We have a wealth Covenant with the Lord! Learn how to engage it today in your life. God gives us power to get wealth that we might be a blessing.**

Deuteronomy 8:18 “And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (NKJV)

➔ **God loves a cheerful giver. Be purposeful and thoughtful in your giving. Do not let your giving be as an after-thought. Give more and you shall receive more.**

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 6 But remember this-- if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much. 7 Everyone must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes. 8 God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more so that there will not only be enough for your own needs but plenty left over to give joyfully to others. (TLB)

CATEGORIES OF GIVING

There are three (3) categories of giving. The Tithe, the Offerings and the Firstfruit.

Nehemiah 12:44 And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered.

II Chronicles 31:11,12 Now Hezekiah commanded them to prepare rooms in the house of the LORD, and they prepared them. ¹² Then they faithfully brought in the offerings, the tithes, and the dedicated things; Cononiah the Levite had charge of them, and Shimei his brother was the next.

A. The Tithe

➔ **The tithe which is the first 10% of your gross income is an act of obedience to God. It is done as a sign of our belief and confidence in the covenant relationship we have with God.**

1. The Tithe is before the Law of Moses

Abraham Pays the Tithe

Gen 14:18-20 18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he(Abraham) gave him(Melchizedek) a tithe of all. (NKJV)

Jacob vows to pay the Tithe (the tenth)

Gen 28:20-22 ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, ²¹ so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. ²² And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.” (NKJV)

2. God admonishes His people to stop robbing Him!

He promises to rebuke the devourer if they obey his command. Obedience to God is first and necessary before any other human obligations.

Mal 3:8-11 8 Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me!

But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation.

¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. ¹¹ “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the LORD of hosts; ¹² And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land,” Says the LORD of hosts.(NKJV)

3. Jesus affirms the payment of the Tithe.

Note: He encourages us to pay the tithe while not neglecting also the weightier matters of love, justice, mercy, and faith:

Matt 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.NKJV

Luke 11:42 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. (NKJV)

Facts and benefits of paying the tithe

- 1. The tithe belongs to God; it is the first 10% of your gross income.**
- 2. The tithe demonstrates reverence for God, it is not optional.**
- 3. The tithe releases God to protect you and to provide blessings stopping the curse (poverty, sickness and death).**
- 4. The open-heaven blessing of the tithe brings; **Insight, Instruction and Direction** to our lives.**
- 5. God is a covenant keeper and He will provide for you at all times in good or bad times, if you stay obedient to the rules of the tithe covenant.**
- 6. The tithe provides for the ongoing operations of God’s house.**

7. For God to receive it; it must be given without restraint and our words after paying the tithe must honor God and not complain. Mal 3:13-15

B. The Offering

➔ The offering is what you determine to give to the Lord. Giving an offering punctuates our worship. It is the substance of our worship.

Psalm 96:8-9 Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. ⁹ Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth. (NKJV)

➔ The offering is a seed for financial increase

2 Corinthians 9:6-10 ⁶ But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. ⁹ As it is written:

“ He has dispersed abroad,

He has given to the poor;

His righteousness endures forever.”^[a]

¹⁰ Now may^[b] He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, (NKJV)

➔ Sowing (giving) releases men to give to us. Name your seed each time you give

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” (NKJV)

➔ You will always reap what you sow

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. (NKJV)

Facts and benefits of the offering

- i. The offering is what we give to the Lord after we have paid the tithe. Giving an offering punctuates our worship. Ps 96:8-9
- ii. The offering is a seed for financial increase.
- iii. To be accepted by God, it must be given willingly and cheerfully. God will not accept leftovers (contemptible offerings). 2 Cor 9:7; Mal 1:6-8
- iv. Giving releases men to give to us. Luke 6:38
- v. Sow specific seed towards specific needs. Demonstrate your faith by naming your seed, i.e. use an appropriate scripture that deals with your expected harvest.
- vi. When you sow bountifully you will reap bountifully. You will reap what you sow. Gal 6:7

C. Firstfruits

➔ **The firstfruit offering is the first of any new stream of income or increase.**

For example, the entire first paycheck you receive on a new job after a period of unemployment is the firstfruit. Tithes are only paid on subsequent checks. If you are currently employed and receive a pay raise at your current job or by making a transition in jobs, the firstfruit is the difference between your new pay and the old. If a business owner, the firstfruit is the first profit you receive in a new business venture or from a new client or account. Note: The income source must be a new stream to qualify the first as a firstfruit. A one-time increase is not a firstfruit.

Exodus 23:19a The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.....(NKJV) *Leviticus 23:10* “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

➔ The firstfruit ties any new increase to the favor of God.

Deuteronomy 26:1-2 ¹ “And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, ² that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.

➔ The firstfruit is given to the pastor to cause a blessing to rest on your house.

Ezekiel 44:30-31 ³⁰ The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest’s; also you shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house. ³¹ The priests shall not eat anything, bird or beast, that died naturally or was torn by wild beasts.

Facts and benefits of the First-fruit

- i. **The first-fruit is the first of any new stream of income.**
- ii. **The first-fruit ties any new increase to the favor of God.**
- iii. **The first-fruit is given to the Pastor to cause a blessing to rest on your house. Ezek 44:30-31**

Summary

- i. *The tithe is one tenth of your increase. It belongs to God. The tithe is an act of faith to ensure protection from the devourer.*
- ii. *The offering is any giving above what is owed to God in the tithe. It is a financial seed of faith for future blessings. Always name your seed when you sow.*
- iii. *The firstfruit is an act of faith to honor the Lord for a new stream of income.*

Job 36:11 ¹¹ If they obey and serve Him, They shall spend their days in prosperity,
And their years in pleasures.