

## **07 – Malachi – Tithes And Offerings**

**Malachi 3:6 For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.**

Remember, in the previous lesson the Lord answered their prayer, "Where is the God of Judgment?" The Lord Himself came to earth in the form of a man and took all of the judgment upon Himself. God is love. He does not change. Because He is Who He is, mankind is not consumed. Thank God His mercies are new every morning.

**Malachi 3:7 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?**

It isn't just this generation that has rebelled against God. Even from the days when they first left Egypt, they complained and rebelled against God. But because of Who God is, and He changes not, they are not consumed. Now God is calling them to repentance again through the prophet Malachi. God says return to Me, and I will return to you. They act all innocent like, "What? Wherein shall we return?"

**Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.**

**You can only rob somebody of something ... if what you took actually belongs to that person.** Under the law of Moses, the tithes and offerings BELONGED to God. They were HIS. They were HOLY unto the Lord.

**Leviticus 27:30-34 And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, IS THE LORD'S: IT IS HOLY UNTO THE LORD. (31) And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. (32) And concerning the tithes of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth SHALL BE HOLY UNTO THE LORD. (33) He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. (34) These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai. [Emphasis mine]**

**Deuteronomy 14:27-29** And the Levite that *is* within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee. (28) At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay *it* up within thy gates: (29) AND THE LEVITE, (BECAUSE HE HATH NO PART NOR INHERITANCE WITH THEE,) AND THE STRANGER, AND THE FATHERLESS, AND THE WIDOW, which *are* within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest. [Emphasis mine]

God does not eat fruit, grains, or meat. He Himself has no need for the tenth part of the harvests or the flocks and herds. Why did He claim it as His own? Why did He want it?

**He wanted full-time ministers.** The Levites had no inheritance in the land. They had no acreage to sow into. They had no pastures for cattle and sheep to graze. They were one hundred percent dependent upon the provision brought in through the tithes and the offerings. Remember, the prophet Malachi was prophesying during the same time period that Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

**Nehemiah 13:10-13** And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. (11) Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. (12) Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries. (13) And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.

The tribe of Levi had no inheritance of land like the other tribes. They had homes with wives and children, but no acreage for cattle, sheep, or crops. They were full-time ministers and God intended for them to receive their provision from the tithes and offerings. Without the tithes and offerings, **God was robbed of His plan for sustaining His full-time ministers.**

**God wanted to provide for the poor ...** the strangers, the orphans, and the widows. The strangers were proselytes, people from other nations who converted

to Judaism. They had no inheritance of land, although they had various occupations within the nation. God wanted provision made for them, and for the orphans and the widows. God LOVES so God GIVES! Generosity is His nature. God hates it when orphans, widows, or anybody goes to bed hungry because there is no food. Without tithes and offerings, **God was robbed of His plan to provide for the poor.**

**Malachi 3:9** *Ye are cursed with a [Hebrew = THE] curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*

**"THE" CURSE. Not "a" curse.** This should not have come as any surprise to them, for they all knew the law of Moses. Under that covenant, you were cursed if you did not keep the law. They knew to bring tithes and offerings, but they were not doing it. They were under the curse of the law, just as God had spoken to Moses. How do you stop THE curse of the law? REPENTANCE:

**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.**

**1 - Spiritual "meat"** through the teaching of the Law from the lips of the Levites.

**Malachi 2:4-6** *And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. (5) My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. (6) The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.*

**2 - Physical "meat" (food) for the poor:** the stranger, the orphan and the widow.

In that agricultural society, in the Middle East, the number one thing needed for prosperity was RAIN. When the Lord speaks of opening the windows of heaven and pouring them out a blessing, He is talking about ending the drought by sending them RAIN. "Prove Me" simply means "test Me" like you would test metal.

**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.**

The second thing needed was protection from swarms of locusts and other crop destroying insects. God is promising to supernaturally keep such swarms of locusts and other pests away from their crops so they can prosper.

The third thing needed was protection from various forms of diseases that could cause diminished harvests of crops, or crop failure altogether. God is promising to supernaturally protect their crops from such destruction.

Remember, there were no insecticides or herbicides in those days. They needed God's help to prosper, and He is promising to keep His part of the covenant, if they will keep theirs.

*"If you will repent and bring all of the tithes and offerings into the storehouse so there will be provision for my full-time ministers, so that there will be food for the poor including the stranger, the orphan, and the widow ... then I will supernaturally cause the rain to come and water your crops. I will keep the devouring pests and diseases away from your plants. You will have abundance."*  
Gary's paraphrase.

Remember all of this was under the first covenant. We are in the second covenant, a better covenant, based upon better promises.

**Hebrews 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.**

**Hebrews 10:9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.**

#### **A Few Comments:**

1. God was promising to provide "conditions for prosperity."
2. They still had to plow their fields and sow the grain.
3. They still had to milk their cows and shear the wool from their sheep.

4. They could not just "give into the offering" and not work and expect God to send them finances by way of bluebirds.
5. Even under the Old Covenant, if you did not work, you did not eat (if you were able bodied).
6. Don't forget the theme of the book, "Where is My honor?" If they gave their tithes and offerings with the same lousy attitude that they offered the sick, blind, crippled sheep in chapter one ... the Lord would not receive them.

What about us in this second, better covenant?

**Galatians 3:10-14** For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. (11) But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. (12) And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. (13) Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

If you keep one part of the law, you are commanded to keep all of the law. There are 613 commandments under the law of Moses.

If you are going to tithe because it is the law, be sure you also bring a spotless lamb with you at offering time so your pastor can shed its blood for your sins. Understand you are going to pour the blood of that lamb right on top of the blood of Christ because ... the blood of Christ was not enough. Abomination. He took away the Old Covenant, in order to establish the New Covenant.

**Hebrews 10:8-10** Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; (9) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Why doesn't a Christian steal? Is it because it is against the law of Moses? No, the Christian does not steal because it is against his nature.

**Romans 2:13-15 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (14) For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves [SELF GOVERNED BY THE NEW NATURE]: (15) Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) [Emphasis mine]**

Remember how today's lesson started: **Malachi 3:6 For I *am* the LORD, I change not.**

1. He wants full-time ministers today.
2. He wants to feed the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger today ... through the church ... not government welfare programs.
  - a. They did not expect Rome to feed the widows.
3. He wants the church to be a good witness to the world and pay their bills on time.

Why do Sue and I personally tithe and give offerings? Because God does not change. We look at the patterns He established. They were to tithe and give offerings at every harvest and at every time of increase. That produced regular, diligent giving for the work of the ministry.

Every harvest = every time you get paid = every time you get increase.

We do regular, diligent giving because the bills for every church and for every ministry are regular and diligent. Widows and orphans need to eat every day. Electricity and water bills need paid every month. [Only 5% of Christians tithe.]

**Matthew 6:31-33 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (32) (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**