

Lesson 5:

Forsake Not The Levite

How did God intend the tithe to be used?

The tithe is collected for the communal support of God's ministers.

Malachi 3:10-11

- 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.*
- 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.

Before the Israelites ever began to settle in the land of Canaan, the Lord declared that the Promised Land would be parceled out according to tribe.

Numbers 26:52-56

⁵² And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

⁵³ Unto these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names.

⁵⁴ To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance: to every one shall his inheritance be given according to those that were numbered of him.

⁵⁵ Notwithstanding the land shall be divided by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit.

⁵⁶ According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few.

One tribe, the Levites, were separated from all the others for the special reason of serving God and leading the worship.

Deuteronomy 10:8-9

⁸ At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.

This tribe did not receive a parcel of land to call their own. The Lord himself promised to be their inheritance.

Deuteronomy 10:8-9

- ⁸ At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi,
to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD,
to stand before the LORD to minister unto him,
and to bless in his name, unto this day.
- ⁹ Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance
with his brethren;
the LORD is his inheritance, according as the
LORD thy God promised him.

The other tribes were told to donate a portion of their land for the priests and their families to live.

Numbers 35:2-3, 8:

- ² Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.
- ³ And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts.
- ⁸ And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth.

The LORD awarded the Levites the tenth part that he received from the other tribes so they'd be able to serve him without hindrance.

Numbers 18:20-21

- 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.

Under penalty of death, no other tribesmen were allowed to serve in the tabernacle. The Levites would represent everyone.

Numbers 18:22-23a

²² Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.

²³ But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity:



This statute was never to expire.

Numbers 18:23b-24

²³ ... *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.

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.



If the other tribes did not pay their tithe, there would be no food in the storehouse. The work of God would not get done. This would not affect the Levites only; this would be to the detriment of the entire camp. That is why the other tribes were cautioned to remember their obligation to the Levites.

Deuteronomy 12:19

¹⁹ Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth.



In order to demonstrate that their faith was in God and not in the storehouse supply, the Levites themselves were commanded to return a tenth part of the tithe to God.

Numbers 18:25-26

²⁵ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

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.**



The things recorded in the Old Testament “are a shadow of things to come” (Col. 2:17). The Levites of the New Testament are those men and women foreordained by God to serve the church. Their career is not by choice; it is by calling.

Hebrews 5:4

- ⁴ And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.



The Levites of this time are the church presbytery.

God has redirected the allotment of tithes from the ministers of the physical temple to the ministers of spiritual temple, the body of Christ.

Romans 13:6-7

⁶ For for this cause pay ye tribute also:

for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

⁷ Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.



A minister of God is commanded by God to receive the tithes on behalf of God.

Hebrews 7:5

- ⁵ And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:



Paul made it an ordinance that such collections be made on the first day of the week, the day we now call Sunday.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

- ¹ Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.
- 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.



To tithe or not to tithe -
That is the question:



You will remember that the people of Malachi's time questioned the benefit of this statute.

Malachi 3:14

¹⁴ Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?



You will remember that the people of Malachi's time questioned the benefit of this statute.

We have learned that God will “rebuke the devourer” on behalf of those who tithe. But there is even more!

Malachi 3:14

¹⁴ Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?



Every Israelite was not a soldier, but every Israelite was benefited by the men who went to war. Still, every citizen still had to do his part. Crops had to be tended to, weapons had to be manufactured. That is why King David made it a law that the spoils of battle would be shared by everyone who contributed to the war effort.

1 Samuel 30:24-25

- ²⁴ For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: **they shall part alike.**
- ²⁵ And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.



Every Israelite was not a Levite, and every Christian is not a clergyman. God, who is no respecter of persons, designed a way in which all could receive an equal reward for service to God here on earth. All who support the work will share equally in the reward.

Jesus said it this way:

Matthew 10:41

⁴¹ He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.



You don't have to be a prophet to receive a prophet's reward! When you stand before God, you won't be judged only for the work you did but also for the work you supported. Because of your contributions, you will part alike.

That is why Paul encouraged gifts of support.

Philippians 4:17

¹⁷ Not because I desire a gift:
but I desire fruit that may abound
to your account.



When things are done God's way,
there is equality. Everyone contributes
his part, and everyone shares in the
reward.

2 Corinthians 8:13-15

- ¹³ For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:
- ¹⁴ But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:
- ¹⁵ As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack. (Exo 16:18)



Abound in the grace of giving to gospel work, and prove the sincerity of your love.

2 Corinthians 8:7-8

- ⁷ Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, **see that ye abound in this grace also.**
- ⁸ I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, **and to prove the sincerity of your love.**



When you invest in gospel work, you invest in your future. You can't take your money with you when you die, but you use your money now to store up treasures in heaven.

Luke 16:9

⁹ And I say unto you,
Make to yourselves friends of
the mammon of unrighteousness;
that, when ye fail,
they may receive you into
everlasting habitations.





wtwh.org