

WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS...

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE TO GIVING

The Bible teaches us many things. Some lessons we are willing to learn and apply to our lives. Others we skim over and say, "They are not for me." This article will explain, not just simple giving, but an investment that will pay you a higher dividend than anything possible on this earth.

In this article, you will be learning spiritual truths about Biblical stewardship. Following these scriptural directives will bring enjoyment to your life now, while earning great spiritual rewards after your earthly journey is over. After all, this world is not our home. We are looking for a mansion in a city not made with hands.

Turn to Malachi 3:10, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. Prove Me in this," says Yahweh Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Do you realize that this is the only place in the Bible where we are told to "prove Yahweh" to see whether He will do as He has promised? We are told in many places that He is proving us, but only once are we commanded to prove Him.

This is a confirmation for us that Yahweh is true to His word, seen in a definite, positive light. This is not just a statement, but a promise. It confirms for us, that if there is any doubt in our mind, we not only can read about it, but we can actually put our Father Yahweh to the test and see the results for ourselves, not just accepting what someone else may have taught us or may have experienced.

If we cannot believe what Yahweh said, how can we believe that He has power to give us everlasting life with Him? If we single out parts of the Bible that we do not believe, or say that they are not for us, then no part is valid. The result would be people "picking and choosing" until there would be nothing left.

Tithing and giving are a part of the total picture of good stewardship—the proper management of Yahweh's money. We not only have to give account of our 10 percent, but we must give account of the other 90 percent. [We even have to give account of every word that we speak or think.]

Everything is Yahweh's Anyway

"Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will He has begotten us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" (James 1:16-18).

We are His chosen people, made in His likeness, given a body and mind that function as nothing man has ever made. We can certainly understand Yahweh's directives. He only asks for ten percent, when in truth, everything belongs to Him.

Are we investing in our future home in the Kingdom? We go to great lengths to have beautiful houses that can be enjoyed for only a few short years, but we rarely give thought to the home that will be ours for an eternity.

The fact is that all we have here on earth is given to us by Yahweh. Everything we possess He actually owns; He only lets us use it for a time. Someday, He will call us to give account of our stewardship.

Consider Paul's wisdom, "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:7-10).

Notice again verse 7, "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." But we can, in effect, send it on ahead.

New Testament Tithing Command

In the Old Testament, there is no doubt that tithing and giving are a part of the law. It is there that the Prophet Moses went to Mount Sinai where Yahweh gave him the law. Moses came back and presented it to the people.

In the New Testament, tithing was included in worship. Instead of being "taken away" or fulfilled, this commandment took on a deeper meaning.

Yahshua rebuked the religious leaders by saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matthew 23:23). He emphasized that what they had done was good, but they should have gone a little further.

In Matthew 5:17, Yahshua said He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. So the law is still in effect with an added, deeper meaning. Giving is a definite part of obedience to Yahweh's law and an essential part of worship.

If we fail to give our tithes, then we are failing to give Yahweh the worship that is due Him. Yahweh will not force anyone to give to Him. He has taught us from His Word the proper way of giving. He has given us a proper perspective of finances and material wealth.

Better Than the FDIC

There was a young minister who was pastor of a small assembly in a small town, struggling to meet his own financial obligations. The young pastor shared the problem with the Director, who was making his annual visit to the scattered assemblies. The older Director looked into the pastor's eyes and asked a probing question: "Are you tithing?" "No, I'm not. I did once, but with low pay and the demands of the ministry, I have just given when I had some money left, which hasn't been often."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," answered the Director. "If you will tithe for the next year and be faithful at it, I'll personally guarantee that any bills you cannot pay and any groceries you can't afford, I'll pay for you." With that, the man left with a promise to be back in a year.

A quick break from the story: Wouldn't you tithe if someone were to give you that kind of guarantee? How could you lose?

Back to the story: The year passed and the Director returned to the small assembly in the small town. The work was advancing and had grown some. The young pastor was learning and growing with the work and seemed to be happy.

Noting that there was more food in the pantry and better clothes for the family, the Director inquired about how the tithing exercise had been working. The pastor said, "The first couple of months, I gave a tenth and could see that we were advancing very slowly in our financial condition. But, I always wrote the check because I remembered your guarantee.

"One day, however, I read Malachi 3:10 and Yahweh spoke to me. I had been trusting your guarantee to meet my financial obligations if tithing failed. I knew and trusted you. But then I realized that I could trust Someone who was even more faithful and trustworthy. Yahweh's resources are greater than anyone else's. I realized that I could always trust Him to keep His promise to see that my needs were met.

"Since then, we gladly give a tenth to Yahweh and He has never failed to meet our financial needs. Thank you for showing me this truth."

This story has a good, practical application. But what will happen if we choose not to obey a direct command? Will we be blessed? Yahweh asks, "Will a man rob Elohim? Yet you have

robbed Me." But you say, "Wherein have we robbed you?" "In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse: for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation" (Malachi 3:8-9).

Now, let's read verse 10 once again, to reinforce what we've learned: "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, says Yahweh of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

That is the best personal guarantee we will ever receive! You can invest for your future and He will give you back the investment, plus, pay you for investing!

We cannot buy our salvation—it is a gift from Yahweh. But when we tithe to Yahweh, He will "open the windows of heaven" for us; so much so, that we will not be able to receive it!

Remember Yahweh's own words: "PROVE Me now..." and He promises, He will provide for you!

When we don't invest through tithing, we are robbing Yahweh of the worship that is due Him and we are also robbing others, "...even this whole nation," by not allowing His Word to be preached to every nation through the commission with which He has called us as True Worshipers to carry out.

Malachi is the only place where we are challenged to "prove Him," but in many places, Yahweh proves us. Through our giving, we prove our love for Him. He also proves us by testing how much we love our fellow man.

How We Show Love

What are the two great commandments? "You shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment of the whole law. And the second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

How can we love Yahweh and our neighbor if we do not fulfill their needs? Our sacrificial giving helps to provide spiritual food for others.

Paul states in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, "...he which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposed in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for Elohim loves a cheerful giver. And Elohim is able to make all grace abound toward you...to every good work."

Someone once made the comment, "I don't have to give—my salvation comes solely from believing on Yahshua." But, if you don't believe what Malachi and Paul said, then you won't believe Yahshua either. Therefore, you will not gain salvation by grace because you simply

don't believe. You cannot just believe one part of the Bible and discard the rest. It is a whole unit which must be taken in context. "All scripture is given by inspiration of Yahweh..." We must believe that every word is true or none at all. It is just that simple.

They'll Call You Blessed

Do you believe our Heavenly Father will do what He said He would do? "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...and all nations shall call you blessed: for you shall be a delightful land, says Yahweh of hosts," (Malachi 3:11,12).

If we do not give willingly to Yahweh, He may not keep the devourer from your door, and the devourer will collect. The sad part with the devourer's collecting is that you will not have the opportunity to lay up treasures in heaven.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Please consider this prayerfully: Where will you be putting your treasure?

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