



September 15th, 2024 • Malachi 3:6-10

Page 802 in the church Bibles • The Book of Malachi

Message #5/6 • by Pastor Marcus Johnson

“Fearing the Great Name of the LORD & Experiencing His Love”



Sermon Series Theme Verse – “For from the rising of the sun to its setting
my name will be great among the nations . . . says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 1:11)

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The Unchanging, Covenantal-Faithfulness of Yahweh: & the Bountiful Blessings of Tithing

1. Yahweh’s Word to His People

- He is unchanging – in His covenantal faithfulness to the children of Jacob
- He commands that they return to Him – rebuking them for robbing Him
- He commands that they bring in the full tithe – promising a heavenly bountiful blessing of provisions

2. Taking the Prophetic Word to Heart

- Love & worship the LORD – as we live & give by faith
- Return to the LORD – & repent of robbing God

- Embrace & enjoy the biblical principles & blessings of tithing
- Be a generous, missional, Christ-centered local church

Excursus: Understanding & Embracing the Biblical Principles of Tithing

(Notes below are by Marcus Johnson; Adapted from a sermon on 07-17-22)

The Old Testament Tithe – Examples of tithing (giving God a tenth of one’s income or increase) are found before God gave the OT law (e.g., Abraham, Ge 14:20; Jacob, Ge 28:22). Tithing is emphasized in the OT law as one way for Israel to joyfully worship the LORD her God (Lev 27; Num 18; Dt 12, 14). The tithe included giving one’s first fruits (giving to the LORD first; Ex 23:17; Dt 26:2) and it supported the priests & the temple (Lev 27:30ff; Num 18:24), the celebration of feasts (Dt 12:17-19; 14:22ff), and the sojourner, fatherless & widow (Dt 14:28f; 26:12). Multiple tithes are mentioned in the OT (see references above) which may refer to more than one tithe (e.g., giving an extra tithe at the end of the third year, Dt 14:28, etc.). Some scholars think the combined tithes that God commanded Israel to give would have equaled about 20% (not 10%).

Tithing & the New Testament – The NT’s emphasis is not on tithing, but rather living & giving generously by faith, being cheerful givers, storing up treasures in heaven, and financial supporting preachers & teachers, missionaries, & believers in need (Mt 6:19ff; Ac 2:45; 1Co 9 & 16; 2Co 8-9; Php 4:10ff; 1Ti 5:1ff). However, everything written in the OT was written for our instruction (Ro 15:4), so embrace the *principles of tithing as part of living by faith & worshiping God (*joyfully giving a tenth & our first fruits, etc.).

Return to the Lord thru repentance: If you’ve have been robbing God related to finances, repent & make it right. If you decide in your heart, “I don’t want to live this way anymore”, then repent, and starting giving to the LORD with a generous & cheerful heart (remembering you are giving to God what belongs to Him/what He gave to you).

Avoid Two Extremes – First, do not use this excuse, “tithing is an OT commandment that doesn’t apply to me”, as justification for sinful living. Bear in mind that everything written in the OT was written for our instruction (see above). With that, there is no example in the NT where believers are found giving God less than a tithe and He is pleased with it. Second, do not be overly focused, legalistic or self-righteous about tithing, for that contradicts the heart, spirit & purpose of tithing (loving & worshiping God, etc.). Likewise, it is difficult to know exactly how much the OT tithe added up to (it might be 20%), and to know how tithing applies to Christian living & the local church (see above). Finally, tithing (for many Christians in America) is not giving generously or by faith, & the NT exhorts Christians to be generous, cheerful givers, who live & give by faith, storing up treasures in heaven in support of the gospel until King Jesus returns.