

Should Christians Tithe?

The born-again Christians know that they are not under obligation to keep the Old Testament law which became **obsolete** with the establishment of the **New Covenant** (Hebrews 8:7,8,13). They know that they cannot be justified before God through the works of the Law which God had given to His **circumcised** people, Israel (Colossians 2:13,14; Acts chapter 15). However, the leaders of some Christian groups, ignoring the words of Paul in Galatians 3:10-13, pressure their followers to keep **parts** of the Mosaic law, such as the law of **tithing**, the keeping of the Sabbath or the acceptance of a special priesthood. In the fore-mentioned verses, Paul wrote:

“Because as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: because it is written, ‘Cursed is every one who does not continue (persist) IN ALL the things which are written in the book of the law, in order to do them.’ The fact that no one is justified by the law before God, is manifest; because ‘The righteous will live by faith.’ And the law is not of faith; but, ‘The man who does them (the works of the Mosaic law), will live through them.’ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law ...” (Galatians 3:10-13)

From the above verses, we understand that before the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, one could receive everlasting life **by keeping ALL the works prescribed by the Law of Moses!** In other words, the person who would be able to keep the Law of Moses to perfection would live by the works of that law (Matthew 19:16,17). However, **an uncircumcised person did not have the right to keep any part of the Mosaic law --- not even the smallest of the ordinances** (Exodus 12:43,44,48). Why? Because circumcision was the “initiation ceremony”, so to speak, which

gave to the circumcised person the right to enter the first covenant and to keep its law (Acts 15:5;)! On the other hand, **a person who would keep only PART of the Law, would be cursed by God!** (Galatians 3:10-13)

Since the time **our Savior God became flesh** (John 1:1,14) and **died** on the cross for the transgressions of men according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:5,8), God will give everlasting life to all those who will:

1. **Recognize who Jesus Is** (Isaiah 53:11; John 6:40; 8:24), in other words, to all those who will believe and confess with their mouths that Jesus is the “**LORD**”, the YHWH of Romans 10:9,13,14,
2. **Believe in their hearts that God raised Him bodily from the dead** (Romans 10:9; Acts 2:31), and
3. **Pray to Jesus --- call on His Name** (Romans 10:9-14). If they cannot pray to Him (because prayer is worship), then, they have not believed that He really is the “**LORD**”, i.e., the YHWH of Romans 10:9,13!

The words of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:8,9, are clear: Salvation is received **by grace through faith** (in the right object of faith) --- not by keeping the law of Moses!

One of the requirements of the Mosaic law was that **all those who were under the first covenant had to give one tenth of their income to help the poor and to support a special priesthood**, the Levites and their families, because

God had forbidden them to inherit any part of the promised land (Numbers 18:20,21).

Those who have entered Christ's new covenant do not need a special priesthood. The Christian Church of the first century did not have a special priesthood. The Lord Jesus is not a High Priest according to the order of Aaron but according to the order of Melchizedek --- outside the Levitical priesthood appointed by God (Hebrews 7:11). The Lord Jesus Christ did not establish a special priesthood in His Church, neither did His apostles after Him (Matthew 23:8-12). They did not establish a special priesthood for the following reason: All those who by faith enter the new covenant, which the Lord Jesus established with His blood, **become priests** (Revelation 1:6). Those believers make up a **kingdom of priests** (1 Peter 2:5,9) whose High Priest is the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:22-26). Therefore, the doctrine which exacts from a Christian to tithe as a fulfillment of the Mosaic law, is alien to the New Testament and places the Christian under the curse of that law!

The apostles did not introduce the law of tithing in the Christian Church; neither did they use that law as a guideline for the minimum amount that a Christian must give. They advised the believers in Christ to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10) and to give as the Lord had prospered them (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Those who introduce **the law** of tithing in the Christian Church are guilty of heresy. In their love for money, they use Malachi 3:8-10 which was written for **the circumcised Israelites**. They preach that the Christians who do not give one tenth of all their income to their religious institution every month, rob God and that, for this reason, God will

curse them! By doing so, **they alter the gospel of grace** and thus, they bring the curse of God upon themselves (Galatians 3:10-12).

Malachi 3:8-10 does not apply to Christians! Therefore, let it be known to all that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ does not contain any curses for those who believe in Him, but it curses all those who alter it (Galatians 1:8,9)! Remember the words of Paul. He said, “... *there isn't any condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 8:1)!

Those who claim to be Christians and are involved with the law of tithing, must remember that a Christian who tries to fulfill the Mosaic law **or any part of it**, **has not entered God's rest and is guilty of disobedience** (Hebrews 4:11).

I have discussed the subject of tithing with many Christians. It is perplexing that when I say that those who keep **part** of the Mosaic Law are under the curse of that Law, some of them, immediately, **change their story!** They say that the Christians must tithe not as a fulfillment of the Mosaic Law, but to follow **the example of Abraham** who tithed to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20)! They try to say that because Abraham gave one tenth of the loot to Melchizedek **before** the law was given to the Israelites, the giving of the one tenth (tithing) must continue even **after** Christ fulfilled the law of Moses with His eternal sacrifice!

I wonder, if it is only for the sake of following Abraham's example and not fulfilling the law of Moses, then, why do they use Malachi 3:8-10 which instilled fear in the Israelites so they would fulfill the Mosaic Law?

Let us consider the following:

Did Abraham give a tithe to Melchizedek **monthly**? The answer is “**No!**” Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek **only once!**

Did Abraham give Melchizedek one tenth of all his yearly income? The answer is, “**No!** He gave only one tenth of the spoils he collected after a battle!” (Hebrews 7:4)

Then, how could Abraham’s case become our example? Why is this case used to convince the Christians that they must give one tenth of all their income, every month, to the religious institution they belong to?

How is it that Jesus and the apostles did not use Abraham’s example to teach the Christians of their era that they must tithe?

Do the Scriptures say that **Melchizedek symbolizes the religious institutions of our time**? If not, then, why should Christians tithe to them?

The Scriptures indicate clearly that Melchizedek symbolizes the Son of God and His eternal priesthood because he was “*without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life*” (Hebrews 7:3).

If we think of the case of Melchizedek in a symbolic way, as Jesus is High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:11), **then, our priesthood as priests of God and of Christ (Revelation 20:6) is also according to the order of Melchizedek!** Thus, what should we say?

Melchizedek must pay tithes to Melchizedek? This case has become ridiculous!

If Christians must tithe because Abraham tithed **before** the law, then, what should we say about circumcision? Abraham was also circumcised **before** the law! Is it possible we must follow Abraham's example and circumcise? God forbid! (Galatians 2:2-4)

Obviously, the doctrine of tithing is not in harmony with the gospel of the New Covenant, **the gospel of grace**, of which we are sharers!

The monetary needs of the Pastors and of the local churches whose goal should be **to help the poor**, should be covered by free-willed offerings of the flock of God (1 Corinthians 9:11-14; 16:2; Galatians 2:10) --- not by keeping part of the Mosaic Law!

The decision of how each one of the readers of this article will react is as personal as is the reward which each one will receive from the Lord when He comes (Revelation 22:12)!