Israelite Tithes & Offerings

Summary

What does the Bible actually say about tithing — and does it apply the same way to New Covenant ministry? The answer, drawn largely from Paul's own letters, may surprise today's traditional Christian.

- The Old Covenant tithing system: a tithe supporting the Levitical priesthood, a second tithe for festival attendance, a third-year tithe for the poor.
- Paul's letters (1 Corinthians 9; 2 Corinthians 11; 1 Thessalonians 2; Titus 1) read as calling New Covenant ministry to serve "free of charge."
- Isaiah's and Micah's warnings about corrupt, self-enriching religious leaders ("priests teach for pay," "prophets divine for money") applied to modern institutions that solicit tithes and offerings.
- Yah'shua's command in Matthew 23 not to accept titles such as "Rabbi," "Father," or "Reverend."

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Yah'shua the Messiah said, "I will build my Congregation" *(Matt. 16:18)*. And in the book of Hebrews, the Messiah's Congregation is referred to as: "the GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CONGREGATION OF THE FIRSTBORN WHO ARE REGISTERED IN HEAVEN" *(12:23)*.

The Bible also has a lot to say about tithes and offerings, most of which may come as quite a surprise to today's traditional Christian.

"Behold, I Yahweh have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; they are a gift to you, given by Me, to do the work of the tabernacle of meeting"...and Yahweh spoke to Aaron: "Here, I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings, all the Holy gifts of the children of Israel; I have given them as a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever. This shall be yours of the most Holy things reserved from the fire; every offering of theirs, every grain offering and every sin

offering and every trespass offering which they render to me,..."*(Numbers 18:6,8,9)*.

"All the heave offerings of the Holy things...I have given to you...as an ordinance forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before Yahweh with you and your descendants with you...behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting" *(Numbers 18:19,21)*.

In these verses from the book of Numbers, Yahweh is instructing physical Israel that He has given the Levites to them as priests forever, and that they shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting. Yahweh also instructs Aaron, the high priest, that he and the Levites shall be entitled to eat *(sustain themselves from)* certain portions of the "offerings" that the Israelites are commanded to make.

Yahweh makes it clear to all Israel that the covenant is forever, respecting the PHYSICAL descendants of Levi and the PHYSICAL TABERNACLE OF MEETING. The physical tabernacle was constructed by the Israelites from special "free-will" offerings Yahweh commanded specifically for that purpose.

The physical, man-made tabernacle was commanded to be constructed in order that the people had a means of "spiritually meeting" or communicating with Yahweh, through a series of rituals. *(see Ex.25 and 36.)*

"Then Yahweh said to Aaron: `You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel'" *(Numbers 18:20)*. Yahweh repeated these commands in verses 23,24,26, and several other places in the Old Covenant. Yahweh is here making it clear that because of their spiritual work as priests, the Levites would receive a spiritual inheritance, rather than a physical inheritance as promised to the remaining Israelites. This is a TYPE of what would be promised to modern spiritual Israel under the New Covenant Priesthood, as prophesied in many Old Covenant verses, and as set out throughout the New Covenant.

"You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces YEAR BY YEAR. And you shall eat before Yahweh your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil...that you may learn to fear Yahweh your God always. But if the

journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry your tithe,...then you shall exchange it for money,...and you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink,...you shall eat *(the tithe)* there before Yahweh your God, and YOU SHALL REJOICE, YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD...at the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied,..." *(Deuteronomy 14:22-29).*

Here is the SINGLE PLACE in the Bible where Yahweh is setting forth His precise PURPOSE FOR TITHING! Unlike the sacrificial offerings, presented as physical sacrifices for sins, or the various thanksgiving offerings, presented to honour Yahweh for abundant harvests and flocks, or the free-will offerings used to build the physical tabernacle of meeting, TITHING WAS A VERY SPECIAL ORDINANCE, PURPOSED TO INSTIL FAITH IN Yahweh, AS WELL AS STRONG FAMILY AND COMMUNITY VALUES.

Yahweh's plan for humans is that we grow into "children of Yahweh", and the concept of "family", is extremely important to Him. Yahweh gave a PERPETUAL COMMAND to His people to keep several annual festivals in His honour. These festivals were/are to be kept by "families". Yahweh instructed the head of EVERY HOUSEHOLD to save a FESTIVAL TITHE *(one tenth of his increase)* to ensure that the "FAMILIES", THE "LEVITES" AND THE "POOR" would be able to keep these festivals as ordained.

"So YOU SHALL REJOICE in every good thing which Yahweh your God has given to YOU AND YOUR HOUSE, you and the Levite and the stranger who is among you. When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the THIRD year, which is the year of tithing, and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, then you shall say before Yahweh your God: `I have removed the Holy tithe from my house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, according to all your commandments '"*(Deuteronomy 26:11-14)*.

Yahweh instructed His people *(ALL OF US - that wish to be "His people")* to tithe annually, in order that our families might afford to participate in the annual festivals, in honour of Yahweh with genuine feelings of thanksgiving. Yahweh further instructed the people to set good examples in the community by helping the poor. He ordained that every third year, an ADDITIONAL annual tithe amount should be given ENTIRELY to the Levites, the strangers, the fatherless and the widows, so that they may "eat within your gates and be filled".

NOWHERE IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE does Yahweh ever say, or imply, that anyone is to tithe to support the NEW COVENANT ministry or that tithes are designated for the work of preaching the Gospel. TITHES ARE ABSOLUTELY NOT FOR "supporting the ministry" or "preaching the Gospel"! TITHES ARE FOR THE "FAMILIES" OF Yahweh, AND THE POOR!

In physical Israel, tithes, and offerings, primarily sacrificial, were used IN PART to support the priests, while the primary purpose for the annual tithes were to ensure families were able to partake of the annual Holy Festivals of Yahweh. The ADDITIONAL THIRD YEAR TITHE was for helping to look after

the poor and needy in the community every third year. Special free-will offerings were used only to build the tabernacle of meeting.

Both Old and New Covenants, are replete with prophetic warnings of false ministers, teaching false doctrines, and STEALING Yahweh's HOLY TITHE FROM ITS INTENDED PURPOSE in these New Covenant times!

For example, when prophesying for OUR TIME, *(the latter days),* Isaiah was inspired to write of these false ministers: "For behold, Yahweh...takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah...the judge and the prophet and the diviner...For...the plunder of the poor is in your houses *[the false prophets]*...Yes they are greedy dogs which never have enough. They are shepherds who CANNOT UNDERSTAND, they all look to their own way, EVERY ONE FOR HIS OWN GAIN"! *(3:1-3,14;56: 11,12).*

Again, in prophecy for our time, Micah warned: "Now hear this, you heads...and rulers of Israel, who abhor justice and pervert all equity...her heads judge for a bribe, her PRIESTS TEACH FOR PAY, and her PROPHETS DIVINE FOR MONEY. Yet they lean on Yahweh, and say, `Is not Yahweh among us?'...therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed

like a field, Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins" *(3:8-12)*. When will this happen? The very next verse: "Now it shall come to pass in the LATTER DAYS" *(4:1)*. In other words, it is in the process of happening RIGHT NOW!

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, `thus says Yahweh your God to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock'" *(Ezekiel 34:2,3)*. This is prophesy for end-time spiritual Israel - FOR US, RIGHT NOW!. Here Yahweh is warning through the prophet Ezekiel of shepherds - meaning ministers or priests, that would abuse their authority in these end times.

Ezekiel is speaking in prophetic symbolic language but his message is all too clear. As in a great many other Old Covenant prophecies, Ezekiel is pointing out that in these end times, ministers and priests would take advantage of the people's material possessions in order to suit their own selfish and/or egotistic ambitions, by twisting the intent of Yahweh's tithing principles.

Throughout the New Covenant, we are warned of these same events occurring. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, declared how he dealt with the matter, and gave advice to his readers - US: "Give no offence, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the Congregation of Yahweh *[where membership is "registered in heaven"],* just as I also please all men in all things, NOT SEEKING MY OWN PROFIT, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also imitate the Messiah" *(1 Cor. 10:32-33).*

"If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words...and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing...men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, WHO SUPPOSE THAT GODLINESS IS A MEANS OF GAIN"! *(1 Timothy 6:3-5).*

"therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which His Holy Spirit HAS MADE YOU OVERSEERS, to shepherd the congregation of Yahweh which He purchased with His own blood" *(Acts 20:28).* Here Paul is speaking to the Ephesian elders, and to all of us in spiritual Israel, making it clear that the congregation of Yahweh, the

congregation Yah'shua the Messiah said He would build, has been established.

Those of us that are led by His Holy Spirit, the elect that cannot be deceived, have been made overseers by His Holy Spirit, to guard the truth and to perform the work of shepherds for end time spiritual Israel. Paul in effect was saying that all of us that have been baptized by His Holy Spirit are responsible for ministering to the needs of the rest of the people - the congregation, the "called out ones", and for maintaining the true doctrine that the Messiah preached, concerning the kingdom of Yahweh.

"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves" *(Acts 20:29,30).* Here Paul is saying that false ministers, would come in to teach false doctrine at the expense of the flock in these end times. This false ministry made up of many false apostles would speak a perverted version of the truth; something that would sound and appear like the truth, but would nonetheless be twisted in some manner so as to provide a means for these deceitful workers to "draw", or lure away the believers, to

satisfy their own selfish financial gain and/or egotistical ambitions.

"And now brethren, I commend you to Yahweh and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified" *(Acts 20:32).* Here Paul is giving sound advice to all Spirit-filled Israelites. He is pointing toward our High Priest, Yah'shua the Messiah, who became the "Word". He is telling us where to turn when we need to be built up spiritually. We need to turn to Yahweh and to Yahweh's Word - Yah'shua the Messiah, who was the Word, who being born of the flesh, died to become our High Priest, of the New Covenant congregation He said He would build. When seeking the truth of our salvation; our inheritance, we must look to the Word of Yahweh, not to men's words.

"I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me" *(Acts 20:33,34).* Paul is pointing out that while he had been teaching in the synagogues each Sabbath and ministering to the needs of the people, he did so at his own expense and even provided for the expense of any of his assistants by the work of his own hands.

"I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of our Lord Yah'shua the Messiah, that He said, `It is more blessed to give than to receive'" *(Acts 20:35).*

Paul was reinforcing the Old Covenant examples of being a strong, contributing member of the community. Paul himself, was labouring with his own hands - working to look after his needs and those of his fellow workers, while taking from his own time and expense, to preach the Gospel to those who needed it - the "weak in spirit", every Sabbath as his custom was.

Paul believed that it was more blessed to give spiritual enlightenment to the people than it was to receive material reward for so doing. Paul was one of the New Covenant's best examples of how to be a disciple of the Word of Yahweh. Paul's special calling was indeed to be a disciple to the Gentiles.

"Do you not know that you are the temple of Yahweh and that the Spirit of Yahweh dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of Yahweh, Yahweh will destroy him, for the temple of Yahweh is Holy, which temple you are" *(1 Corinthians 3:16,17)*. Paul is clarifying to the Israelites at Corinth that things have changed.

There is no longer need of a physical tabernacle of meeting built with human hands, that in fact, His Holy Spirit now dwells in our very bodies - which have become "temples of Yahweh". Those at Corinth were learning of the new spiritual age WE ARE NOW LIVING IN!

"If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others *[i.e. landlords, kings, the Roman rulers, etc.]* are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless, we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Yah'shua...Even so Yahweh has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel. But I have used none of these things...What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of the Messiah without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel" *(1 Corinthians 9:11-18).*

Paul points out that to the carnal mind it would seem quite reasonable to receive material rewards in exchange for sharing and imparting the much more valuable spiritual understandings. However, he makes it abundantly clear that he and his fellow workers NEVER DID ACCEPT TITHES, OFFERINGS

OR PAY OF ANY KIND for preaching the Word of Yahweh.

Paul further points out, that although it was commanded in the law of Moses that the preachers of the Gospel should live from *(OBEY)* the Gospel, such as the Levites did, that he rather found his reward in the fact that he could preach the Gospel of the Messiah FREE OF CHARGE! He went on to say that it would be an abuse of his authority to do otherwise, and worse yet, that by looking for material recompense, he would actually be hindering the Gospel from reaching those that had no material things to give.

Another of Paul's warnings on this very issue, appears in his letter to Titus. He instructs us to "be blameless, as a steward of Yahweh, NOT SELF-WILLED...but...just, holy, self-controlled...For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and DECEIVERS ...whose mouths...subvert whole households, TEACHING things which they ought not, FOR THE SAKE OF DISHONEST GAIN" *(Titus 1:7-11).*

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the congregations *[called out ones]* of Galatia, so you must do also. On the first day

of the week *[so as not to be done on the Sabbath, while I teach]* let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come *[to not interrupt my teaching]*. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift [tithe] to Jerusalem" *(1 Corinthians 16:1-3)*.

Many times in Paul's various writings, he makes it clear that he taught in the synagogues each Sabbath. Here Paul is instructing the Corinthians to ensure that they take time during their regular work week, to set aside their Festival tithe - their collection for the saints. This collection, was to be delivered to the Levites for distribution to the families and to the poor people that would be celebrating the up-coming Festival in Jerusalem. Paul clearly did not want this work to interfere with his teaching in the synagogue, as he said "that there be no collections when I come". These collections were obviously not for Paul and his fellow workers, but for the families and the needy that would be celebrating in Jerusalem.

"For we are not, as so many, PEDDLING THE WORD OF Yahweh; but as of sincerity, but as from Yahweh, we speak in the sight of Yahweh in the Messiah" *(2 Corinthians 2:17).* Again, Paul is

repeating the fact that although he has the most valuable news in all the world, that he and his fellow workers are imparting it free - not as some "peddlers", who Paul says are "so many" sinners.

"Did I commit sin in abasing myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of Yahweh to you FREE OF CHARGE? I robbed other congregations *[called out ones]*, taking wages from them to minister to you. And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one...But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of the Messiah. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. therefore it is no great thing if his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness..." *(2 Corinthians 11:7-9,12 thru 15).*

Paul is stating firstly, that HE LABOURED FOR and TOOK WAGES FROM OTHER congregations *(CALLED OUT ONES)*, that he might teach the Corinthians FREE OF CHARGE *(he did not "teach" the others that he "worked" for, hence they did not*

receive the free gift). He further points out, that only false apostles led by Satan would take a collection of tithes or offerings for preaching the Gospel, due to their SELFISH FINANCIAL AMBITIONS, as well as their EGOTISTICAL NEED TO BE "REGARDED", as one of the "apostles of the Messiah".

"But as we have been approved by Yahweh to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but Yahweh who tests our hearts. For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness - Yahweh is witness...For you remember brethren, OUR LABOR AND TOIL; for labouring night and day, that we might not be burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of Yahweh" *(1 Thessalonians 2:4,5,9).*

Again, Paul is simply reconfirming that each Sabbath, he preached the Gospel as it was. He did not "flower" it up to make it more appealing, nor did he lure people to it with flattering words. Nor did he use it as a cover *(cloak)* for payment or collections *(covetousness).* And again, he makes it perfectly clear that he supported himself with the work of his own hands - not by taking collections of tithes or offerings from those he preached to.

Yahweh uses the book of Hebrews, primarily chapters 5 through 10, to outline the required changes, or improvements concerning the New Covenant ministry, with Yah'shua the Messiah as our High Priest. The full account should be read to fully appreciate the significance of the New Covenant Priesthood.

"Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood *[for under it the people received the law],* what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar" *(Hebrews 7:11-13).*

Yah'shua the Messiah was from the tribe of Judah, of which Moses spoke nothing concerning the priesthood. Yah'shua the Messiah is now our High Priest. As Yah'shua the Messiah is clearly not a Levite, the covenant with the Levites respecting the physical tabernacle, does not apply. Yahweh is here telling us that BECAUSE THE PRIESTHOOD CHANGED it was also NECESSARY to make a COINCIDENTAL CHANGE IN THE LAW!

Yahweh is confirming that the people could not attain perfection through the old covenant, and that a new covenant concerning the priesthood was necessary, in order that the people might attain salvation through the power and strength of His Holy Spirit.

"For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness,...for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: `Yahweh has sworn and will not relent, You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek', by so much more the Messiah has become a surety of a better covenant" *(Hebrews 7:18,21,22).*

Here we find the comparison of the Levites who received their priesthood by being born into it physically, while the Messiah received it by virtue of Yahweh's oath in perpetuity. We are also instructed that it would be a BETTER covenant.

"FOR IF THAT FIRST COVENANT HAD BEEN FAULTLESS, THEN NO PLACE WOULD HAVE BEEN SOUGHT FOR A SECOND" *(Hebrews 8:7).*

"Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary...It was

symbolic for the present time...But Yah'shua came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle NOT MADE WITH HANDS, that is, not of this creation...HE TAKES AWAY THE FIRST THAT HE MAY ESTABLISH THE SECOND...through the offering of the body of Yah'shua the Messiah once for all...For by one offering He has PERFECTED FOREVER THOSE WHO ARE BEING SANCTIFIED *[by Yahweh; through OBEDIENCE to His laws]" (Hebrews 9:1,9,11; 10:9,10,14).*

"And there were *[then]* many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood" (Hebrews 7:23,24). Because Yah'shua the Messiah will hold His position forever, it will remain unchanged. Obviously, it is designed in such a way as to OFFER EVERYONE *(who chooses to be obedient)* a means to its purpose.

"For such a High Priest was fitting for us,...who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself" *(Hebrews 7:26,27).*

The change in the law here is evident. Formerly, according to the law, various sacrificial offerings were offered up as sin offerings to Yahweh in search of His forgiveness. Yah'shua the Messiah, having perfected the perfect sacrifice; His own sinless life, was able to make one last sacrificial offering on behalf of all men's sins; past, present and future.

"Now where there is a remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin" *(Hebrews 10:18).* Where there is no longer an offering for sin, there is also no longer a need for any of the rituals and temple fixtures required to perform the offering. Where there are no longer ritualistic offerings, there are no longer Levites *(priests)* required to perform them, hence the change in the law; the "annulling of the former commandment".

Under the New Covenant Priesthood, Yah'shua the Messiah replaced Aaron and the Levites, and made the physical offerings obsolete. *(Including that portion of the physical offerings formerly set apart to support the Levitical priesthood.)*

We were COMMANDED FOREVER, to keep our annual Festival tithe for our FAMILIES, and our third year tithe for the poor in our communities to celebrate Yahweh's plan of salvation. NOTHING in

the New Covenant Priesthood, in any way changes, or implies any change to this PERPETUAL COVENANT!

"therefore brethren,...let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,...and let us CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER in order to stir up good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" *(Hebrews 10:19-25).* Here the apostles are informing us that although we no longer need to assemble for the sake of offering, we should continue to gather together for spiritual edification.

As it is written, we should consider the spiritual needs and encouragement of ONE ANOTHER, assembling together to SHARE our spiritual understandings and to build each other up in the faith, in order to stir up enthusiasm for good works. No mention of tithing is made when speaking of these assemblies, however it is clear from many of the apostles records, that they ALL kept the various annual festivals, and that the family tithing and third year tithing laws for the poor, were still in force.

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at

the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which Yahweh erected, and not man" *(Hebrews 8: 1-2).*

Yah'shua the Messiah did build His congregation. He is now our High Priest, seated at the right hand of Yahweh. This makes the high priesthood of Aaron OBSOLETE. Yahweh sent us His Holy Spirit to be our Spiritual Leader. All those of us (the elect) that allow His Holy Spirit to be our Leader *(our "Helper"),* are guided in our understanding of the Bible - of Yahweh's laws and the mysteries of His kingdom.

His Holy Spirit working through Yahweh's elect, makes the Levitical priesthood OBSOLETE. Hebrews 10:19 thru 25 tells us we should still gather together, but that we should TEACH OR EXHORT ONE ANOTHER, AS LED BY His Holy Spirit - NOT AS LED BY MAN-MADE MINISTRIES, WITH FALSE DOCTRINES!

Paul, who was regarded as the greatest New Covenant preacher of the Word of Yahweh, set us a wonderful example of how to teach and share Yahweh's Word, FREE OF CHARGE AND WITHOUT FAVOUR. He likened receiving any type of remuneration for preaching the Gospel, to sin! In other words, it is

SINFUL to STEAL Yahweh's Holy tithes from their intended purpose!

He stated categorically that anyone who used the Gospel, with no matter what flattery or twisting of words, as a means to justify collecting money or material things *(TITHES OR OFFERINGS),* was in fact, a FALSE APOSTLE, a deceitful worker, LED BY SATAN, for his own personal ego and selfish ambition!

In early Israelite times, when Paul and the other apostles taught, they did not need to expend lengthy sermons on the law. Yahweh's laws, which included the annual Holy Days, the festivals and the tithing principles, were familiar to everyone. They were being read every Sabbath in all the synagogues *(see Acts 15:21).*

Therefore, Paul and the others were persuaded by His Holy Spirit to concentrate on the matters at hand; the significance of the Messiah's message concerning the Kingdom of Yahweh, and about the new Congregation Yah'shua the Messiah said He would build. We, the ones called by His Holy Spirit, are that congregation. The word "church", more properly, "Congregation", is translated from the Greek "Ekklesia", or "called out ones". If we submit and

allow ourselves to be led by His Holy Spirit and are not deceived, then we are the elect members of Yah'shua's Congregation, where membership is "registered in heaven". No man *(minister, pastor or priest)* can register you in heaven, or do anything that could make you a member of the Messiah's Congregation.

It is our job to share the faith and testimony of Yah'shua, as Paul and the others did. Part of that job is to warn Israelites of false ministers *(wolves in sheep's clothing)* that steal Yahweh's Holy tithes from their intended purpose.

Tithing is Yahweh's way of ensuring that families of believers are able to gather together to partake of His Festivals, sometimes with many other families, and to thereby fellowship; to share the faith, to build each other up in knowledge and understanding of Yahweh, by celebrating the awesome love and compassion of His plan of salvation. It is Yahweh's way of making sure that His Love forms the central theme of our celebrations; that we would always think of Him with a sense of peace, joy and thanksgiving, while our families are celebrating and being taught His plan of salvation.

We are still under command of Yahweh to gather with others of "like precious faith", for edification; NOT TO BE TAUGHT BY MEN, but rather, to SHARE with one another, individual knowledge and understanding REVEALED TO US BY His Holy Spirit from the Word of Yahweh! And clearly, His Holy Spirit (Yahweh's Will), does not require recompense for being our Helper! Our physical reward, for sharing our revealed understandings, like Paul's, is the joy of SHARING the "implanted word", according to the Commandment of Yahweh; that Word that we KNOW IS TRUE UPON HEARING IT!

In addition to, but completely distinct from our family's Festival Tithes and the third year Tithe for the poor, we can do as we wish with the remainder of our income, including free-will offerings *(THE ONLY TYPE OF PHYSICAL OFFERINGS THAT ARE NOT OBSOLETE UNDER THE NEW COVENANT),* to conduct worthwhile community and charitable objectives. We must not be deceived into believing that we should build "churches", or that we are even able to build a group of "called out ones", *(as we cannot; only Yahweh can call someone into His Congregation),* or that we should be learning any part of Yahweh's Word from men. The Bible

COMMANDS that we search the Scriptures diligently and "prove all things" with the aid of His Holy Spirit, especially that which we may hear from men! The Bible does not in any way, at any time, even suggest that Israelites should tithe to support any type of ministry. Like it or not, any ministry that asks for tithes or offerings *(other than free-will offerings),* in support of its work, is being led by the un-holiest of all spirits; the Devil.

Free-will offerings should only be given, AFTER you have SET ASIDE YOUR OWN FESTIVAL TITHE, AND THE THIRD YEAR TITHE FOR THE POOR; and then, ONLY if your family can still afford it! The Devil would truly love to STEAL your family's Tithe, or the third year Tithe, preventing either you or the poor from celebrating the wonderful plan of salvation revealed in Yahweh's Festivals. Especially when he can steal it under the guise of accomplishing "God's" work through one of his many false "Christian" ministries! Do you realize that the 10% of our nations' income *(tithe)* that the false "churches" STEAL each third year *(plus that portion of every annual tithe that is beyond our own family's Festival needs)* is more than adequate to FEED AND HOUSE THE POOR AND EVERYONE ON WELFARE!

Yahweh sums up His instructions to His spiritual congregation in Hebrews chapters 12 and 13: "to the general assembly and congregation of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to Yahweh the judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Yah'shua the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel...therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to Yahweh, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices Yahweh is well pleased". These are the only, "sacrifices" of the New Covenant Priesthood!

Yah'shua made a point concerning all of Yahweh's laws *(including the laws on tithing)* as written throughout the Old Covenant perfectly clear, when He said: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill [complete, perfect, make whole or finish]. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" *(Matt. 5:17-19).*

This, and only this, is the true Gospel that the Messiah commanded us to preach when He said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe ALL THINGS that I have commanded you" *(Matt. 28:19,20)*. And in Matthew 23:8, Yah'shua COMMANDS us saying: "But you, DO NOT BE CALLED RABBI *[father, priest, pastor, reverend or minister]*; for ONE IS YOUR TEACHER, THE MESSIAH, and YOU ARE ALL BRETHREN".

When questioned on the matter of "which is the greatest commandment in the law?" *(Matt. 22:36),* Yah'shua responded to a lawyer by saying, "You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, all your soul, and with all your mind, this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: `You shall love your neighbour as yourself! On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets'" *(vv.37-40).* Yah'shua makes it clear, that these two commandments as He quoted them from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, are in fact the two most important commandments, notwithstanding the fact that they are not included in the "Ten Commandments", which represent the "beginning of the Law".

These two *[of the original Ten]* Commandments are eternal, just like the eternal laws concerning tithing and the keeping of the seven annual Holy Days *(and others)*, which together with all of Yahweh's commandments, serve to "complete", or "fulfill" the law.

In fact, Yah'shua added another new commandment, in John 13:34,35, when He said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples..." So we see that Yah'shua COMMANDED us to keep these three laws, which are in addition to the original Ten Commandments:

1. to love Yahweh, and;

2. to love your neighbour (The Greek word translated to the English "neighbour", taken in context of the original grammar, meant those of other nations or other faiths that might be living nearby.), and;

3. to love one another (The original Greek translated to "one another" was meant to distinguish all those disciples, or brethren - those that are believers of the Israelite faith.);

We must add each of these to the original Ten Commandments, just like the eternal laws concerning tithing and the keeping of the seven annual Holy Days (and others), to "complete", or "fulfill" the law. So by Yah'shua's own words, we see that we are bound to obedience on no less than 13 of Yahweh's laws - that is if we lump the keeping of the annual Holy Days and festivals, into one law, and the instructions on love, into one more law. The original 10, plus Tithing makes 11, plus the Holy Days makes 12, plus the three on love, makes 13. (*By the way, there are more than 13 Commands in the Bible!*)

Clearly, the Ten Commandments are proven to be the "beginning of the law", that Yah'shua said He came to "fulfill", or "complete". ALL OF THE LAW set forth in the Old Covenant, remains IN FORCE, EXCEPT that which was specifically changed by Yahweh, under the NEW COVENANT PRIESTHOOD! And as this chapter sets forth, the ONLY change in the laws of Yahweh, resulting from the New Covenant, are those laws specifically addressing the priesthood; the laws of the PHYSICAL PRIESTHOOD, including the laws with respect to PHYSICAL SACRIFICES, and the PHYSICAL tabernacle of meeting, all of WHICH ARE NOW OBSOLETE!

As Yah'shua is now our High Priest forever; our ONLY TEACHER, let us willingly submit ourselves to Yahweh's Holy Spirit; our HELPER, that we may be guided to a revealed *(spiritually discerned)* understanding of all things pertaining to the mysteries of Yahweh, and to our promised inheritance - our salvation.

Let us keep all of Yahweh's eternal laws, including tithing to ensure our continued annual celebration of Yahweh's great plan of salvation. And as stated in Hebrews 13:15,16, "let us continually offer the SACRIFICE OF PRAISE TO Yahweh, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. But do not forget to DO GOOD AND to SHARE, FOR WITH SUCH SACRIFICES Yahweh IS WELL PLEASED"!

Many Bible verses on tithing are commonly quoted by traditional Christian ministers, in an attempt to legitimize their false motives. Malachi 3:8 through 10 is one such example: "Will a man rob Yahweh? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, `In what way have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings. For you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house". Yahweh continues by saying that when

this commandment is obeyed, His blessings of national wealth, peace and happiness will follow.

Yahweh obviously gave these instructions under the OLD Covenant. But the prophetic meaning behind the instructions is DUAL! They were to tithe one tenth of their increase *(not of their income),* in the form of foods - grain, oil, wine, flour, livestock, etc., which was to be taken to the national storehouse in Jerusalem.

The Levites would ensure that the national storehouse supplied the families when they celebrated the various annual feasts at Jerusalem in Yahweh's honour, and that the poor, the fatherless, the widows, the strangers, and the Levites themselves, were also able to partake each third year, "the year of tithing" *(See Num. 18).*

The Levitical priesthood, the physical tabernacle, the physical offerings, the national storehouse, and the physical requirement of travelling to Jerusalem, are all OBSOLETE under the New Covenant. We are now, "spiritual temples", WHEREVER WE RESIDE! This does not mean to do away with the prophetic NEW COVENANT message contained in Malachi 3:8 through 10, as above referenced.

Like most prophecies, Malachi's statement "will a man rob Yahweh", has a dual meaning. It was originally to warn PHYSICAL Israel, while it is also now meant, to warn US IN SPIRITUAL Israel! In other words, if we would NOW be OBEDIENT to Yahweh's command to set aside our own families' annual Festival Tithes and the third year Tithes for the poor, and thereby be able to keep the perpetually ordained Festivals, our nations would also NOW be the recipients of Yahweh's blessings of NATIONAL WEALTH, PEACE AND HAPPINESS!

There is only ONE CONGREGATION *[CHURCH]*; ONE GROUP OF "CALLED OUT ONES" - "OF THE FIRSTBORN WHO ARE REGISTERED IN HEAVEN"! No human-organized traditional "Christian church" or "minister" *(father, pastor, priest, rabbi, reverend)* can register anyone in heaven! Nor can they accept Yahweh's Holy Festival Tithes from you. If they do it's THEFT!

Yahweh entrusts each of us, as His spiritual temples, to MANAGE OUR OWN FESTIVAL TITHES and the THIRD YEAR TITHES FOR THE POOR, and to be OBEDIENT IN ALL THINGS PERTAINING TO HIS WORD.

In Yahweh's name, don't be deceived into giving your Festival Tithes or your third year Tithes for the poor and needy; you and your communities' "Holy"day expense money, to a false “Christian” ministry, one of Satan's many "wolves in sheep's clothing"!

You, your family, and the poor, deserve much better!

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