



Should A Christian Tithe?

Part 1 – What the Scriptures Say

INTRODUCTION

- As we looked at the subject matter of the prosperity gospel and its damaging effects against Biblical Prosperity, we felt the need to address one of the 'Elephants in the Room' which is TITHING.
- In recent years, in some segments of the contemporary church, the debate about the Tithe has been quite widespread, heated and controversial.
- This has been due to inaccurate dissection and teaching of the Scriptures.



INTRODUCTION

- We are going to attempt to settle this matter once and for all, through the scriptures during this short series. We are going to try to present this lesson in three sessions. We ask that you attend or listen to all three before you conclude on the subject matter.
- We believe that the Bible answers this question very succinctly and therefore we will examine together what the Word says and allow this to be the final judge on the matter.
- We ask that you invite other friends and as many believers as possible so that we can have a wholesome and rounded conversation across the spectrum of the Church.



INTRODUCTION



We ask for the following from you as we teach this:



Kindly refrain from assuming you know where we are going before we finish the whole series



Please be kind, courteous and open to other contrary views.



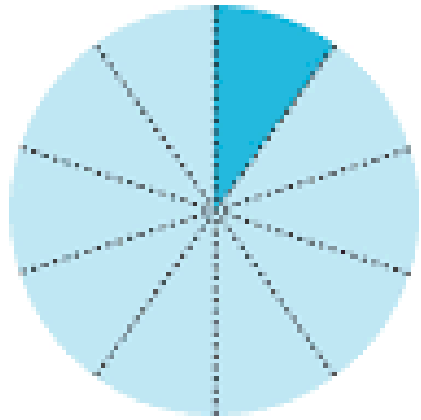
Do not demonize anyone or label them negatively if you think they are not aligned to your views.



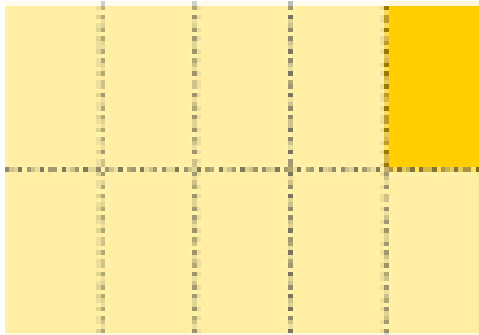
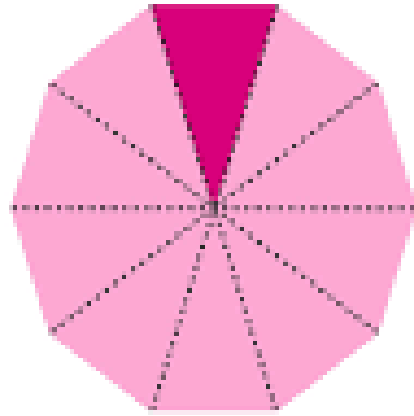
During the open sessions, let us talk constructively and take turns in expressing our points.



Please always remember that: Everyone is entitled to an opinion!



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DEFINITION

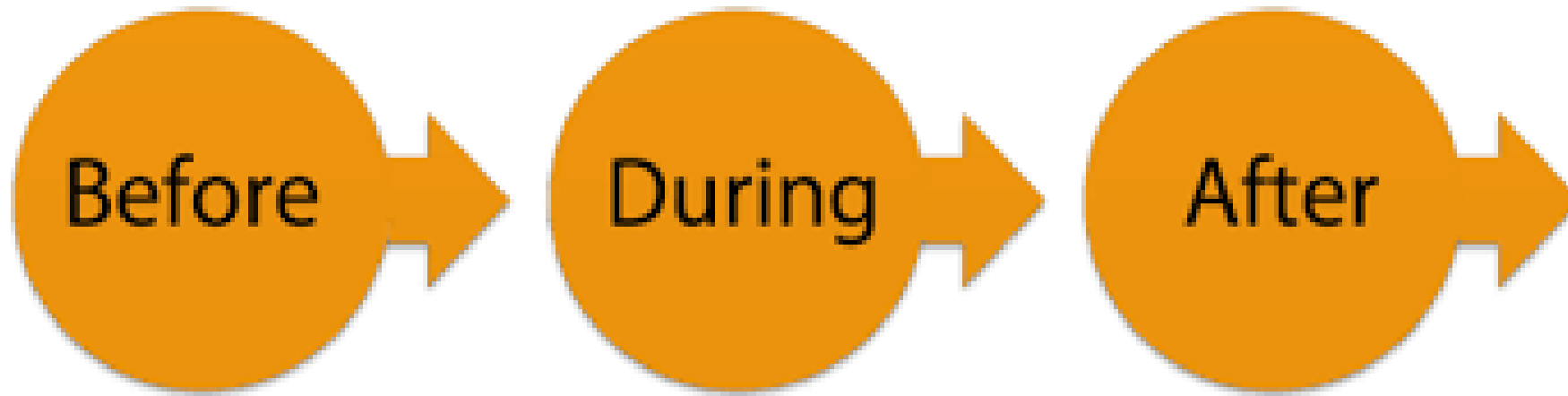
- According to Bible dictionaries and lexicons, the TITHE simply means a TENTH of the whole.
- It means the tenth part of something.
- The tenth sheep, cattle or goat of a herd.
- The tenth part separated or dedicated to God. The sacred part of the whole which belongs to God.

DEFINITION

- ³⁰ 'And all the tithe (tenth part) of the land, whether the seed of the land or the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD.
- ³² For every tithe of the herd or flock, whatever passes under the [shepherd's] staff, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD.

Leviticus 27:30,32





One of the best ways to read and understand the Bible is to read it “IN CONTEXT”. Therefore, we will hereby look at the occurrences of the **TITHE** in three different contexts

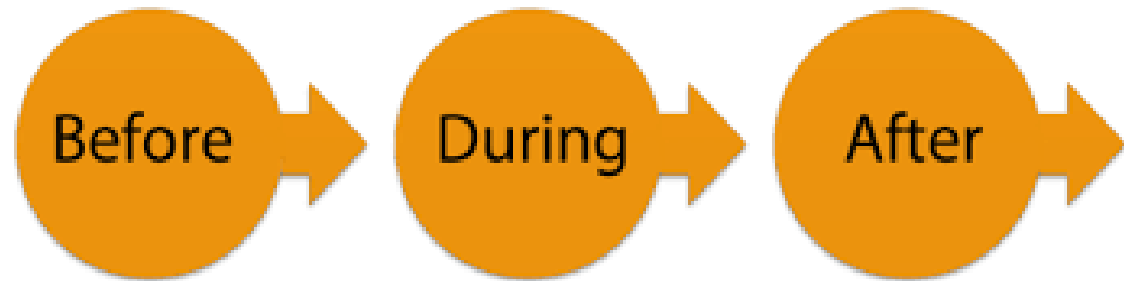
- Before The Law
- During the Law era
- After the Law

CONTEXT



CONTEXT

- What you are about to hear about the Tithe is very different in these three CONTEXTS.
- This is where we strongly believe the confusion lies. Simply put, the period before Israel became a Nation with a constitution from God via Moses is the first era.
- The second era (The Law) spans that period from Moses to the Cross and Christ's Resurrection.



BEFORE THE LAW - ABRAM

¹⁶ So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

¹⁷ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that *is*, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who *were* with him.

¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said:

“Blessed be Abram of God Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth;
²⁰ And blessed be God Most High,
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”

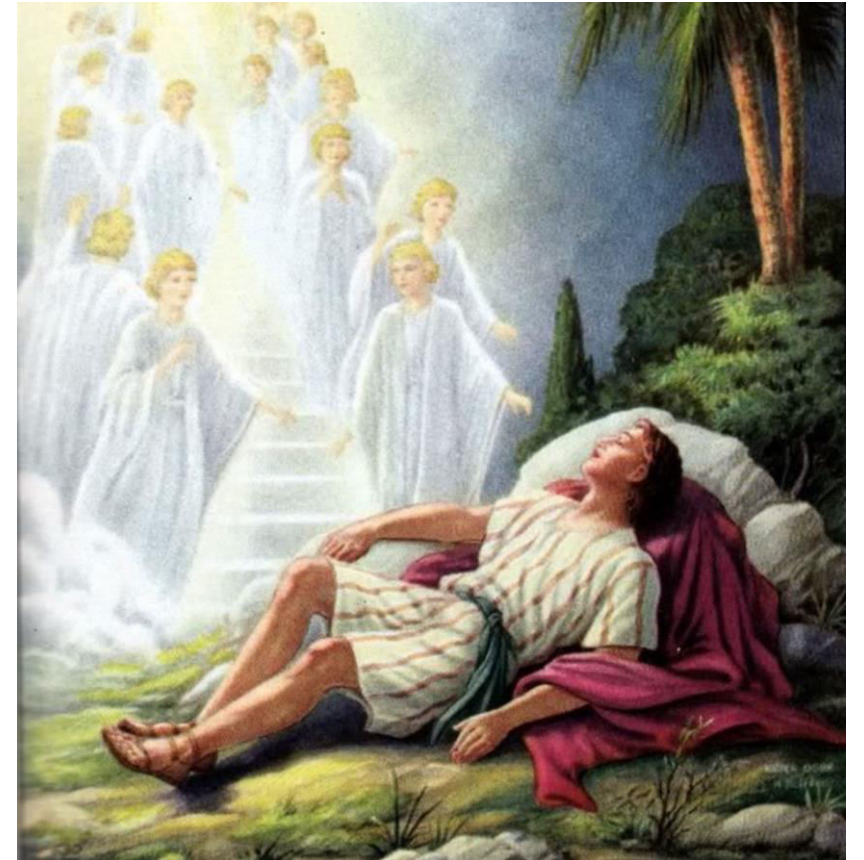
And he gave him a tithe of all

Genesis 14:16-20



BEFORE THE LAW - JACOB

- ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know *it*.” ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, “How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven!”
- ¹⁸ Then Jacob rose early in the morning and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹ And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.
- ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, ²¹ so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. ²² And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me **I will surely give a tenth to You.**
- Genesis 28:16-22



BEFORE THE LAW - SUMMARY

- Abram gave Melchizedek the Priest of God a tenth of all
- It was a tenth of the spoils not Abraham's wealth
- It was voluntary and not requested or demanded by Melchizedek
- It was ONE reference in all of Abraham's story
- Jacob had an encounter with God
- He turned the place into a 'Holy Place' which he promised would become God's House
- He vowed to give God a Tenth or 'Tithe' of all his wealth
- It was a voluntary act and not requested or demanded by God.

THE LAW OF TITHING – THREE TITHES

- In the Old Testament or Law which was established through Moses, we discover that the Nation of Israel gave THREE types of Tithes.
- Josephus the Jewish historian wrote this:
- "In addition to the two tithes which I have already directed you to pay each year, the one for the Levites and the other for the banquets, ye should devote a third every third year to the distribution of such things as are lacking to widowed women and orphan *children*."
—*Antiquities* iv. 240; Loeb ed.



THE FIRST TITHE – Levites & Priests

- ²¹ “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. ²² Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, lest they bear sin and die.
- ²³ But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; *it shall be* a statute forever,
- throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴ For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up as a heave offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance;
- therefore I have said to them, ‘Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.’
Numbers 18:21-24

THE SECOND TITHE – Festivals...

- ²² “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. ²³ And you shall eat before the LORD 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, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.
- ²⁴ But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry *the tithe*, or if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you,
- ²⁵ then you shall exchange *it* for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. ²⁶ And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household.
- ²⁷ You shall not [e]forsake the Levite who *is* within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you.
Deuteronomy 14:22-27

THE THIRD TITHE – The Poor...

- ²⁸ “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.
- ²⁹ 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, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do

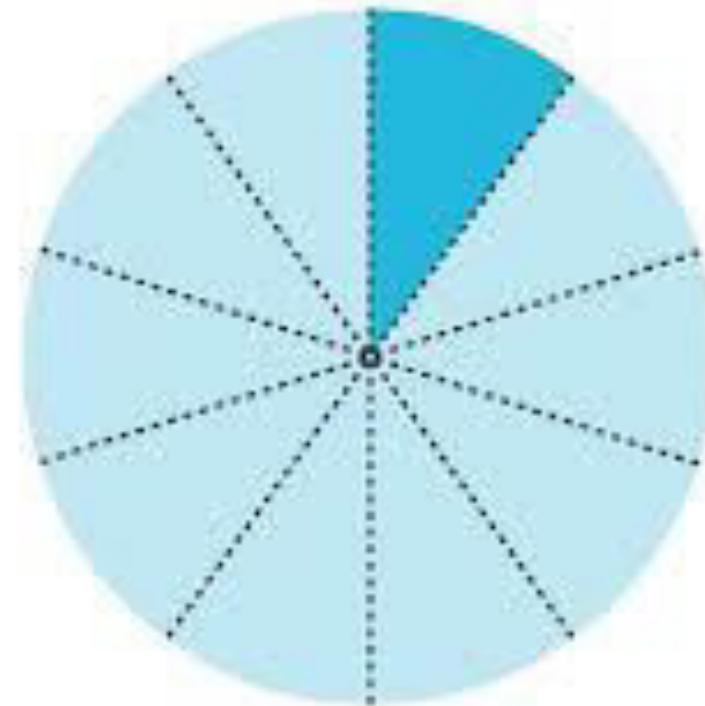
Deuteronomy 14:28-29



THE LEVITES & PRIESTS PAID TITHES

- ²⁵ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶ “Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: ‘When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the LORD, a tenth of the tithe.

Numbers 18:26



DURING THE LAW - SUMMARY

- Tithing under the Law was compulsory and not voluntary
- The Israelites had to give more than 10%!
- The rough calculation annually for Tithing according to the Law and the prophets like Malachi was around 20-23%! In the third year that went up to around 30%!
- So tithing according to the Law was NOT 10%
- Tithing was NOT money but the agricultural produce of the land and the animals.
- Money was only involved if a person wanted to redeem their tithe or the distance was too far to take all the living animals and produce.

DURING THE LAW - SUMMARY

- Some of Tithes were eaten during the festivals
- The Tithes were used to cater and care for the poor, the sojourner, the Levites, widows and orphans
- No Christian Tithes today according to the Scriptures ascribe to Israelites under the Law.
- Pastors that quote Malachi and some of the Tithes scriptures should prescribe more than 10% and it should not be money!
- Tithing according to these times can best be described like a Foodbank distribution centre and a cold-room storehouse
- If we added the list of offerings to the Tithes, then the percentage given will be approaching 40%!!

DURING THE LAW - SUMMARY

- Tithes was from the land and animals.
- It was not required of merchants or fishermen or other professions.
- The reasoning was that the LAND was the blessing of God, and the Levites did NOT have any land or inheritance.
- **THEREFORE, NOT EVERY JEW TITHED!!**



AFTER THE LAW - Hebrews

- Please bear in mind that when we say, “after the law”, we mean scriptures starting from the Book of Acts and the last chapters of the Gospels.
- The one place Jesus mentioned Tithes was UNDER THE LAW to those living by the law. (Matthew 23:23)
- There is therefore only ONE reference to Tithes after the Cross.
- Let us look at the context in which Tithes are mentioned in the Book of Hebrews.



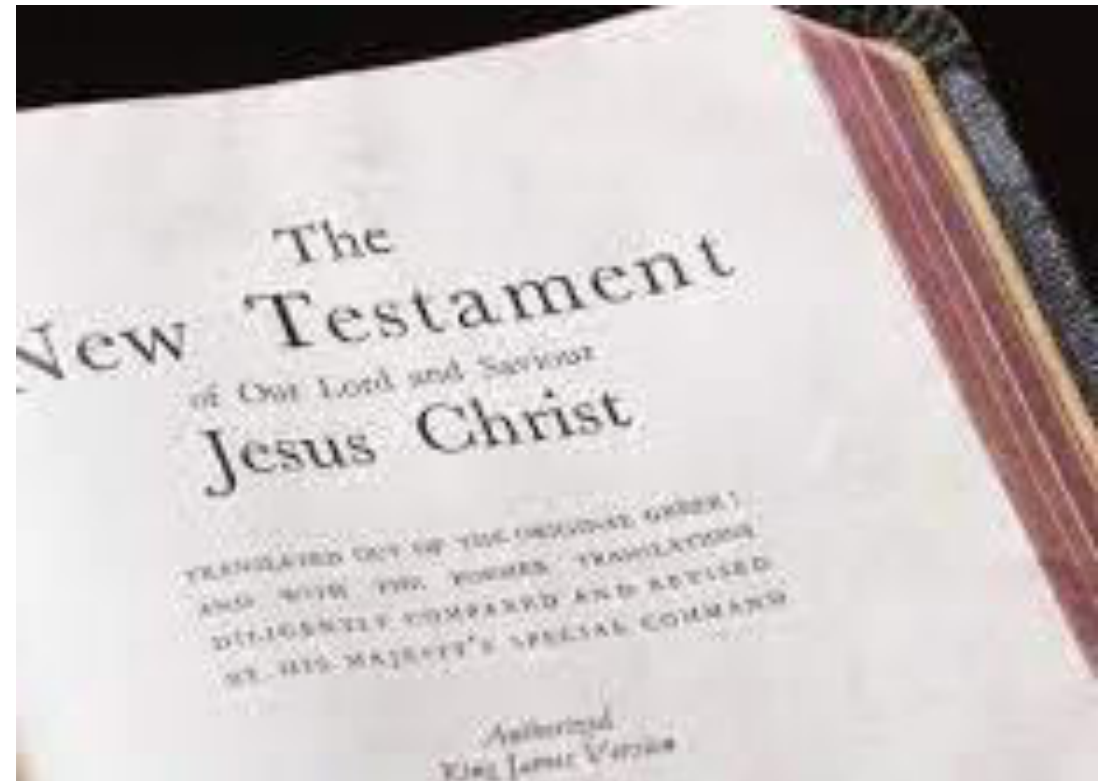
Tithes in Hebrews....

- Hebrews 7:1–10 introduces the author's central argument about the superiority of Jesus Christ. Melchizedek, a figure from the story of Abraham in the Old Testament, is the main evidence used.
- In this segment, the author shows how Melchizedek was superior to Abraham, since Abraham paid him tithes. This has implications for the priesthood of Melchizedek, as well as the priesthood of the Old Testament.
- Next, the author will show how the priesthood of Jesus, symbolized by Melchizedek, is superior to that of the Levitical law.



AFTER THE LAW - SUMMARY

- The New Testament is very 'quiet' on the matter of Tithes according to the Old Testament
- Jesus' mention of Tithe was in the context of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees
- The one passage that references Tithing in the New Testament is a letter to Hebrews. Using the analogies of the Old Testament practices to highlight the New Covenant.



AFTER THE LAW - SUMMARY

- We cannot use Hebrews to teach tithing because Abraham gave only once to Melchizedek and that was from the spoils of war!
- The principle of tithing mentioned in Hebrews is very different from the doctrine of tithing taught in the church today.
- The whole context of Tithes mentioned in Hebrews is not about Christians giving ten percent but about the Priesthood of Christ!



NEXT
WEEK....

THE SPIRIT OF TITHING





WAIT A MINUTE!

The Abolishment of Tithing is Not The Abolishment of Giving