**Solid Rock**

**Missionary Baptist Church**

**Doctrinal Study Series**

**The Tithe of All Thine Increase**

***“Why Must Modern-Day Christians Tithe?”***

 Tithing is a normal part of spiritual life. Biblically, the question of whether or not to tithe never came up for discussion. Instructors concerned themselves only with when and how to tithe, who would get it and why. The Levitical law explained and harmonized tithing.

A. The biblical example

 In Genesis, while Cain and Abel’s offerings to God were mentioned, nothing is said about what type they had to be. Commentaries state that they were, “thank offerings and sin offerings brought to God at an appropriate time.” However, the term firstlings, used to describe Abel’s offering gives us the first indication of the requirement. Looking at the result of the oblations given, we might jump to the conclusion that Cain did not give of the first fruits of the harvest. We cannot safely jump to that conclusion given the nature of the conversation that ensued afterwards. But that’s for another time.

 The first time the word tithe is used is when Abram returned after rescuing Lot for the five kings. Abram tithed after Melchizedek, King of Salem, and priest of the Most High God blessed him. There is nothing in the text that required him to tithe. Therefore, we can deduce that it was known and practiced by all who called on the LORD.

 Ge 4:3-7

 Ge 14:18-20

B. Relating to the promises of God

 Viewed in the light of the sacrifice of his son, Abram would say that the tithe was insignificant. If we present our bodies to God by being a living sacrifice, it is our reasonable service. Should we not also say that by that same logic the tithe is just as insignificant to us? Can we tithe without any thought as to its being a detriment to us? Would we be better served if we saw it as naturally, yea, as spiritually as Abram did? If one strains at 10%, how can one say that, “My all is on the altar of sacrifice?”

Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son and God swore by Himself that He would bless Abraham exceptionally well. He has promised us that if we would but tithe, He would bless us in like manner.

 Ge 22:12, 15-18

 Mal 3:10-12

 Rom 12:1-2

 Heb 6:10-15

C. After the order of Melchizedek

 Melchizedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. (Heb 7:1a, 3) Since Jesus was made a priest after his order and He is our high priest, we are to tithe unto that order of promise. Since the Levitical law did not constitute tithing, we are not bound thereby and are not beholding thereto. The law gives us the details in writing for the first time of a tradition that was, until the law, wholly a verbal tradition.

 Levi tithed in Abram to Melchizedek several generations before he was born and the law did not come until four generations later.

 Ge 14:18-20

 Ps 110:4

 Heb 5:5-10; 6:20; 7:13-17

D. Above the Levitical law

 God swore an oath to make Jesus a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Abram tithed to Melchizedek and we are to tithe unto his order. Our High Priest of that order is Jesus. Abram tithed seven generations before the priesthood and the law. As our High Priest is before the law in His calling and superior in His order, so then are we in our tithing. We are to tithe in accordance with the promise and not in accordance with the law. We use the law only to the extent that it can educate us as to the parameters of proper tithing. Remember that it is the written version of a verbal tradition. We therefore use it for instructional purposes.

 Heb 7:1-12, 18-28

 8:4-13

 7:8-10

 Lev 27:31

E. To whom goes the tithe?

 The tithe is to go to the servants of God, for use in the service of God by the servants of God. The freewill offering, given above the tithe, augments the tithe in the building and maintenance of the tabernacle and its caretakers. Biblically, the best of the tithe goes to the priesthood. Beyond the whole-burnt offering and the sin offering, anything not eaten at the temple by the congregation goes to the priesthood. No, we are not talking leftovers. The Angel of the LORD spent a considerable amount of time delineating the finer points of the tithe proportioned to the priesthood by reason of the anointing.

***“By reason of the Anointing.”***

Nu 18:8-32; (8-9, 12-14, 19-21, 26-32);

(8) “And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Behold, I have also given thee the charge of Mine heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by ordinance for ever.

(9) This shall be thine of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every oblation of their’s, every meat offering of their’s, and every sin offering of their’s, and every trespass offering of their’s which they shall render unto me, shall be most holy for thee and for thy sons.”

(12) “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto the LORD, them have I given thee.

(13) And whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the LORD, shall be thine; every one that is clean in thine house shall eat of it.

(14) Every thing devoted in Israel shall be thine.”

(19) “All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee.

(20) And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

(21) And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

(26) “Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe.

(27) And this your heave offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshing floor, and as the fulness of the winepress.

(28) Thus ye also shall offer an heave offering unto the LORD of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the LORD’s heave offering to Aaron the priest.

(29) Out of all your gifts ye shall offer every heave offering of the LORD, of all the best thereof, even the hallowed part thereof out of it.

(30) Therefore thou shalt say unto them, When ye have heaved the best thereof from it, then it shall be counted unto the Levites as the increase of the threshing floor, and as the increase of the winepress.

(31) And ye shall eat it in every place, ye and your households: for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.

(32) And ye shall bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from it the best of it: neither shall ye pollute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die.”

**\*** There are notable exceptions in the law where the law gave permission to members of the congregation to redeem the tithe for various reasons. There is also the doctrine of the third year, which is the year of tithing. We will not elaborate on any exceptions since they are not germane to our study of tithing.

F. The N. T. gives the priesthood the fruit of the altar “by reason of the anointing.”

 It begins with the orders of Jesus to His disciples and continues throughout the N. T. As Paul said, as gentiles we are debtors to those who came before us. Though he was talking about devout Jews, we must treat our devout elders in like manner. As good stewards of the Lord’s tithe, we are to share with all those in need, not just those of the household of faith.

Lu 10:7-9;

(7) “And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

(8) And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

(9) And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”

Ro 15:25-28;

(25) “But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

(26) For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

(27) It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

(28) When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.”

I Co 9:1-14; (1-11, 13-14);

(1) “Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

(2) If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

(3) Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

(4) Have we not power to eat and to drink?

(5) Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

(6) Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

(7) Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

(8) Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

(9) For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

(10) Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

(11) If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?”

(13) “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

(14) Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”

I Th 5:12-13;

(12) “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

(13) And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves.”

I Ti 5:16-18;

(16) “If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

(17) Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

(18) For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward.”

II Ti 2:6-7;

(6) The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.

(7) Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

***“By reason of the Anointing.”***

 The entire tithe received from the congregation goes to the pastor and his ordained ministerial staff: “By Reason of The Anointing.” God ordained this from the very beginning. As the Pastor of the church or High Priest of the temple or synagogue dictates, portions of the thank, meat, freewill and other offerings that are not to be eaten or whole burnt will then go to the operation of the church. Those, however, that receive the tithe are not exempt from the order to tithe.

 There was never a problem with supplies when Israel obeyed God because He made sure that there was always more available than everyone needed. There was enough left over after preserving and storing the necessities, (even greedy necessities), to give away to all that needed help no matter the situation or number of requests.

 But, what does the phrase, “by reason of the anointing”, really say? How does it apply or how can we appropriate its meaning for us in these times and the present spiritual climate? Especially since it is the children of God that fight so fervently against this doctrine.

 The anointing is that one essential element in the gospel that separates the ordained preacher from every other child of God. The anointing is a permanent consecration of the life unto the full time service of God. It ushers the preacher into a realm of inexplicable parameters and spiritual entanglements. In Eph 3:9, the love of Christ passes knowledge and in Php 4:7, the peace of God passes understanding. Do we now say that we completely know and understand the anointing of which God speaks?

 There was a prohibition placed upon the priesthood that when they were under the anointing, they could not leave the tabernacle. The high priest could not do many things during the time he was high priest. Lev 21:12, “Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; ***for the crown of the anointing oil*** of his God is upon him: I am the LORD.” The anointing, as God sees it, is well beyond our comprehension of it. God said that the anointing given to the Levites made Him their inheritance. It made them joint heirs with Him in everything brought to the altar by the congregation. Our disagreement with this truth does not make for an argument that will stand before Jesus when He comes.

 The modern-day priesthood’s fight against the children of God for the right to receive the tithe as God commanded is based upon the history of our pastors and ordained preachers, (high priests and Levites). Dancing with the dead and doing all manner of untoward things have rendered them dead in the sight of their followers. Moreover, God, for the most part, has in no wise disagreed with their assessment to-date. However, to apply their assessment to every person of the priesthood is patently wrong. Moreover, I might add, shortsighted, jealous and greedy.

 If any facet of the argument is that the pastor/preacher “…should get no more than I or we get.”, the underlying reason for the entire argument is jealousy and greed. Another proof of the error of the argument is the imputation of a sin that someone else committed. Even to the practice of imputing the sins of a prior generation unto the people of a succeeding generation.

 So, can there be a satisfactory description for the anointing? This anointing is far more spiritual and personal than it is physical and washable. The oil can be washed off but the anointing cannot be washed out. Again, this anointing is an internal, permanent consecration of mind, body and spirit. It also makes clear the passage that says men so anointed must give an account to the Father concerning the flock over which they were assigned.

 This anointing is not just the oil representing the Holy Ghost; it is the Holy Ghost Himself taking up residence in the individual to do the work. Therefore, by reason of the consuming unction of the permanently indwelling and overarching Holy Ghost, the preacher/pastor’s only vocation, yea occupation, addiction and calling should be the service of the saints and the calling to salvation of the sinner.

 A good question to ask is: Where did the Aaron and Levites get the live animals to sacrifice for their own sins if they could only get parts and pieces from the congregation’s sacrifices? They had no inheritance among the people but God gave them of the people everything they needed to serve Him.

 Read again the books of the Pentateuch. For a quick look, Lev chapters 5-8, covers just some of the offerings and their portions that God gave to Aaron and the Levites because of the anointing. Read again the book of Nehemiah.

 Today, a company of men so anointed will, as Aaron and the Levites, be bound to labor in and live of the gospel. The tragedy is that we are so anointed but we, like the Levites of Nehemiah’s day must flee to the fields. Neh 13:10 “And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.”

 Whether the tithe is given to whom it should be given or not, we are yet required to tithe. I spent a considerable amount of time on the anointing because without it there would actually be no reason to tithe. Only God knows why ten percent is required. Many churches function on less. However, we must consider that God knows best. Ten percent is the minimum God will consider as an acceptable remittance. The tithe is not a gift it is a remittance. Offerings are not gifts. One cannot rob a person of a gift not given, but God said, “You have robbed Me…” (Mal 3:8-9)

 Meat in God’s house is the overarching theme of tithes and offerings. It is not our place to decide for ourselves how they are administered. If we get the edict from the gospel, we are to follow that edict line by line and precept upon precept. If we expect the rewards of obedience, (Mal 3:10-12), we should also expect the chastisements of disobedience. (Mal 3:13-15)