

The Economy of the Tithe Put God to the Test

In Genesis Chapter 14 we have the first mention of the tithe ever recorded in the Word of God. Yet tithes were given before this time. In Genesis 14:20 Melchizedek is speaking to Abram and says, "Blessed be the most high God which has delivered your enemies into your hands and he, (that is Abram), gave him, (that is Melchizedek), tithes of all. 'All' here simply means of the cattle, of the sheep, of the finances, of the gold, of the silver, of the jewels, of all that he had taken in this war. Abram now gives a tithe of all to Melchizedek or, in essence, gave it to the Lord. Melchizedek was God's representative, the priest of the most high God in this earth. Abram is doing something which is monumental in his life. We're not told before this time that he tithed. He has been a believer for awhile, but he must have known about tithing for some time. This was Abram's first actual act of tithing. We will see this again in Chapter 15. Abram had to break through a barrier in his life to give of the tithe.

Concerning the tithe, people often ask, "Why did God ask for ten percent? Why not seven percent or five percent?" I honestly don't know the significance of the ten percent, but I do believe it is a test of obedience. Why did God say to lay hands on the sick? Why didn't He tell us to lay feet on the sick? I don't know. Why not lay elbows on the sick? I don't know. Why did he say confess with your mouth? I don't know, but you know what? When we obey, it works. When we are obedient to lay hands on the sick, they do recover. It comes down to this. You can argue all you want to about the tithe. You can dissect the ten percent, compare the percentage to all of the other numbers written in the Word of God, but it simply comes down to this: God simply wants to know if we will obey Him and when we release the tithe into God's hand, it actually opens up something in our life. This is what happened in Abram's life.

It is interesting that the Law was not given for some twenty-five centuries or nearly 2500 years after Adam. Abram gave the ten percent to Melchizedek a slightly more than 400 years before the Law was given, and yet we find throughout the Book of Genesis people were doing things in obedience to the Law, yet the Law had not been given. There were three areas which were understood before the Law ever came along—three things already happening in this earth that the Law simply reiterated. We're not sure how they were handed down from generation to generation. We don't find any direct commandments on these three areas, yet they existed and again, were reiterated in the Law.

First were the sacrifices. People knew to offer blood sacrifices. When Cain slew Abel, he was not ignorant of blood sacrifices; he simply didn't want to obey God. He wanted to offer sacrifices his own way. Yet Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice unto God. Abel offered a blood sacrifice. We can trace this back to the fact that God was the first one to offer blood sacrifices in the garden. Adam and Eve covered their nakedness with leaves and God said, "No, I want something more permanent." God shed the blood of animals to cover Adam and Eve with animal skins, yet we find no commandment of God telling Adam and Eve, "I want you to do this from this time on." Apparently after observing God, they did the same thing, passed it the next generation, which passed it on to the next generation. Blood sacrifices were offered to God from this point on. Noah offered blood sacrifices. After the flood, Noah offered animal sacrifices to the Lord. Later Abram offered blood sacrifices to God.

The next area was the Sabbath. We don't find God instituting a specific day of rest, although we do find that on the seventh day God rested. So apparently man observed God and began to pattern himself after God. Throughout the Old Testament there was an observance of the Sabbath even before the Law came along. Today some people believe we should still worship God on Saturday, but we should actually worship God every day. Most Christians today set aside Sunday to meet together because Acts records that believers worshipped God on the first day of the week in honor of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Sunday is really the eighth day of the week. In the Old Testament, eight was the day of new beginnings. What we refer to as the first day of the week God said, "No, let's call it the eighth day of the week. Let's just call it a brand new beginning." The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ marks something brand new. In the Old Testament they circumcised on the eighth day, a symbol of a brand new start, we do the same thing when we worship God on Sunday. I've seen places around the world where it was very difficult to find a facility to worship God on Sunday, so they would rent a place meet on Saturday or Monday. God doesn't care if you worship Him on Monday or Saturday. God shows up on Monday and He shows up on Saturday. There is not something special or holy about worshiping God on Sunday. But God is saying there needs to be a day set aside specifically designated to honor Him. Most churches in America have chosen Sunday because of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, but we do not have a commandment for meeting on Sunday. Before Law was given, believers observed the Sabbath day. When the Law was given concerning the Sabbath, it did not say we

must start observing the Sabbath day. What it *did* say was to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. You know why? Because it already existed!

The third area was the tithe. We find the example in this passage from Genesis. When Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek it was not something brand new; apparently there had been tithing prior to this. It was understood that God wanted ten percent as a test of their will of obedience to Him and this is what happened in Abram's life. Apparently up until this time Abram obeyed God in many areas, but it was difficult for him to break loose in the area of giving his increase unto God. And we saw so much increase that God had given him and we saw Melchizedek standing there in front of him. Melchizedek did what we are supposed to do. Melchizedek drew Abram's attention to the Lord and said, "Abram, you didn't get this riches. God got it for you. Remember the commandment, don't forget the Lord your God when you have these riches?" He was probably coming back from all the war and figuring out what I'm going to do with it. This will pay off this bill, and this will pay off that bill, and ah I'll buy myself a new chariot. I've been wanting one. See it on the showroom floor every week. I'd like to have one of those, and all the things he wanted. My kids could have this or my wife can have this and all the different things he wanted to do with the finances. And just as he got near home, guess who met him? Melchizedek, and said, "Oh, Abram. Blessed be the most high God which made heaven and earth and by the way all the things you're dragging back from the spoils of war. Oh, and, Abram, blessed be the most high God that really caused you to defeat your enemies and you didn't do it. God did it." And suddenly all his attention got back on the Lord. He looked at all those riches and said, "You know what? God did do that for me. I'm going to honor the Lord with the first fruits of all of my increase." And he gave 10% of everything and gave it to Melchizedek. And again we find after that his wealth began to increase even more and more.

Look with me at Chapter 15. There's always great financial blessing attached with the tithe. Always. Whenever the tithe is mentioned, there's usually... whether it's commanded at the moment or whether it's brought out in the verses that followed, great prosperity comes. This is how we enter in to God's financial plan, the economy of the tithe. In Chapter 15 and verse 1, it says, After these things...after the tithe...the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, fear not Abram; I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward. I brought this out many times, but apparently even after he gave the tithe fear entered in. After he gave it and walked off, he probably thought, "Man, I could have used that.", and because his security up until that time had been in the finances. Remember again the Lord said how difficult is it for those who trust in uncertain riches to either be saved or in the Kingdom of God as Christians for us to truly advance in the things of God when our trust is in uncertain riches. The riches that Abram had just brought back were still uncertain. Those around him were still fighting for it. The King of Sodom was still fighting for those riches to be brought back or even give the people back and Abram to keep the wealth. He wanted to divide it up and we find the pressures on Abraham existed at that time but the Lord said to Abram, "Fear not Abram. I will be your shield and your exceeding great reward."

Again I want to point out those two areas that the Lord wants to be to us. He wants to be our defense, and he wants to be our exceeding great reward. Again the three Hebrew words here for exceeding great reward...the three Hebrew words actually says this, I will be your shield and your ever increasing supply of money. I will be your shield or your protection and your ever increasing supply of money, but this came after that Abram obeyed the Lord and gave of the tithes to God. And God was simply saying, "Abram, something happened at that moment you turned lose of that money. Money no longer became your shield and no longer did money become your ever increasing supply of money. Suddenly you now have to look for something else to trust in and put your trust in me. No longer fear, Abram, but put your trust in me for I will be your shield and your ever increasing supply of finances." How many of you know that God is the best one to put your trust in? How many of you know that God is the best one to shield you from the circumstances of life?

Perhaps some of you have looked to your retirement account to shield you from the days to come and your shield has been melting away in front of your eyes in the past few weeks. Well, folks, behind that shield is God back there all the time going, "I've been here all the time. I've been...What's that trust in that shield you call finances? Why don't you let me be your shield? Why don't you let me be your defense against the onslaught of this world for I will take care of you?" The banker may say he loves you but he doesn't love you that much. I landed on Southwest Airlines a few weeks ago. They were going right where I wanted to go and I landed on Southwest. The moment we landed on the runway the flight attendant came on and said, "Nobody loves you or your money more than Southwest Airlines." And I thought, quite not true, somebody loves me more than Southwest Airlines. God loves me more, and somebody loves my money more than you do. It's God, and He promised to take care of me, because out there they want my money. God wants to use my money and bring it back into my life.

So often again Christians come up with this, "You know, if I don't tithe and all that, won't God still take care of me?" Well, God can...God can. He can still rain down manna out of heaven, but that's not His best. He can still send quail once a day and drop them in your lawn, but that's not His best. In fact, He told the children of Israel that after forty years that was not His best. His best was when they came to the land that the manna quit. We're told that in Joshua Chapter 5. When they entered into the Promised Land, they came there. The moment that they entered the Promised Land (snap!) the manna quit, and now they had to eat the corn of the land. What God was saying was, "I would rather not send it from heaven without you doing anything. I'd rather cooperate with you. I'd like you to do something I could work with and that's plant seed. I'd like to take the corn of the land plant it and that way I can work with you."

Again we taught it before. I think I'll teach it again sometime coming up here real soon. The difference between miracles and blessings is that we often want a miracle and think that's the greatest thing. The greatest thing in the Kingdom of Heaven is not miracles. It's blessings. Miracles are momentary, just for the moment just to carry you through, and as soon as it's over you have to have another miracle. Blessings keep on producing and keep on producing and keep on producing. Blessings start with seeds. Blessings start with seeds. Miracles start with nothing. God just does something for you and how many of you ever been in that place where God did something for you even though you were screaming, kicking, and yelling He still came through? Oh, come on! Hold up your hand! Let's talk about the mercy of God this morning. I've been there before crying, "God, where are you?", and He showed up...showed up! Had no reason to show up. Just did it to show me He loved me. After it's over it's kind of like Jesus stilling the storm. He turned around and rebuked them. You know? They were yelling and crying, "Don't you care?", and He suddenly stood and stopped the storm and turned around and rebuked them. He'd rather work with seeds of faith rather than their cries and their fear. He'd rather work with your seeds of faith and your seeds of faith are demonstrated by your giving of the tithe to the Lord. God would like to start with you. The economy of the Lord begins with a deposit. Most banks will tell you. Want to join the bank here? Come with a deposit in your hand. That's how you start out. God simply says if you'll come and deposit in my Kingdom that's how this thing begins. Entrance into my economy starts with a deposit and that deposit is beginning to tithe unto the Lord. This is what causes the blessings to begin to come our way.

Look with me at Genesis 28...Genesis 28 and let's take a look a verse 19. Here we have Jacob offering tithes. Isaac his father also tithed. We find him tithing in a time of great adversity, that great famine entered into the land, but yet he tithed and God provided for him in that time. We find here in Genesis 28 we have Jacob's tithe and again we find Jacob didn't tithe until later in his life. There was just all these things in his life that were standing between him and God and things he wanted to get worked out in his life and finally one day he just decided I'm going to do it. I'm just going to do it. Verse 19 of Genesis 28, And he, that is Jacob, called the name of the place Bethel. Remember what the name Bethel means? House of God. So he's now making a fresh dedication of his life to God. How many know that just getting Born Again isn't enough. You need to make fresh rededications of your life from time to time. Born Again says you're going to heaven, but the rededications are a time when you come back to the foundations of life, the fundamentals of life. Folks, there's foundations we must come back to from time to time. The foundational essence of righteousness is so important that we don't forget we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. We need to come back to the fundamentals of divine healing and realize there's a foundation under us that God has placed there and the other foundation comes back that we must have a consecration to God, and a consecration to God means that actions must follow. Consecration isn't just done in the prayer closet where we walk out the same as we've always been. We come out of a prayer closet changed and different than we have ever been before. So that's what this happens. At this time Jacob is making a fresh rededication of his life to God and he calls the place Bethel, the house of God.

How many of you know that that house of God is not necessarily a building? This was just an altar built out in the middle of nowhere and he called it Bethel, the house of God. Folks, the house of God is where you and God meet together, and he decided to set up this before God and made the alter before the Lord, and he called the name of the place Bethel but the name of the city was Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I must go, then I will give me...and will give me bread to eat, raiment to put on. So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that you shall give me I will surely give the tenth unto you. Let me tell you the place where Jacob was right now. Jacob was broke, disgusted, mad at himself, and he makes a vow with God. He says, God, I'm just looking for the necessities of life. How many of you know often times you get to those places where even the necessities aren't there. It's not God's fault. You've driven yourself to that point. Folks, it comes back to this. It doesn't start with the tithe. It starts with Bethel, the house of God, the dedication to God. Tithing is not a bribe to get God to move in your behalf. It starts with proper heart attitude first. Tithing should be an outward demonstration of a dedication in your heart to God. That's where it begins. God doesn't want you coming

and giving Him your money but your heart is far from Him. That's why tithing has not worked in some cases where people said I've given for years but where is your heart? Where is your heart? He made a dedication of his heart first to God and then said, My finances will come right along after that.

Let's find out what happened in his life. Turn over to Chapter 32...Chapter 32. Did God come through for him? I ask you a question. Did God come through for him? Yes. Even without reading the verse, you know God's going to come through for him. There's always financial blessing attached to the tithe and especially when that tithe is given out of a love and a dedication for God. Genesis 32, look with me at verse 10. Here Jacob says I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth, which you have showed me unto your servant; for with my staff I crossed over this Jordan: and now I have become two bands. He said I went over Jordan and all I had was a staff in my hand. Talk about poor, the clothes on his back and a staff in his hand, but what was different about him when he went over Jordan? He went over with a fresh rededication to God at a place called Bethel and there he made his consecration to God, his heart was with God, and he said, "I'm going to tithe from this point on of all that you bring into my life." Well, guess what happened when he came back across Jordan a few years later. He said I walked over with a staff in my hand and now I have come back with two hosts, and those hosts included his wife, included all the children, included the stock, included the oxen, included the sheep, included the wealth that God had given to him, and it started with a simple dedication. I'm here to tell you he wasn't blessed because of the economy. He was blessed because of God's riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

It comes down to this. Again some of you have your heart torn away from the things of the world right now. Quit watching the news every day to find out what the stock market is doing so you know where your trust is. Your trust is not in the stock market. Your trust is in God. On top of that, it won't change when the stock market starts to go up and gets blessed again. Your blessings come from God. Therefore your faith and trust has to be in the Lord.

So again the foundational things of God...And again this foundational truth is how God supplies for his kingdom. In the tabernacle, the temple of God, and in the church today, again the tabernacle, the temple of God, and also the church today tithing has always been a means of supporting the ministry. And when you support the ministry, you support God. And when you support God, God turns around and supports you. You see you don't take your money and throw it in the air. That's not how God receives it. We give our money to men. How many know when God blesses you he doesn't drop it out of heaven and it ends up on your dresser in the morning? You often wish that would happen, but how many know we give to God through men and God gives back to us through men. That's Luke 6:38. So again God works through people. Notice that Abram didn't take the tithe and throw it up into the air for God to receive it. He gave to a representative in this earth named Melchizedek. Here men that die receive tithe that He receiveth them of whom it is witnessed that he ever lives. When you give into this earth through people, when you give here to Pastor Bob and the Church here at Grace Fellowship, you're actually giving into God's work. And again this is a foundational truth, something you must turn back to. God even continues to bless those who put his kingdom first and again we need to return to this foundational truth.

Write these two verses down. First of all is the 30th chapter of Second Chronicles. Just write this down. The second or the Second Chronicles 30. Hezekiah called the people together because for centuries they had left out two aspects of God's commandments that we talked about earlier. First of all they had forgotten the Sabbath and the Passover annually, but they also had quit tithing. And this had gone on for centuries and the nation had deteriorated and deteriorated and deteriorated where they were weak and powerless and overrun by false religion, and Hezekiah stood up before the people and called them to come back to the Lord. In Second Chronicles 30, Hezekiah called the people to observe the Passover and the tithe that had been forsaken for centuries, and God blessed the people greatly of the land. When they put their first...When they put Him first in those two areas.

What is the Passover and what is the tithe? The Passover is their time and the tithe is their finances. God wants that first fruits. How many know that God wants some of your time during the week? How many know God wants some of your time during the day? God wants you to spend those times in prayer and study and dedication to Him. Time and worship where you fellowship with God for that's the first thing that Jacob did was set his time aside and set a place called Bethel where he could come and worship the Lord. It begins with a heart attitude. Next of all, the finances, and we find in the verses after that, the chapters after that, that God came through greatly for the land and great blessings began to come into the life. Again you can't find a teaching in the Word of God on tithing without great blessing coming along after that in the Kingdom of God. Next of all, write this chapter down. Nehemiah Chapter 10...Nehemiah Chapter 10, this is found in verses 34 through 39. When the children of Israel came out of captivity in Babylon, they were commanded to reinstate their time and also reinstate the tithe. Again he talked about a dedication of their time back to God and also of the tithe. And listen, when the children of Israel came back

from Babylon, they had to come back to their foundations. The foundation of the temple represented the foundation of their life. Building the temple before anything represented their life. There had to be a fresh rededication to God. As far as a nation was concerned, as far as individuals were concerned, they had to come back to placing God first, but how many know Matthew 6:33 tells us seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. Seeking first also includes the foundational element of your life and that's giving the tithe unto the Lord.

So he's saying here again that when they did that God blessed them immensely. Now I ask you a question. Once they came back from...from being in Babylon and they rebuilt the temple did Israel prosper? Yes. Oh, the zenith of their prosperity. Never even under Solomon did they ever prosper like the nation did after they came back from Babylonian captivity. The next four hundred years was the golden years of Israel when literally it came to pass, Deuteronomy 28, they lent to many nations and they did not borrow. Israel became the banking nation for the whole world for some four hundred years, but it started with a dedication when they came back from the land of captivity to start tithing to the Lord again of all their increase and suddenly things began to take off in their life. And I'm going to tell you something also, those four hundred years between the time of captivity and the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ were some of the darkest times the world had ever seen. Wars, Alexander the Great conquering nations, others conquering those nations, and great wars were going on and yet Israel was right there in the midst of it being prospered and prospered and prospered. Folks, I'm here to tell you what God did for a nation He'll do for you and your family. That a thousand may fall at one side, ten thousand at the other, but it shall not come nigh you. No plague will come near your dwelling. It may happen around you but not to you, and, folks, when famine hits the land and whenever financial pressure hits the land, you'll be over there as the children of Israel were in Goshen where God sent protection over them. As devastation hit Egypt, they were protected. We still serve the same God who has never changed. El Shaddi is still the same and He still supplies and He still gives into our life, and, folks, we are hooked up to him not to this world's economy.

So today I'm simply asking you in your own heart unplug from the world and plug into God. Unplug from the world's plan and plug into God's plan. Even the world tells you, "You want to see some financial increase? It starts with a deposit first of all." God's saying it starts with a deposit but watch how I can work as opposed to how the world will work. Oh, glory to God! Glory to God! Give the Lord a hand. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Turn with me to one more verse of scripture, Matthew Chapter 6 and verse 24...Matthew Chapter 6 and verse 24. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. What is mammon? Money. He said you can't serve both. That's the problem. Up until a certain time Abram was trying to serve God and money. He had to choose which one came first, and he decided one day and he gave the tithe to the Lord and set God up as number one in his life or as Melchizedek had said, "Blessed be the most high God." Money is like a god but it's not the Most High God. It has power but not like God has power, and we often try to balance the two in our life and serve the both of them at the same time; and God said it cannot be done. You cannot serve two of them. You will hate one and love the other or love one and hate the other. He simply goes on to say you can't serve God and money. So the two masters he's referring to here are finances.

The next verse goes on, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life. In other words, therefore I say unto you, don't worry. Say, "Don't worry." Don't worry. Folks, if you choose to serve God above money, you can quit worrying. Didn't the Lord tell Abram, "Fear not."? The moment he made the decision to put his faith and trust in God, he says, "Now quit fearing. I'll take care of you. I'll be your shield and your exceeding great reward." What's God telling us this morning? He's simply saying, don't try to serve two masters, seek after God, seek after His Righteousness, seek after His Kingdom, and the moment you do that quit worrying. Don't worry. Be happy. He'll take care of you. So again I say unto you take no thought for your life what you shall eat, what you shall drink, or yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? The answer is absolutely true. God is everything. Clothing is not the most important thing. Food is not the most important thing, but the sad thing is you may be hearing in the weeks to come Christians complaining just as much as the world. What am I going to eat? What are we going to wear? How will my kids be educated? How will I put gas in the car? Question after question after question, but those who have their trust in God say life is more than gasoline. Life is more than food. Life is more than clothing. My trust is in Jesus Christ. He is my shield and He is my ever increasing supply of money. Oh, glory to God!

Faith and trust in Him. So just write this last phrase down. God supplies for obedient Christians. Tithing is just a test of your obedience. Will you obey it? Again God supplies for obedient Christians. Say, "Yes, but didn't it say I

wouldn't see the righteous forsaken or seed begging bread." Yes, but righteous there is more than just righteous to the fact, you know, Jesus is righteous that you walk in righteousness; because there's been a lot of Christians around begging bread. Amen? Amen? God will but He's simply saying trust Him. No good thing will He withhold from those who what? Walk uprightly. There's an uprightness before Him. He promises He's a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Folks, if there's a diligence seeking after God, He rewards and rewards and rewards and rewards just like you do with your children when they diligently seek after being a good son, a good daughter. You just reward them and reward them, and God is the same.

So I'm simply bringing it back to you. What's the foundation of your life? Let this be a Bethel this morning not just a building. Let it be a heart altar between you and God to where you decide today, Lord, I'm going to step out and trust you. Will you close your eyes for just a moment? In your heart this morning, many of you are having to make that decision because maybe you've feared when it came to the tithe. That fear just like the overwhelmed Abram has overwhelmed you, and every time you face it you back off and think, "But I have need of these finances." But remember again it's the Most High God that delivered your enemies into your hands. It's the Most High God who is the creator of heaven and earth. It's the Most High God who put the finances into your pocket that created the wealth to bring it to you, and He simply wanted you to look to Him, set your attention on Him, and break through that fear in your life today and give to the Lord. Make it up in your heart right now. Father, I'm going to be a tither. I'm going to be a tither. Some of you used to be and quit. You let the pressures of life get to you. Others have never made that commitment. You'll give a little here and give a little there, but when it comes to the actual tithe you question and ask God, "Why?" and "Why 10%?" and this morning you realized what does it matter. God just asked me to do it and promised great blessings. In fact, He even said you can test in this area. See if I will not open the windows of heaven for you. Oh, let me tell you this. Many of you have been tested and flunked the test. Never will you test God and He will flunk. Never will God fail. Repent this morning. Some of your hearts need to repent. God forgive me. I have put myself above you. I have put finances above you or I have tried to make finances equal with you and serve two masters. I just can't do it. This morning I make that decision, and once I do I'm going to quit worrying. You'll supply.

While every head is still bowed this morning, you'll say with me, "Pastor, I've never accepted Jesus. Never have been Born Again. Never given my life to Him and this morning I want to." You've come to a place surrounded by people who have their faith and trust in God. It all began one day when they turned lose of their life and allowed Jesus Christ to sit on the throne of their life. Bible calls it being saved, being Born Again, but it's simply an act of your will where you let Jesus Christ take over full leadership of your life. Would you hold up your hand to where I could see it and say, "Pastor, that's me today." Hold your hand up all over the congregation. Pray for me. Pray for me. Pray for me. I want to accept Jesus. I need to accept Him. I want to leave from here today with my sins forgiven. Jesus Christ be my Lord and Savior. I'm on my way to heaven. Hold up your hand to where I can see it. If you have to wave it at me, do so. I want to receive Jesus today. Anyone?

Bob Yandian

If you like this article, check out [The Economy of the Tithe](#) and his book, [Unlimited Partnership: God and the Businessman](#), at the [BYM Store](#).

Copyright 2009 by Bob Yandian Ministries.

Reproduction of this material in whole or part in any format without written permission is prohibited. All Rights Reserved.