

Genesis Series

Lesson #086

March 29, 2005

Dean Bible Ministries

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Genesis 14:17, “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.”

Genesis 14:18, “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.”

Genesis 14:19, “And he blessed him and said: ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;’ ”

Genesis 14:20, “ ‘And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’ And he gave him a tithe of all.”

1. God as Sovereign Creator God is the owner and source of everything we have, Gen. 14:20

2. As owner God gives possessions to us as gifts.

The Truth About Tithing

1. The first time the word “tithe” is used is in Gen. 14:20; the last time the word “tithe” is used is in Heb. 7:2–6, referring to the Gen. 14 episode.

2. The words:

Hebrew: $\text{rfe}[\text{m}]$; *ma'asar*, a tenth or tenth portion of something, from the participle mi , plus the noun for *ten* $\text{rf}[\text{,,}]$, *'eser*; literally, “from ten.”

Greek: de,katoj , *dekatos*, a tenth of something, a tenth portion

3. The first use is found in a context that precedes the Mosaic Law.

4. There is no command to give a tenth.

5. Parallels from ancient Near-Eastern texts indicate that this was a normative practice in a Land Grant treaty.

6. From Creation to the Mosaic Law all giving was free-will giving, otherwise known as grace giving.

7. The next mentions of tithe, from Lev. 27:30–32 on are all related to the Mosaic Covenant.

8. Gentiles were not under the Mosaic Law and were therefore not under the Mosaic Laws of tithing.

9. The Mosaic Law recognized two categories of giving: freewill and mandatory.

Deuteronomy 12:6, “There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings [hb'd'n>, *nedabah*, free motivation, voluntary offering], and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.”

10. Under the Mosaic Law there were three mandates for tithing, or giving 10% to the state.

Numbers 18:21, “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.”

Numbers 18:22, “Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, lest they bear sin and die.”

Numbers 18:23, “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.”

Numbers 18:24, “For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up as an 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.’ ”

1. Israel was a theocracy under the Mosaic Covenant, therefore the Levites were the bureaucracy of the theocracy.

2. Levites were not given any portion of the land as an inheritance so the tithe of the rest of the nation was their inheritance or possession.

3. The Levites were in turn to offer 1/10 of the tithe to the Lord which went to Aaron the high priest.

Deuteronomy 14:22, “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

Deuteronomy 14:23, “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.”

Deuteronomy 14:24, “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, Deuteronomy 14:25, “then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses.”

Deuteronomy 14:26, “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.

Deuteronomy 14:27, “You shall not forsake the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you.”

11. Every third year Israel required the payment of a charity tithe of 10% for those who legitimately needed help, Deut. 14:28–29.

Deuteronomy 14:28, “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.

Deuteronomy 14:29, “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.”

12. Freewill giving was the basis for constructing the Tabernacle:

Exodus 35:29, “The ¹Israelites, all the men and women, whose heart ²moved them to bring material for all the work, which the LORD had commanded through Moses to be done, brought a ^afreewill offering to the LORD.”

Exodus 36:3, “They received from Moses all the ¹contributions which the sons of Israel had brought ²to perform the work ³in the construction of the sanctuary. And they still continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning.”

**Other passages: Lev. 22:28–23; 23:38;
27:30; 27:30–31; Num. 15:3; Deut. 12:6;
Ezra 1:4; 3:5**

Nehemiah 10:38, “And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tenth of the tithes to the house [*bayit*]of our God, to the rooms of the storehouse [*otzar*].”

Nehemiah 12:44, “And at the same time some were appointed over the rooms of the storehouse for the offerings, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions specified by the Law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who ministered.”

Nehemiah 13:5, “And he had prepared for him a large room, where previously they had stored the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tithes of grain, the new wine and oil, which were commanded to be given to the Levites and singers and gatekeepers, and the offerings for the priests.”

Nehemiah 13:12, “Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse.”

Ezra 1:4, “And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.”

Malachi 3:8, “ ‘Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, “In what way have we robbed You?” In tithes and offerings.’ ”

Malachi 3:10, “ ‘Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.’ ”

Romans 6:14: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

**Rom. 10:4, “For Christ is the end of the law
for righteousness to everyone who
believes.”**

Tithing in the New Testament

**1. With reference to the legalistic practice of the Pharisees:
Luke 11:42, 18:12**

**2. Giving was to be a private matter,
between the believer and God.**

Matthew 6:2, “Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

Matthew 6:3, “But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,”

Matthew 6:4, “that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”

**3. The New Testament recognizes
freewill giving.**