

**To Tithe or Not to Tithe That is the Question
and Here is the Answer Part 1
Rabbin Deborah Brandt M.Div.**

No topic causes more controversy than tithing and reveals what is in a person's heart regarding money and the Kingdom. Whenever a Pastor or Rabbi endeavors to bring up money to the Congregation they are made to feel guilty and condemned or made to feel like beggars or robbers.

You can find all kinds of articles and teaching for and against, however, man's opinions are secondary to the truth of the Word! From many of the articles I have read the ones against tithing, are not heads of Congregations and make their money either writing books or speaking engagements or own businesses. They have no idea what it means to run a ministry relying on the support of others to keep it going. Yes Virginia, it takes money to preach the Gospel and teach Torah!

Yes, you can do a Google search and find articles both pro and con from Jewish and Christian sources regarding tithing. However, the bottom line is, tithing was given by God to make sure that His Word would go forth throughout the earth and that takes money.

I really believe our attitude towards money is a direct reflection on our attitude towards God. Why, if we truly want to serve Him and reach people, feed the poor, clothe the naked, teach and train Talmidim/Disciples for the Kingdom are we fighting over whether we should financially support these endeavors?

Islam is talking over the world because they have the money to finance their lies and organization. Whenever a Church closes they make sure a Mosque is built or takes over the property. It is happening all over the United States! They can do this because they have the financial support to pay cash if they have to for these buildings.

Shame on us for not having a greater zeal to finance the Besorah of Yeshua, to support Messianic Congregations and Ministries in order to spread the only Truth there is and that is God's Holy Word. Many Congregation have to close their doors due to lack of funds. Well some would say, we meet in a house we do not need a building. Didn't Yeshua say to go out into the World and preach the Gospel? Didn't he instruct us to make Disciples? Or people substitute the internet for their Congregation because they say they have no Congregation near them. Why, because people do not want to support the work of God.

So why does God want to prosper His people? Because it takes money to get the job done.

TITHING: The word "tithe" means tenth. God has both a plan to prosper His people and to finance the spreading of the Besorah/Gospel of Yeshua our Messiah simultaneously! It is His Tenth Plan. According to scripture, God requires ten cents on every dollar we earn to be given to our local assembly. The Bible says that the tithe (tenth) is holy to YHVH (Leviticus 27:30). *When we are obedient to tithe, we are acknowledging that everything we have (money, material goods, a sound mind, good health, our employment, our family, time literally everything) comes from Him. He then, in turn, increases our income, stretches our 90%, protects our 90%, and causes us to enjoy our 90% with a clear conscience.*

God instructs in Malachi chapter 3 that all our "tithes" (plural, from all our income sources) go to our local congregation, the singular "storehouse." Also God wants to bless us as we are obedient to give offerings over and above the first tenth of our incomes. Our offerings can go wherever God may lead or for whatever purpose we desire in our hearts. God promises to multiply these offering seeds sown and to increase the fruits of our righteousness (see 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9). As we bring offerings, He promises in Luke 6:38 that there will be a reciprocal giving back to us, as He uses other people to bless our lives. He even promises in Mark 10:29, 30 that He will multiply anything we sacrifice, or give up for the cause of Messiah Yeshua and the Gospel. Our obedience to tithe and bring offerings proves that we are growing in Messiah Yeshua's character because it is the nature of God to give. God gives. Man hoards. Satan steals. The good news is that the scriptures are copiously replete with promise after promise to meet our every need, if we are good financial stewards, so that we always have enough to live, enough to enjoy, and enough to give.

Here are some more references on Tithes and Offerings: Genesis 14:17-20, Genesis 28:10-22, Nehemiah 13:10-14, Proverbs 3:9,10, Malachi 3:6-12, Philippians 4:10-19 (especially good in the Amplified Bible), Numbers Chapter 18, Hebrews 7:8 reveals that Yeshua our Great Cohen Kadol/High Priest in heaven receives our tithes (actually all of chapter 7), 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, Yeshua said that tithing ought to be done in Luke 11:42.

Here is a wonderful article that says it all!

Paying to Pray? An Ongoing Dilemma for Synagogues¹

Friday, September 2 2016 Rabbi Dr. Marc D. Angel.

Over the years, I have received bitter notes from people who strongly object to synagogues charging high prices for seats during the High Holy Days. They have also expressed displeasure with the high cost of synagogue membership dues.

Shouldn't all Jews who wish to pray be allowed to do so without having to pay premium prices? Does it seem ethical for synagogues to "sell seats" for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur? Doesn't this process diminish the sanctity and idealism of synagogues?

Yes, these criticisms certainly seem valid. In an ideal world, synagogues would not "sell tickets" or charge expensive dues for membership.

But we do not live in an ideal world, at least not yet.

Synagogues need funds in order to maintain their buildings; to pay their rabbis and synagogue staff; to provide services to members and the community at large. Synagogues invariably operate with deficits, often very severe deficits. They depend almost entirely on the voluntary dues and contributions of members, but these dues and contributions fall short of the synagogues' expenses.

How are synagogues to exist if they lack adequate financial support?

They can cut down on services; they can cut down on staff; they can cut salaries. Yes, but then they will be unable to be of maximum service to their constituents. People will complain that their synagogues do not provide them

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with enough services to warrant their support; so the synagogues will have even less income and provide even less services.

Synagogues can (and often do) depend on the generosity of a few wealthy individuals who contribute large amounts. Because of these generous contributions, people with lesser means are able to be members or attend services at relatively low cost to themselves. But synagogues cannot forever depend on a few philanthropists; they need a larger constituency of people who contribute as generously as their means allow.

Many people expect synagogues and rabbis to be available to them, but are not willing or able to contribute to maintain the synagogues. They expect that other people will do this for them.

I know from personal experience that many synagogues are quite sympathetic to those who are in financial straits; they provide membership at greatly reduced, or at no cost; they provide seats for the Holy Days at low, or no, cost.

I also know from personal experience that many synagogues are unhappy with those who have financial means, but who do not share in supporting synagogues through their membership dues and contributions. Some people will have no problem spending several hundred dollars for an evening out at a restaurant or for theater tickets, but will complain bitterly if the synagogue asks them for a few hundred dollars for a seat in the sanctuary for the holidays. Some people will spend thousands of dollars on vacations, summer homes etc.; but are offended if synagogues charge a few thousand dollars for dues.

In an ideal world, all Jews would support synagogues to the best of their ability. If this happened, there would be no synagogue deficits, no “selling tickets” for the Holy Days, and no expensive membership dues.

But we do not live in such an ideal world. Synagogues need financial solvency, and they spend a good deal of time and energy coming up with fund-raising strategies. It is a real pity that synagogues need to conduct “appeals,” and “seat sales” and other events to raise funds. It would be so much nicer if they simply had enough support from the community without needing such fund-raising tactics.

There are synagogues that provide free or low cost services for the High Holy Days. Most synagogues will make accommodations for those who cannot afford the cost of tickets. No one should feel precluded from praying in a synagogue on the High Holy Days, or any day of the year due to financial considerations.

As long as synagogues need to “sell tickets” for the High Holy Days, we know that the Messiah has not yet arrived. We know that our system is imperfect, even unpleasant. But the only way to move closer to the ideal is for each Jew to take personal responsibility for the maintenance and flourishing of our synagogues.

Generally, Synagogues charge membership dues if you want to be a member based upon your net worth. Churches and Messianic Congregations depend on the tithe and offerings to keep their doors open.

Either way, they need financial support to function, the same way the Temple required financial support to function.

We criticize those in the Church for saying Torah has been done away with, yet we do the same thing when we state that Tithing has been done away with!

We will show via Scripture that Tithes and Offerings is still a Mitzvot/law that is required by all those who truly love God.

What is a Good Eye and Evil Eye?

Good eye (*`ayîn tôwbh*) / Evil eye²

From Hebrew made easy' The literal Greek of Matthew 6:22 (*ean oun ê ho ophthalmos sou haplous*) "if therefore your eye is single" has been translated variously. The Greek word only occurs in this saying of Yeshua and literally means 'single'.

Other translations have rendered it 'unclouded, sound, clear, healthy' or 'good':

"unclouded eye" (Westcott & Hort)

"sound eye" (Weymouth, Philipps, NEB, Williams, Amplified, GNB, NAB)

"clear/diseased eye" (Knox, NASB [clear/bad])

"single eye" (KJV, Bagsters, Tyndale, Rheims) - literally correct

"healthy eye" (Beck, NRSV)

"good eye" (NKJV, NIV) - Hebraically correct

Only the Paraphrases of Moffatt and Barclay are correct with their idiomatic 'generous eye':

"generous/selfish eye" (Moffatt, Barclay)

For the phrase is indeed a Hebrew idiom for generosity as 'evil eye' is for 'selfishness'. The Hebrew phrase (*tôwbh-`ayîn*) 'good eye' is used in Proverbs 22:9 where it is sometimes translated "a generous man". A good eye 'sees' a need and meets it. In modern English idiom one might use "open handed" and "tight fisted".

Other Hebrew sources such as the Jewish *Mishnah* and *Talmud* speak of 'good, middling and evil' eyes. For example, in the offerings of the first fruits:

"a good eye' gave the fortieth, the house Shammai say, the thirtieth part; a middling one, the fiftieth; and an evil one, the sixtieth part." (Mishnah, *Trumot*, 4.3)

Upon which the Jewish commentators say, a 'good eye' means one that is liberal, and an 'evil eye' the contrary. Elsewhere one reads of 'trading, dedicating' and 'giving with a good' or 'an evil eye', that is, either generously, liberally, or in a niggardly and grudging manner.

"A good eye and a humble spirit and a lowly soul, those who have these are disciples of Abraham our Father" (Mishnah, *Abôth*, 5.19)

Thus Yeshuas meaning is that if a man is not covetous but is generous he will be blessed and righteous in all areas of life. "Your whole body" is simply a Hebrew metaphor for 'your whole person', 'you yourself'.

If we truly love God, shouldn't we strive to be one who has a "Good Eye" with regards to our finances?

Gen 4:3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

Gen 4:4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

Here we have an example of Cain having an "Evil Eye" and Abel having a "Good Eye" when it came to giving to God from a pure heart.

² <http://www.biblicalhebrew.com/nt/goodeye.htm> Biblical Hebrew made easy

Bishop Dominique Bierman an Israel Jewish believer in Yeshua writes the following:

“Holy Giving is a matter of the heart and therefore it comes from the Heart of Elohim(God) Himself! He showed us the way in the arena of giving by giving us the highest He could give, His only begotten Son, His Blood on the altar so that you and I can be rescued from sin and satan! Yeshua’s was Elohim’s First Fruits offering and He gave Him to US!”

*For God so loved the world; that **He gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16. When we have Yeshua’s character, then we are givers by nature!*

*In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Yeshua, that He Himself said, ‘It is more **blessed** to **give** than to **receive**. Acts 20:35 “*

Also....

“This Biblical principle is found in the following Scriptures:

"One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Proverbs 11:24 ESV

"give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38ESV

"One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."5 Galatians 6:6-7 ESV

Notice that each of these statements comes from a different period in Biblical history; that is, according to the time of the Tenach, then according to Yeshua, and finally according to Rabbi Sha’ul (Paul) The summary is simple. It is interesting to note that there is something about our giving that relates to both our heart and to our own personal blessings.

But what does all this have to do with Firstfruits, Tithing and Offerings? It has much to do with them. While some believers run through the Scriptures to prove that New Covenant Believers should not be Tithing "since it was under the Law", the truth is that we should be attempting to find out what the issue of Firstfruits, Tithing, and Offerings was really about, and if it has any application to our lives today.”

So where did tithing have its beginning its The Scriptures? We know that offerings were given all the way back to Cain and Abel, but where is the first mention of the tithe in scripture?

The first tithers mentioned in Scripture are Abraham and Jacob. With Abraham, his tithing was a way to honor the universal priesthood of Melchizedek, and was, by prophetic extension, a way of honoring the Messiah.

In tithing to Melchizedek, Abraham was also supporting and honoring his Torah teacher.

According to Jewish Study Bible³

18–20: The blessing on Abram of Melchizedek, king of Salem (probably Jerusalem, cf. [Ps. 76:3](#)), abruptly interrupts the approach of the king of Sodom, which resumes in v. [21](#). The term *God Most High* is known from Ugaritic texts of the Late Bronze Age (Ugarit was a Canaanite city along the coast of what is now Syria). There it is applied to the god El, with whom the LORD is often equated in the Tanakh (e.g., [33:20](#); [Num. 23:8](#)). *God Most*

³ *The Jewish Study Bible*. 2004 (A. Berlin, M. Z. Brettler & M. Fishbane, Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

High is itself a not uncommon epithet of the LORD (e.g., [Ps. 47:3](#)). That a foreigner should recognize and revere the God of Israel is not unusual in Genesis, though it is so in much of the rest of the Tanakh. The account of Abram's interaction with the priest-king of Salem may have served to establish the antiquity of Israel's holiest site and the priestly and royal dynasties associated with it. (Jerusalem/Salem is never again mentioned by name in the Torah.)) **21–24: Refusing the Sodomite king's offer to split the booty, Abram again displays his generosity and his graciousness.**

Gen 14:18–20 Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, the priest of Elohim, who according to the Book of Jasher (16:11–12; 9:5–6) and rabbinic tradition (b. Talmud Ned. 32), was Shem, and the Torah teacher of Abraham.

Abraham paid tithes of all that he had to Melchizedek—not just the spoils of war. Abraham honored YHVH—possessor of heaven and earth—by giving a tithe to YHVH's servant and likely Abraham's Torah teacher,

Jacob promised to tithe to YHVH. Scripture does not record how exactly he accomplished this, but there is no reason to doubt that he did it. Jacob made this promise to YHVH while leaving the Promised Land for temporary residence in the region of Babylon.

Twenty-two years later, Jacob returned to the Promised Land a wealthy man having obtained all of his wealth in Babylon—not in the land of Israel. If he kept his promise to YHVH, he would have had to pay a tithe on that wealth. This would teach us that the universal principle of tithing as first practiced by the patriarchs applied to wealth not only obtained in Israel but outside of the land of Israel, as well.⁴

The tithing principle pre-dates Moses and the establishment of the nation of Israel in the land of Israel. It is a universal principle practiced by the patriarchs.

Gen 28:22 Jacob tithed all that YHVH had given him, not just the agricultural goods of the land.

Additional Scriptures on Giving

Prov 11:25, The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that waters shall be watered also himself.

Prov 28:27, He that gives unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse.

Prov 22:9, He that has a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he gives of his bread to the poor.

Ps 112:9, He has dispersed, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

Prov 28:27, He that gives unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse.

⁴ Nathan Lawrence Hohanna Rabba "The Tithe"