

TITHING in the New Covenant, part 2

Updated version



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

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Summary: Do we get to tithe in the New Covenant? Review and discussion of other VITAL unfinished points on tithing Part 1, like Second tithe, Poor Fund, was tithing FAIR, and more. Is tithing mentioned and how does it work in the new covenant? Is a percentage mentioned in the New Testament? **Does Christ give us a command** in the New Testament to support his work? No matter what denomination you're a part of now, you're likely to hear some things you hadn't seen before.

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(NOTE: there's considerably more information and discussion in the video. So yes, print out these notes, then have them with you as you watch.)

Hello everyone, I'm Philip Shields, host of Light on the Rock. Thank you for coming to our website. **This message is an UPDATE of my previous posting of a teaching about tithing** in the New Covenant, but we'll first fill in some spots in the part 1 sermon about tithing in the Old Covenant. **Please be sure to watch part 1 of tithing before this one.**

So I'll first fill in some gaps and answer some questions from part 1 - then jump in to Part 2, tithing in the New covenant. **Rest assured; true believers have been called to fully financially support true ministers preaching the gospel.** I'll make it all crystal clear with God's word.

So welcome to our free website, brothers and sisters. Please share this site with your friends and family. If you're here due to an ad you saw, please keep coming.

Now back to the message. *Let me start by asking: if you were the one giving this sermon on New Testament tithing, would you say it's a command, a LAW of God, to tithe in the New Testament or just a nice principle if you can afford it?*

Here's what Paul said, so clearly:

1 Corinthians 9:13-14

“Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? 14 Even so ***the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.***”

So yes, it's very clear, in the New Covenant our Lord Yeshua, Jesus the Christ, commands that we support those preaching the gospel, and true ministers should gladly accept that support.

Luke 10:7

“And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, **for the laborer is worthy of his wages.** Do not go from house to house.”

New Covenant MAGNIFIES the Old: In the New Covenant we normally find God's way, rules and laws of the Old Covenant get magnified. Lust is now seen as adultery. Hatred without a cause = murder (Matt 5:21-28). Tithing is no exception. I believe tithing or supporting God's work gets magnified in the New Covenant. ***Tithing is no longer confined to*** grains, sheep, cows, and goats, for example. So hang in there, I'll cover it all.

I see supporting God's work as an act of praise and worship for our God. It's a wonderful way to show gratitude to God for everything he has done for us. We cannot outgive God. He promises to bless those who tithe and support His work. We will reap what we sow, Paul teaches.

We don't see supporting faithful ministries as something we “have to do” but something we GET to do. We're happy do this; we want to do this.

Remember that “tithe” means a tenth, or 10%. Some people claim to “tithe” – but give only now and again, or give only 5%. That's not tithing though you may be giving much appreciated help to certain ministries.

ANSWERING questions from Part 1, and discussing 2nd and 3rd tithe

We're in the NEW Covenant, not the Old Covenant. Understanding that point plays a big part in how we understand tithing in the New Testament. *What's said about supporting God's work is different in the Old Covenant and New covenant.*

I have sermons explaining how we're in the New Covenant, not just a restored old covenant. **And being in the new Covenant is WAY beyond saying** "In the New Covenant we no longer have a temple, sacrifices, priests, and Levites but otherwise everything remains the same." No, it's much different than that. So please hear my sermon on how the new covenant is vastly more different than the Old Covenant than you may have realized before.

Here's a link to my sermon explaining **how the NEW COVENANT is so much better** than the Old Covenant .

<https://www.lightontherock.org/videos/message/glorious-new-covenant-part-2.html?highlight=WyJuZXciLCJjb3ZlbnFudCIsIm5ldyBjb3ZlbnFudCJd>

Again, the NEW covenant is NOT just like the old one minus the temple, priests, Levites, and sacrifices. But those items were so closely associated with tithing! Without the temple and Levites and priests and animal sacrifices, the rules of the Old covenant tithing have to be different now!

The biggest reason too many ministers, of all faiths, often don't teach tithing correctly is because they try to use Old Testament scriptures to show how we are supposed to tithe in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, tithing on grain and flocks supported the Levites and priests and kept the Temple well stocked. In the New Testament there's no temple, no priests or Levites – and so now we support church ministries with money, not grain.

God's Gentleness: in both covenants, we'll see God's great gentleness, as I'll explain. For example in the Old Covenant, you didn't even tithe on sheep and goats unless you had at least ten, for example. I'll show strong examples for the New Covenant later in this message that might even shock you.

If you were so poor in the Old Testament that you had NO LAND of grains and no sheep or goats – **if you had nothing to tithe on in other words, you didn't tithe!** I say this because I hear ministers saying "Tithing was required of everybody. No one was exempted." That's just not true. If you had nothing to tithe on, you didn't tithe. And the Levites had to tithe to the priests (sons of Aaron), but I see nothing saying priests had to tithe. I also believe that most of the time, as in other laws, that Israel did not tithe faithfully.

**** WAS TITHING FAIR?** Some asked me how tithing could be fair **in the Old Testament** if only farmers and ranchers were required to tithe, or so it can seem, since tithing was on the produce of the land and flocks and herds.

But what about tithing on salaries and wages? What about the carpenters, seamstresses, fishermen, cobblers and potters? Tithing does not mention tithing on anything else, and certainly nothing is mentioned about tithing on wages. That's NOT mentioned at all. But it looks like farmers are penalized.

But unlike today, every household at first had land given to them when the land was allotted out to each tribe. With LAND, they all had a way to produce a harvest and animals like sheep, goats and cattle and therefore something to tithe on. Yes, even fishermen and carpenters were given LAND. Tithing in the Old Testament was FOOD. Get that. It wasn't on salary. To claim so, is adding something never mentioned in the Old Testament. **God required a tithe on FOOD**. Even in **Malachi 3:8-10** God says to bring in the tithes "that there may be FOOD in my house" (v.10).

[Note: There's far more detail on the video than what these notes say.]

Plus in Numbers 31:25-50 Israel completely routed the Midianites on God's command and completely took everything they had as spoils of war: all the ANIMALS (so everyone got a portion of that and any kids and lambs that were born from those would be tithable.) There were hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle – much of which was divided up to the Israelites (**see vs 32-47**). Even virgin women and children were divvied up.

Plus they were all given LAND when they first went in; land to grow grains on. So in the beginning, everyone could tithe on something.

Did the Levites have any land? All tithes, first tithe, went to Levites. Where would they **hold animals given them as tithes**? Well, not well known to most, is that though the Levites did not receive an allotment of land, **they were given 48 Levitical cities, and each city had at least a half mile or more of "common LAND"** all around each city specifically "for their animals". Please on your own READ this in **Numbers 35:1-5**.

****Was tithing required from every nation?** What we read is that tithing was required of the Israelites and those living in Israel. We read nothing of God requiring tithing from the Greeks or Persians, for example. But in the New Covenant, we are all now grafted in to Israel spiritually (**Romans 11; Gal 6:16; end of Romans 2**), and now everyone, even Gentiles, can tithe.

Abraham and Jacob: Abraham tithed on spoils of war, but God made it clear in **Numbers 31, when Israel conquered Midian**, that **no tithes** were required on spoils of war going forward. **God DID accept offerings**

from the gold, silver and animals taken as spoils – **but it was not 10%**. (again in 1 Chron. 26:27). This is often missed. **Also Deut 20:10-15.**

Jacob promised to tithe, but only if God met five conditions Jacob set first, as I covered in part 1 (**Genesis 28:22-28**). Jacob's wording does not denote obeying a tithing LAW as much as as his offer to show appreciation to God BY tithing IF this and if that happened first. I do believe Jacob tithed in the end – but frankly we're not told.

Tithing as a clear law was not taught as a LAW* of God until the time of Moses, as I fully covered in Part 1. Here's one such verse:

Leviticus 27:30-32

“And all the TITHE of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is YHVH's. It is holy to YHVH. 31 If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. 32 And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the TENTH one shall be holy to YHVH.”

The main first tithe was to be given ONLY to, and for the exclusive use, of the tribe of Levi, TO Levites. The Priests were a part of Levi too, but only those Levites who descended from Aaron.

ONLY Levites could eat this tithe, and do so anywhere of their choosing (Numbers 18:21, 24). Jews today would feel it's a sin to tithe as today there are no Levites, priests, or a temple to receive those tithes, as the Torah requires. Jesus, Paul and the other apostles were not Levites. Ponder that.

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."

Hebrews 7:5

“And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the LAW, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham;”

So the first tithe was for the Levites and priests ONLY. Regular Israelites were not allowed to eat of it or use it. See Part 1 sermon if you want more details. Levites then tithed the best tenth of what they received to the

Priests, who are not told anywhere they had to tithe any of what the Levites gave them – a “*tithe of the tithe*” as it was called. That’s all part of part 1.

OTHER tithes? We didn’t have time in the first sermon to cover two possible other tithes that Israelites were familiar with: **the Festival or 2nd tithe**, and the **Poor Fund or 3rd tithe**. The Poor Fund has been magnified in the New Testament as I’ll soon cover.

There’s much disagreement among experts on this. Some believe it was one tithe used three different ways in different years. Others, like **Josephus the Jewish historian**, believed there was indeed a festival or second tithe and a poor fund tithe, also called by some – the “third tithe”.

These tithes are not mentioned at all in the New Testament though I keep the lesson from them.

Second tithe

This tithe we’ll talk about now, the second tithe, was to be kept by and EATEN BY the tithers -- the Israelites – while at the Feasts or holydays of God. *That’s clearly different from the first tithe for Levites!* They could also turn those bags of grain and animals into cash if they wished. Notice again, **this is tithe on grain and herds**, not wages or salary.

Deuteronomy 14:22-27 (“2nd” tithe)

"You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. 23 And **YOU shall EAT before YHVH 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 YHVH 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 YHVH your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when YHVH 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 YHVH 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 [context is **FOOD**]; **YOU shall EAT there** before YHVH your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household.

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

First tithe was eaten only by Levites. But this SECOND tithe was primarily eaten by the tither and then SHARED with Levites also. That's clearly a different tithe.

*Some ministers I know do NOT tithe this second tithe or even the Poor Fund or third tithe, because they see themselves as “**spiritual Levites**” who should be provided for, based on being a “royal priesthood”, but that term is used of ALL the brethren, not just the ministers. (1 Peter 2:9). And it's about “priesthood”-- not Levites.*

So I think that's a risky jump or interpretation of the scriptures to call our ministers “spiritual Levites”. *I don't see Paul and the other apostles ever calling themselves “spiritual Levites”.* And so ask your pastor how he tithes and if he tithes a second tithe and Poor Fund or third tithe.

The Jewish historian **Josephus** after the time of Christ, refers to this Festival fund as “second tithe”. It was for keeping the feasts and was to be shared with the poor and with the Levites.

That, by the way, implies, that God never intended that the Levites would ever be rich. The way tithing is kept today in mega-churches, **the senior pastors are clearly very, very rich.** That's not right.

My wife and I still save up for the feasts, so we can keep them properly, though the New Testament requires it nowhere, but it's a good idea.

The 3rd Tithe or Poor Tithe

In the Old Covenant, in the 3rd and 6th year out of 7-year cycle, there was an arrangement for some money to go to the poor: the Poor tithe, or some call it “THIRD tithe”. Josephus, the Jewish historian just a few years after Christ's ministry, says there were three tithes. But many rabbis explain it in many ways. Some believe it's the same as “first tithe” for the Levites that was re-allocated to the poor in the 3rd and 6th years. There's debate about it. The point was: take care of the poor. Look at the wording of it.

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

“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 YHVH your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.**"

I'm sure that most of the time, Israel did not tithe. We know for sure they were not tithing in the days of Hezekiah, Nehemiah and Malachi, when tithing had to be restored. How have WE been towards the poor around us, especially poor brethren? The new covenant implies we should ALWAYS take care of the poor, not just 3rd and 6th years.

Go to this website home page, in the Search Bar type in "Help the poor" to find the sermon I gave in 2011 on our duty to take care of the poor. I think many could benefit from it. We cannot outgive God. We REAP what we SOW. Notice the last part of v 29 – in WHATEVER we do, God will bless us if we remember to help the poor generously. So many find out that things just go better when people tithe.

Here's an extra scripture on the "third tithe". **Whenever we have contributed substantially to the poor, GOD tells us to ask him to bless us (Verse 15).** Don't balk at that. It's something God tells us to do!

Deuteronomy 26:12-15

"When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the THIRD year — the YEAR of tithing — and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled,

13 then you shall say before YHVH your God: 'I have removed the holy tithe from my house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten them.

14 **I have not eaten ANY of it** when in mourning, nor have I removed any of it for an unclean use, nor given any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of YHVH my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me.

15 **Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and BLESS Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as You swore to our fathers, "a land flowing with milk and honey."**

Notice THIS tithe did not go exclusively just to the Levites. Nor did the Israelite who saved it, eat of it during the Feasts. It was entirely for the poor. This is clearly different.

We personally had still been keeping this and helping the poor. I mention it as it is a part of this sermon. But now we don't just wait every third year. *We're in the spirit of the law, and in the new covenant we are to help as often and as much as we can – and as privately as we can.* God will reward you in his time.

Light on the Rock does help – with poor funds -- some very elderly and/or very poor brethren here in America and even in other countries. We do our best to keep orphans from starving with funds we have, some of which comes from a few of you. If you wish to help us do that, we could sure use it.

HOLYDAY OFFERINGS 3X A YEAR

God listed three times, on three specific holy days for at least all the males to attend, and to be sure to have a holyday offering. **Three “times” cannot be translated “three seasons” and no translation does.** I teach having holy day offerings ***three times a year*** on those three specific holydays. I'm not the only one teaching what scripture says on this. Three times, not seven.

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

"THREE *times* a year all your males shall appear before YHVH your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks [Pentecost], and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before YHVH empty-handed.

17 Every man shall give *as he is able*, according to the blessing of YHVH your God which He has given you."

Come prepared. The Philippians gave "beyond that which you were able". You've thought it through, prayed about it and prepared your holyday offering check. The amount should be a reflection of how much you feel God has blessed you (verse 17).

This is not mentioned in the New Covenant but most of us who keep the holydays do give an offering. Most do it on all seven holydays though. I believe it's always OK to be ready with a voluntary offering to God coming from your cheerful heart. But technically: three times a year is what is required, at least

in Old Testament scriptures.

There's much more in my Part 1 teaching. If you still haven't heard my Part 1 message on Tithing in the Old Covenant, please watch it as there's so much more. Let's move into the New Covenant teaching about giving and tithing.

FIRST LOOK AT TITHING IN The NEW COVENANT

Jesus/Yeshua on use of money and tithing:

Regarding money: Yeshua (Jesus) tells us to focus on using our money in a way that builds an investment in heaven. That's the priority.

Matthew 6:19-21

"Do NOT lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; **20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 19:23-25 he says it's very difficult for the very wealthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Also remember that Jesus had to fulfill ALL the laws of the Old covenant perfectly (Romans 8:3-4, which he DID). So anything he did or said up to resurrection was about fulfilling the old covenant.

Some believe if Jesus said something, it must apply today. Remember he was still living in the old covenant himself! He also said **(Matthew 5:23-24)** to leave your gift (sacrifice) at the altar if you had something against someone, go find the one offended and make amends. Are we to take that to mean that we still must sacrifice animals? NO! He was speaking of the old covenant still.

People point to (as I even did in the past) Matthew 23:23 to show tithing is still a LAW in the new covenant. Sharing certainly is. But note the following:

Matthew 23:23 was spoken to hypocritical Pharisees, ALL still under the old covenant, who were tithing on produce of the land but missing God's greater teachings of justice, mercy and faith. By saying this, Yeshua tells us all that tithing should be done, **but it's NOT the most important thing!** He says to put more focus on justice, mercy and faith.

Matthew 23:23-24 (and Luke 11:42 is similar)

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have **neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith.** These you ought to have done, *without leaving the others undone.*

24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

Jesus even mentions first paying your taxes, then He mentions tithing, so we can be sure what our tithable amount was.

Notice the word order: Yeshua mentions paying taxes **before** he mentions paying God his tithes. Had you ever noticed that before? I think this also leans towards tithing on NET income, not on gross. It shows God's kindness and gentleness to our financial needs.

Matthew 22:17-21

17 "Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? 19 Show Me the tax money." So they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" 21 They said to Him, "Caesar's."

And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

And some of you don't even believe in paying taxes and do all you can to get out of it. STOP. Scripture is clear here and **Romans 13:6-7. We pay taxes.**

Yeshua was careful with his word order and which he put first. Again, this is still under the old covenant. If you didn't pay taxes, you could go to jail!

What else DID Yeshua (Jesus) teach on this subject: Take care of your relatives who need help before focusing on gifts to the temple (or nowadays, to the church. Yep, that's what he said! He said they were nullifying God's commands to HONOR father and mother by their ridiculous idea that gifting the temple trumped helping out ones needy parents. Wow!

Mark 7:9-13

He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'

11 But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban" — ' (that is, a gift to God),
12 **then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother,**
13 **making the word of God of no effect through your TRADITION which you have handed down.** And many such things you do."

What's he saying here? God's gentleness is coming through. God is prioritizing taking care of your parents and loved ones here I believe. Don't tell your parents you don't have the funds to help them because you have to first pay what you've committed for church support or tithes.

Paul taught the same thing. Of course. Take care of your loved ones and relatives or you're worse than an unbeliever!

1 Timothy 5:3-4, 8

"Honor widows who are really widows. 4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.

8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever".

If you live in Europe or Australia where taxes can be as high as 60%, and if you try to practice three tithes, and believe in tithing on gross (as one speaker I recently listened to), there could be little, or nothing left to provide for your OWN family! **So this is why I'm showing you where God gives us priorities and shows the gentleness of God about funds.**

Jesus also laid the groundwork for landmark teaching that **we can give MORE THAN 10% if we wish**, or be generous with everything we have! Remember the poor widow who gave her last two mites—a penny- and Yeshua said she gave everything – 100% -- of what she had, and he did not stop her.

Mark 12:41-44 ESV

And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums.

42 **And a POOR WIDOW** came and put in two small copper coins, **which make a penny.** 43 And he called his disciples to him and said

to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box.

44 For they all contributed out of their abundance, **but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.**"

The New Covenant magnifies the Law. Now the SPIRIT and intention of the law are included. So in the New Testament God focuses more on generosity, always helping the poor, and giving more than 10% when we can. God will bless you. We cannot outgive God.

Jesus also said when we give alms or support, to do so privately. Normally, we aren't to think much about it or tell others about it. (**Matthew 6:1-4**).

Tithing and supporting "the Work of God" in the New Testament

Besides **Matthew 23:23** – what we just read, but still applicable under the Old Covenant, only Hebrews 7 and Luke 11:42 mention tithing, plus the Pharisee in prayer who bragged of tithing of all he possessed (**Luke 18:12**).

Get this: **NOWHERE else in the New Testament – besides those verses -- do we find the words "tithing, tithed, tithes". They're just not there!**

Paul never mentions tithing or teaches it. He DOES discuss supporting those who feed you with God's word (1 Cor. 9:14). But he never chastises anyone for not tithing, though he certainly corrected a lot of other issues in church.

Jesus could not have, and did not, receive tithes or that would have broken the Old covenant law he was still under.

Remember? The First tithe was to go only to Levites and ONLY Levites could consume what they received. And Levites gave 10% of the best part to the priests, who were also Levites. Jesus and his disciples were not Levites.

How then were Jesus and his twelve disciples supported as they went about preaching the gospel? Not by tithes. But they absolutely did accept SUPPORT and offerings from people.

Luke 8:1-3

Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. **And the twelve were with Him, and certain women** who had

been healed of evil spirits and infirmities — Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, **and many others who provided for Him from their substance.**

So our Savior Yeshua (Jesus) accepted food and financial help and even invited himself to lunch at times, as he did Zacchaeus (**Luke 19:1-10**).

Our Master taught his disciples to accept food and accommodation during their ministries as their RIGHT, as their WAGES. *He never says, "You can safely receive tithes."* They were all still in the Old Covenant, so he could NOT and did not teach that. *The disciples were not Levites. HE DID NOT even call them "spiritual Levites", as many call ministers today.*

Matthew 10:7-9

"And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' 8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons.

Freely you have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, 10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; ***for a worker is worthy of his food.***"

Luke 10:7 (and Mark 6:10)

"And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, **for the laborer is worthy of his wages.** Do not go from house to house."

It's OK to accept support and accommodation from brethren apparently, and Yeshua said, "EXPECT it, ACCEPT it."

I think it's shameful that many preachers who strongly preach tithing, still charge \$45-\$150 and more for their DVD's or books. But they have expensive rings, multiple mansions, often own their own jets – and more! Disgusting. "FREELY give", our Savior said. If they are being tithed to, believe me, they can afford to give their DVD's freely. Some people are too poor to produce extra cash for their products.

APOSTLE Paul's TEACHING on supporting true ministers

Now let's talk about Paul and the New Testament on financial support.

In the instruction to the Gentile churches given in **Acts 15**, **nothing is mentioned about tithing**. After 70 AD, when the temple in Jerusalem was totally destroyed, and the priests and Levites scattered, and many were killed – one could not tithe in obedience to the Torah. *Without the temple, Levites, priests, and sacrifices – how could Jews who accepted only the Old Testament lawfully tithe? They couldn't*, by Old Covenant standards.

Paul, who was never shy about pointing out areas that needed correcting, never mentions tithing or tithes. Not even once. He mentions support, but not tithing, even in 1 Cor. 9, when he had the perfect opportunity to!

In the New Covenant, after Christ's resurrection, there are no stated tithing laws, and the laws of the Old Testament could NOT have been used once there was no more temple, no more Levites. We might assume that true ministers are "spiritual Levites" because of us being called "a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). But that term applies to all believers, not just the ministers.

What we saw in Jesus' example and what we'll also see from Paul is *that ministers, especially full-time ministers, who are providing spiritual food to you **DESERVE their hire, their food and your financial support.***

I still do send contributions on my salary or income in the New Testament. And we can read **in Philippians 4:15 that tithing is now called, in the New Testament, "this matter of giving and receiving"**.

Philippians 4:15

"Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, **no church shared with me concerning GIVING AND RECEIVING but you only.**"

Paul never mentions tithing! It would have been so easy here. From everything I can see, it is not a LAW to teach New Testament tithing. **But it IS a very definite law to financially support those preaching the gospel. Call it tithing if you will. But Paul never did.** He used the words "this matter of giving and receiving". *I'm not going to try to be better or stronger than Paul on this doctrine.*

Paul did strongly preach what Jesus/Yeshua had commanded. Commanded.

1 Corinthians 9:14

"Even so the Lord has **commanded** that those who preach the gospel should LIVE from the gospel."

In the New Covenant, everything I can see, is that we are commanded to financially support where God is clearly working. We're no longer tithing on grains, fruits, flocks and herds.

But there was a special collection, an offering, being gathered to take down to the poor starving Jerusalem brethren during a famine. This was not tithes, but a food offering. But look at the HEART here.

God is watching and judging our cheerful generosity to help saints in need – even as our LOTR does. **Please remember we'll never outgive God. Notice he never mentions tithing;** but he does teach generosity, helping the poor and needy and supporting the ministry.

2 Corinthians 9:5-7

“Therefore I thought it necessary to urge these brothers to go to you in advance and to arrange ahead of time the generous contribution you had promised, so this may be ready as a generous gift and not as something you feel forced to do.

6 My point is this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and **the person who sows generously will also reap generously.**

7 Each one of you should give just as HE has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, because God loves a cheerful giver.”

Now we give and share – and support the poor and the work of ministry -- **because we WANT to, not because we HAVE to** (under compulsion)

We'll soon see what Paul taught in **1 Cor. 9**. Paul makes the argument there that Corinth and all the churches where Paul was “feeding” them God's word, should have been providing food and money to him as he preached to them. But the churches at Corinth (Greece), Thessalonica and maybe even Ephesus were NOT providing for him.

Paul had to **make tents while in Corinth (Acts 18:1-3)** to supplement what he was receiving from the church of Philippi in Macedonia.

Philippians 4:14-17

“Nevertheless you have done well that **you shared** in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians also know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, ***NO church shared with me***

concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.”

Paul had to support himself even in Ephesus, he said: (**Acts 20:34-35**) as he told them to look at his worn hands from so much work. Paul says in Acts 20 that HIS OWN HANDS provided for his own needs! SHAME on Corinth and Ephesus and Thessalonica!

Supporting true ministers is the New Covenant approach. But he never mentions tithing. This would've been the perfect time to do so! But he did not. And he doesn't call it tithing – but “concerning giving and receiving.”

Now let's focus deeply on Paul's inspired teaching of supporting true pastors.

1 Corinthians 9:3-14

“My defense to those who examine me is this: 4 Do we have no right to eat and drink? 5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? **6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?** 7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

8 Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? 10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? 12 If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? (see verse 14)

Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. [Yet he never talks about tithes here] **13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar.** [Num 18:8-10; Deut 14:1-5]

*****14 Even so the Lord has COMMANDED that those who preach the gospel should LIVE from the gospel.**"

"Tithing" in the New Covenant is NOT AT ALL about grains, herds, and fruit. They're not even mentioned! Now it IS about money, wages, and about generously supporting ministries from your cheerful voluntary heart when they are feeding you spiritually and doing the work of God.

Yes, that includes even us right here, at Light on the Rock! So many share financially with *other* ministries but then come here for spiritual food *but feel somehow, we don't need or qualify for any support.* We here at Light on the Rock could use support too, just like Paul is saying. Please consider us also.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4 (about the food offering to Jerusalem)

"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia (Philippi): **that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.**

3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and **BEYOND their ability, they were freely willing...**"

2 Corinthians 11:7-9

"Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because **I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge?**

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you.

9 And when I *was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one*, for **what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied.**"

If you're receiving spiritual food – whether from us at Light on the Rock – or others, SUPPORT those feeding you by supporting them financially. If you have several ministries who are feeding you, **then SPLIT your support** accordingly, but don't miss the "little guys", like us at Light on the Rock. The much bigger ministries no doubt receive a lot of "tithing" money already. People like to support organizations that are "doing the Work of God" and I don't blame them.

But does it take hundreds of ministers, cd's, DVD's, and booklets? Paul and Barnabas (or Silas) were just two people. No booklets, no radio or TV. And he had to work during the week but preached each sabbath.

We're also doing the Work of God too. **And what is "the work of God"?** Is it a big church group that has lots of power and resources to print booklets, be on TV and radio, and hosts huge feast sites? Here's what Yeshua said:

John 6:28-29

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

29 **Jesus** answered and said to them, "**THIS is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.**"

And you all know THAT is our focus: pointing you to Jesus Christ, or what his mama called him - Yeshua. HE'S our Light. HE's our Rock. HE is our focus here at Light on the Rock. We're constantly teaching on utter complete faith and belief in Jesus Christ and our heavenly father. Constantly. We're doing God's work too, though we're very small. But so were Paul and Barnabas – two people trying to do their incredible work while also self-supporting their needs.

So in the NEW Covenant, it's no longer tithes on grain and flocks, but sharing money to help the ministry continue. Yes, *I would gladly accept any help from you, besides the 3-4 who help me now.*

If you wish to help us at Light on the Rock, go on our Light on the Rock home page, go to "About" at the top of the page – click on it, then find "Donate to LOTR" – and hit the yellow donate box. You can use your credit cards or PayPal. And wow, thank you so, so much if you help.

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You can also mail a check if you prefer, to this address:

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HELPING The POOR in the NEW Covenant

How would you like to directly help Jesus Christ when He's in need?

How are we to help the poor in the NEW Covenant? Too often brethren can settle into the attitude of just leaving the poor a statement – “You're in my thoughts and prayers”—**which** is just a variant of what James says – “Be warmed and filled” – but then we do nothing!?

James 2:15-17

“If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “*Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,*” *but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body,* what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

Isn't that so often what happens? We feel bad for them – but do nothing? You can join with us in helping some of the poor, here in America or even poverty-stricken areas here and there around the world.

Let me tell you about a HUGE bonus when you help the ultra- poor and needy! Our Yeshua the Messiah says he takes all that – personally. He sees us as feeding HIM, clothing HIM, helping HIM and welcoming HIM – when we do it to the poor and those rejected by the world.

The parable of the Sheep and Goats in **Matthew 25:31-46**. Please take time to read it again through verse 46.

Matthew 25:31-40

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.
33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'**

37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, '**Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?**'

40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.

There are terribly poor people in America, Kenya, others, and orphans we could use some help on. Would you help us help Christ's "least" brothers and sisters? **He's watching. So the point is: take care of the poor, as much as you can and in the new covenant, and don't wait for every third year.**

In fact pure religion" is partly described as helping orphans and widows **(James 1:27).**

There's a lot of discussion about the "3 tithes" but they're not discussed in the new covenant in any way, and never mentioned anywhere after Christ's resurrection. Nor were they part of the instructions to Gentiles in Acts 15. So in the New Covenant, the amount is one you set – and God delights to see our generosity and cheerful heart – and He's JUDGING our hearts and generosity, as in the parable we just read.

Therefore any discussion about what it means to tithe on "increase" – for example, is now moot in the New Testament. How much you tithe or when and how and to whom – is your choice, and being observed by God who likes to reward us and bless us when we're generous. To "tithe" means to give 10%.

In the New Covenant, of course you're not limited and we're not tithing on grains and flocks. So in the New Covenant, find a ministry that is feeding you – and send them support. I hope you'll find we are feeding you and others too. I thank you who choose to help us.

But do support where you see God's work being done. Whether you call that "tithing" or being generous, we should do it in the new covenant.

If you wish to continue the Old Covenant model of 10% first tithe, plus offerings, plus 10% festival 2nd tithe, and 10% in the 3rd year – you may do so voluntarily, but one more time: it's not a new covenant requirement.

What is required now? Support those ministers of God who are doing his work and help the poor.

And God wants us to give as we're able. He no longer says 10% in the New Covenant – but I think God is wanting us to help the poor all the time, and to strongly support ministries that are feeding you.

If you disagree with this presentation, then show me why with New Covenant scriptures without assumptions or what you've always believed. I hope most of you have found this interesting and thought provoking. And I hope you've learned more about tithing.

May God bless you as you live in this Biblical understanding. And if some of you choose to send support to us at Light on the Rock, may God bless you immensely. *With more support, we'll get God's word out to much more of the world!*

I hope you've learned a lot about tithing – both in the old and new covenants – as indeed even I learned a lot in preparing this. Thank you for coming. Let's close in prayer.

Closing prayer