Cheerful Givers

Why Should We Give Tithes and Offerings?

What is a tithe? A tithe is a tenth of what we owe to God for all that He has given to us. The tithe is first mentioned in Genesis 14:20 when Abraham gave tithes to the Most High God for granting him victory over his enemies. God later required the Israelites to give a tenth of all their earnings in worship of Him, their Provider (Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:24-28; Deuteronomy 14:22).

Besides the tithe, there is also the offering. The offerings are voluntary gifts or freewill offerings (Exodus 25:2-3; 35:5, 21-29; Leviticus 7:16; 23:38; Numbers 7:2-88) in thanksgiving to God for answered prayers, or for special purposes like the building of God’s house (Exodus 35:21; 36:3; Leviticus 7:12; 22:29).

A Command
So why should we give tithes? We give our tithes to God because (1) He commanded us to do so, and (2) the tenth is holy and belongs to Him. Leviticus 27:30, “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’s: it is holy unto the LORD.”

Jesus told the people, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21). The things that belong to Caesar, the money that he requires in the form of taxes, give to him. Likewise, we ought to render unto God the tithe that is His. When a man does not tithe, he is said to have robbed God. God is angry at those who steal from Him: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation” (Malachi 3:8-9). Each time we get our paycheque, let us not forget to put one-tenth of it into the offering bag.

Obedience
Although God has commanded His people to tithe and offer to Him their material goods, yet nothing delights Him more than obedience. Samuel said, “Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22). How then should we offer our tithes and offerings? The offering of anything to the Lord must be preceded by a godly and sanctified life, or else our gifts would mean nothing to Him at all.

Love and Gratitude
We tithe and offer to God our possessions not only because it is commanded of us to do so, but also because we love Him and are
grateful to Him for all that He has given to us. Everything we have and own comes from the Lord. “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven” (John 3:27). In Him “we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). If God does not provide for us a job, give us good health and strength to work, grant us good opportunities and success, we will not be able to earn and get gain. Therefore, we ought to show how thankful and grateful we are to the Lord by our heartfelt offerings. David expresses such a spirit well when he prayed, “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee” (1 Chronicles 29:14).

Sincerity and Truth
When we give to the Lord, it must be done out of a sincere and truthful heart. The Apostle Paul said, “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). We must not be like Ananias and Sapphira who gave out of an insincere and deceitful heart. Peter rebuked Ananias, “Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3-4). When we give to the Lord, it must be done with a pure heart of love for the Lord, thinking only of Him and not of self. This is wonderfully demonstrated by the poor widow who only had two mites, but gave them all to the Lord which earned the Lord’s commendation, “Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living” (Mark 12:43-44).

Worship
When we present our tithes and offerings to God, we must do so worshipfully. “Give unto the LORD the glory due to his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chronicles 16:29). When entering into the presence of the Lord, we are told not to appear before Him empty (Exodus 23:15; 34:20). We are to honour the Lord with our substance, and with the first receipts of our profits (Proverbs 3:9).

Privilege
Tithing our tenth and offering to the Lord our gifts is a privilege. We give to the Lord not because He needs our money or goods, but because He desires our worship of Him sincerely expressed in tangible ways. The Lord is a debtor to no man. When we give to Him, He gives back to us even more, not just materially, but even more so, spiritually. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). Above all, know this: “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8).