

Our Possession...The Tithe

Many of us have been raised in the tradition of tithe and offering for the financial provision of ministry and church expenditure. The system works very well in most environments as a practical method to meet the financial commitments of the church. Tithing is even practiced outside of the Christian faith. Tithing has been utilized even before the time Abraham. Historically it has been the financial cornerstone for everything from religion to the spoils of war.

Much can be written on the history of the tithe but that is not the focus of this short article.

What motivates me to write this is that as a full Preterist the word of God has taken on new meaning when the ceremonial rites of the old testament are ferried over into the new testament. A response that I have heard is "the tithe was instituted before the Mosaic law" therefore it is an eternal principle. My answer to that is, so was animal sacrifice, circumcision and pagan priesthoods.

I believe that the tithe is part of the ceremonial law. And that its shadow was cast from Mt. Sinai to the consummation of law keeping in 70 AD. The shadow of the tithe is fulfilled in association with the New Testament priesthood. I will get to that later. As fulfilled prophecy believers we are encouraged to identify word pictures in the old and new testaments for an accurate assessment of our biblical study. This approach to the word of God breathes new life to our understanding but also challenges some of our most cherished beliefs.

To begin our study we must examine when the tithe becomes an important player in the economy of the ceremonial law. It is also important to see how it is handled by the priesthood and to see the prophetic view it projects in new testament fulfillment.

The Sabbath, circumcision, the Feasts, new moons and dietary laws were all to be fulfilled in the new kingdom.

There is no way around this fact. These things in the old testament had to have a complementary representation in the new testament. Each aspect of the sacrifices and offerings were illustrations of Gods` redemption and vision of how the church would function.

Unfortunately, there are church systems that embrace aspects of the ceremonial law. The Sabbath, a return to the Seder at Passover and in some cases dietary laws have been embraced.

Why Did God Give The Tithe To The Levite Only?

The Levites were not to possess land for an inheritance. Their possession was the harvest.(the tenth)

Num 18:20-21

20 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi **all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance**, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation

The Levite was to inherit the tithe, it was his possession. It would be short sighted on our part to say that the only biblical function of the tithe was only for the financial upkeep of the priesthood. To see the greater view we must look at what was offered.

Lev 27:30

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.

KJV

Lev 27:32

32 And concerning the **tithe of the herd**, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

KJV

Deut 14:23

23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, **the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks**; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

KJV

We should take note here that money, products produced and profit on services rendered were not tithed. That in itself is a curiosity. Why were only the agricultural products tithed? The emphasis that Jesus made in his parables and his teachings will give us a clue. The tithe is directly related to the harvest. Whenever Jesus refers to the harvest he was referring to souls. John 4:35

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and **then cometh harvest** ? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest .

The harvest that he was referring to was the final harvest of the religious year. The feast of Tabernacles was the seventh and final month of the harvest cycle. This harvest reaped all of the fruit of the land as opposed to Passover (barley) and Pentecost (wheat).

The harvest of course was a type of his people. The reaping a type of resurrection. Now that we have established the typology of the harvest let us look to the harvest of the first month (Firstfruits)

The feast of Firstfruits was celebrated three days after Passover. On that day the High Priest would wave a sheaf of the harvest before the Lord.

Lev 23:9-11

9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:

11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

The sheaf that was waved represented the harvest of the first fruits (the first harvest of the cycle.) You could say it showcased the entire first harvest.

That sheaf was Jesus Christ, he shewed himself alive for 40 days with many infallible proofs. He was waved before the Lord by the High Priest (himself)

It was at this feast that the children of Israel brought their offering of the first fruits of their increase. This was done only once at that time of the year.

Prov 3:9

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the **firstfruits of all thine increase** :
(The above scripture does not refer to tithe). This offering is tied to the feast of first fruits.)

In new testament fulfillment, the first fruit harvest represents the first fruit generation.
(Pentecost to 70 AD)

James 1:18

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that **we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.**

KJV

Rev 14:3-4

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. **These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb**

I hope that we have now established a link identifying the first fruit offering with the harvest of Firstfruits. The harvest being the first generation believers.

The tithe is also tied to the harvest. In terms of the new testament, the tithe is also the possession or inheritance of the priesthood. Today the priesthood is the entire church.

1 Peter 2:9

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light

The tithe represents the entire harvest. How do I get that? Ten represents the whole.

10 commandments = all of the law. When one gave a tithe in the old testament it represented all of their increase. The tithe today represents the whole harvest of believers. We the priests of the most high God possess each other, the harvest, the body of Christ.

We the meek, inherit the earth. (the new earth, his temple)

First fruit offering = the first generation believers

The tithe = the entire church

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signature In Jesus Name,
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