

KINGDOM
or
GODS DOMINION

John 8,32

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Author: Daniel Seidenberg - Deutsche Erstauflage 2003

Bible: King James Version

Translation: Heinz Hofstetter

With the consent of the Author Daniel Seidenberg,
Lehrdienst LaMakor, Lamakor.info

This publication may be freely reproduced and published, inasmuch as the text is rendered completely and without cuts. All other uses require the express authority of the author.

Contents

Author's preface	1
TITHES	1
Tithes and offerings, a new testament order?	1
The tithes before the law at the time of the Patriarchs	1
Tithing in the Mosaic Law and in the prophets	3
The role of money in tithes and offerings in the old Covenant and in the Prophets	7
Labor of Love - the glory of the new Covenant	8
Summary of the two chapters	14
Is tithing or giving now actually wrong?	15
THE KING'S LAW	15
When people are ruling instead of God	15
The Kingdom of God through the law of the Holy Spirit	20

KINGDOM OR GODS DOMINION

Author's preface

This little script shall contrast the reign of God and the human kingship in the community only in broad terms. It is also not a systematic study, but rather a Bible-Study on this subject. It should encourage us to remove the yoke of the people that rule in the body of Christ and to "plow a new". The dough by mixing became sour and should be done away, to make room for a new, pure dawn. So, the body of Christ will be released for his vocation, to witness the reign of God to the whole world through the labor of love.

TITHES

Tithes and offerings, a new testament order?

Tithes and offerings are an integral part of systems in most churches today. They guarantee for the necessary income, from which are paid the costs for the church building, the salary of the pastor and the duties at the headquarters of the community movement. What tithing is meant here, the giving to the church (community or person to which) where one belongs, to pay the tenth of their income in Tithes and offering. Since there are no Scriptures in the New Testament that clearly prescribe or regulate tithes and offerings, the rules of the Old Testament are used. To do this, the interpretation is implanted: The Temple becomes the congregation (church) and the priests the pastors. The Scriptures on which that interpretation is based, are examined in this study.

The tithes before the law at the time of the Patriarchs

To justify a New Testament tithe bid, reference is made to Abraham and Melchizedek, which is an image on Jeschuah*, in that, Abraham, the father of all believers, also gave tithes demonstrates, tithe is an eternal order independent by law.

*(Jeschuah is the Hebrew Name and means "JAHWEH saves", Jesus is only the Greek pronunciation).

Genesis 14,18-20

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be the most high God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Melchizedek blesses Abraham after his victory over the Kings.

Then Abraham gives him the tithe of his (booty) plunder spontaneously.

This procedure is however unique. We don't read that Abraham gave the tithe to anyone else of anything else and on any another occasion. What Abraham on this occasion did, also became never a practice and was not corresponding to the time of the Law. When the children of Israel under Moses defeated the Midianites, they also made much loot. This was divided among those who went and those who did

into battle. Then later a toll was charged for the Lord. But this was not 10 percent, which would have met the tithes.

But for those who had not fought only 2 per cent and the fighters even only 2 thousandths - 50 times less than the tithe but nothing even near the tithes.

Numbers 31,28-30

28 And levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war who went out to battle: one out of five hundred (0.2%), both of the persons, and of the cattle, and of the donkeys, and of the sheep:

29 Take it from their half, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for a heave offering of the LORD.

30 And of the children of Israel's half, you shall take one out of fifty (2%), of the persons, of the cattle, of the donkeys, and of the flocks, of all manner of animals, and give them unto the Levites, who have charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.

We can easily see from this example, that it was not custom in Israel also under the law, to give the tenth like Abraham from the spoils of war. Abrahams tithe was a one-time-thing and that of an exception. Also, this process in the New Testament is interpreted only spiritually.

Hebrew 7,1-3

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all;

3 made like unto the Son of God; abides a priest continually.

This section includes an entire chapter. Nevertheless, it holds no single verse that talks about we should give the tithe in the New Covenant order. Highlighted is rather that Jeschuah is our eternal high priest.

Hebrew 8,1-2

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

The next time the tithe was mentioned, was when Jacob fled from his brother Esau in the foreign land.

Genesis 28,20-22

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothing to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that you shall give me I will surely give the tenth unto you.

Jacob makes God a vow: **If - then**. Only after God had given him about what he wished (it took Jacob twenty years), Jacob promised to give him the tithe. Whenever "Jacob" is called in the scripture - it points to Israel according to the flesh. Here no spiritual model is shown to us, but a man, who wanted to make an horse-trading in a carnal calculation with God.

Tithing in the Mosaic Law and in the prophets

Christian tithing derives typically to the merits of the Mosaic Law. This is the model that should be acted according to its pattern in the new Covenant. The priests of the Old Testament are reinterpreted to New Testament "pastors", the temple to the local community. In this thinking, clearly the unfortunate clergy-laity system of the Roman Catholic Church is exposed, that still sticks in us! In the New Covenant, not just a few are anointed - yes just a few - and all the others are just ordinary people, as has been the case in the Old Covenant. Instead, there are now all members of the body of Christ - "Christ's Kingly Priesthood". No one is more holy or higher as his brothers and his sisters. Thus nobody is guilty tithing to anyone.

1. Peter 2,9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

We want to now examine detail the Scripture most commonly quoted in connection with the "Christian Tithing Type".

Malachi 3,8 Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, How have we robbed you? In tithes and offerings.

The interpretation of this verse has caused the most disquiet and uncertainty, because it contains the threat "a curse"; so life will not be trifled with itself. So seriously, we need to examine whether we are not still guilty in the NT of taxes and tithes. This question unsettled Peter already. But Jeschuah made it clear to him, God is neither collecting taxes nor tributes from his children.

Matthew 17,24-26

24 And when they came to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Does not your teacher pay tribute?

25 He said, Yes. And when he came into the house, Jesus preceded him, saying, What think you, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter said unto him, Of strangers. Jesus said unto him, Then are the children free.

Jeschuah has and is the justice, which the law calls for.

But we should live as sons of the New Covenant in the sense and spirit of the Torah, but not according to their letters.

Roman 10,4 For Christ is the end (Gr. telos STRONG) of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

Paul warns us seriously, not to return under the Law, as we then just come back under its curses.

Galatians 5,1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The ecclesiastical tradition has reduced the sense of tithing - to bring money into the religious transmission.

Thus, especially the clergy (in the community of preachers) and the infrastructure of the Church (or municipality) should be entertained.

However, if we consider the legislation which God gave in the Torah through Moses, it will result in a much more nuanced picture of tithes and offerings. Who absorbed it more deeply, notes just that tithes and offerings are not uniform. There are many different tithes, taxes and offerings, and the provisions for them will fill several chapters!

The exact practice is but still not to be found in it. The historical sources and the Jewish traditions speak of three different tithes; one of the priests and Levites, a poor tenth and a tenth that was reserved for the feasts of the Lord. But they cannot give us exact information. Both the Jewish and the Christian experts agree however, that the levies for the Levites and priests are just one aspect of what emerges from the Scriptures.

Tithes and offerings served last but not least, to experience community with each other and with God. This was fulfilled in lush banquets, which played an important role, as testifies to mutual appreciation with meals has always been in the Middle East and reaffirms also alliances. So also Melchizedek met Abraham with bread and wine, which is so - with a meal. Abraham hosted the three angels, of which one was the Lord himself (*Genesis 18*), and they ate with him. Following this meal, Abraham received huge promises.

Paul also talks about God's table community with us, and sets it out in relation to the new Covenant.

1. Corinthians 10,16-18

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

The greatest and most beautiful performance of the table community with the offer, we find in the Passover-Meal, that Jeschuah with his disciples was sharing, before he gave Himself as the sacrifice.

Luke 22,13-20

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.

14 And when the hour came, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with

15 And he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my

blood, which is shed for you.

This background opens now a very different context, if we read:

Malachi 3,10 Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and test me now in this, says 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.

The word *food* is an important key to a deeper understanding. In the corresponding Mosaic provisions (in the law), which include many chapters, it is namely repeated time and time again - food and eating.

Numbers 18,8-11

8 And the LORD spoke unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given you the duties of my heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto you have I given them as a portion to you, and to your sons, by an ordinance forever.

9 This shall be yours of the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering of theirs, and every sin offering of theirs, and every trespass offering of theirs, which they shall render unto me, shall be most holy for you and for your sons.

10 In the most holy place shall you eat it; every male shall eat it: it shall be holy unto you.

11 And this is yours; the heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel: I have given them unto you, and to your sons and to your daughters with you, by a statute forever: everyone that is clean in your house shall eat of it.

Not only the priests, but also the ones who brought tithes or offerings, shall eat it. Every two years the Israelite had an obligation, to fully bring their tithes to Jerusalem, and to eat it himself with his family and all his household there. The Levite, who lived in his village, was also invited.

The commandment of the tithes was the call, to thank God for his goodness and his blessing, which he had given with the harvest, and a large and cheerful celebration before him with all households in the city of God.

Also the Levites, the widows and orphans, as well as the aliens and needy were invited. First fruits, tithes, vows and offerings were prescribed as sacred meals and were not allowed to be eaten anywhere else but in Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 12,17-18

17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain, or of your wine, or of your oil, or the firstlings of your herds or of your flock, nor any of your offerings which you vow, nor your freewill offerings, or heave offering of your hand:

18 But you must eat them before the LORD your God in the place which the LORD your God shall choose, you, and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite that is within your gates: and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in all that you put your hands unto.

In this chapter, the request is reviewed, the call to eat itself from the tithing and be merry before the Lord, because he enjoys such communion with us. The Israelites after the harvest thus drew to Jerusalem; to praise God for the return he had given them, by extensively celebrating, eating and drinking in his presence, - and this

year after year. It was something like "Holy Holiday" with God. We read the same in relation to the firstfruits.

Deuteronomy 15,19-20

19 All the firstborn males that come of your herd and of your flock you shall sanctify unto the LORD your God: you shall do no work with the firstborn of your bullock, nor shear the firstborn of your sheep.

20 You shall eat it before the LORD your God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, you and your household.

The tithe should only, once in three years come to the others not only the Levite as a receiver, but also poor, widows, orphans and strangers completely.

Deuteronomy 14,28-29

28 At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your increase the same year, and shall lay it up within your gates:

29 And the Levite, (because he has no part nor inheritance with you,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

That others could be saturated by the giving of the tithe, Giving was the basis, on which God blessed him (the giver). Sure, also the recipients blessed him, who often sorely needed these gifts, in gratitude, after they had eaten themselves and was satisfied. Also in the third year of the tithes, the emphasis lies on the "common cheerful giver".

Deuteronomy 26,11 And you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given unto you, and unto your house, you, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

It is also noted that they ate the tithes of the first two years in Jerusalem, but gave the tithe of the third year at their place of residence. The tithe, of which man himself ate, has a higher spiritual significance as the tithes destined exclusively to the Levites and needy.

Deuteronomy 26,12 When you have finished tithing all the tithes of your increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and have given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within your gates, and be filled;

After they had done all this, they asked the blessing, but now not for themselves, but for the people and the land of Israel.

Deuteronomy 26,15 Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel, and the land which you have given us, as you swore unto our fathers, a land that flows with milk and honey.

This will be the divine service in the Messianic Kingdom of peace. Many people from all the Nations will come to Jerusalem, to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. To be able to host this many people at once, all the pots of Judah will be needed. From ordinary cooking pots are now sacred vessels. In the table community meeting with God was visible.

Zechariah 14,16: And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the

nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zechariah 14,20-21

20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and boil in them: and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

The Lord loves the table community with the people. Therefore he will organize a magnificent feast for them in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 25,6-9

6 And on this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of rich things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD has spoken it.

9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

So, even the famous words Psalms are fulfilled.

Psalms 34,8-10

8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusts in him.

9 O fear the LORD, you his saints: for there is no lack to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.

The role of money in tithes and offerings in the old Covenant and in the Prophets

In contrast to today's practice, the tithing with money in the Old Covenant played no role at all. Also among the offerings, it is barely mentioned. Which is countered that one had previously only little money in use and more fussed with natural objects and Exchange. Tithes should not be represented specifically with money, but with food.

Deuteronomy 14,24-27

24 And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry it; or if the place is too far from you, which the LORD your God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD your God has blessed you:

25 Then shall you turn it into money, and bind up the money in your hand, and shall go unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose:

26 And you shall bestow that money for whatsoever your soul desires, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever your soul desires: and you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you, and your

household,

27 And the Levite that is within your gates; you shall not forsake him; for he has no part nor inheritance with you.

That proves the subject of tithes, dues and offerings, was never an issue of money, but about the grateful community with God. This is reflected most clearly here, because the money from the proceeds of the tithe was earmarked.

It had to be cast back upon arrival in Jerusalem into something edible. Another use, for example, insertion into the **treasury**, was not allowed. The prompt was to buy what you wanted (even liquor mentioned here!), shows that it was for celebrating a great, happy feast with God.

Labor of Love - the glory of the new Covenant

If there is no law, which clearly regulates the donations in the New Covenant, how do we know then, what God expects us to do? Now, yes the Old Covenant is based on rules, the new but on the "Law of the Spirit", so on the alignment to the Spirit of God, who dwells in us. We can learn much from the laws of the Torah, but do not live according to their letter, but according to their meaning and Spirit. To distinguish properly, we should know the principles of God in these questions, which He reveals to us in Scripture. God's instructions here are simple and easy to understand and clarify the rules of the House. They show us clearly the family character of his house. First one takes care of his own house and family.

1. Timothy 5,8 But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

... then for the brethren, and also for other distressed.

Galatians 6,9-10

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Romans 12,13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

In the early Jerusalem church, providing for the needy was an integral part of the regulations.

Acts 2,45 And sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all men, as every man had need.

That this daily "poor" had a large scope which was reflected by this, that several deacons had to be employed to organize them.

Acts 6,1-3

1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reasonable that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

They followed this example, which Jeschuah himself had given them and his

teachings.

Luke 12,33 Sell what you have, and give alms; provide yourselves purses which grow not old, a treasure in the heavens that fails not, where no thief approaches, neither moth corrupts.

Jeschuah stressed that the poor and the works of mercy are worship and a more important test, which turns out our love to him as genuine.

Matthew 25,34-36

34 Then shall the King say unto them 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: 25,36 Naked, and you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.

Matthew 25,40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Since you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.

Already in the Old Testament we find the same doctrine as in the Gospels:

Proverbs 19,17 He that has pity upon the poor lends unto the LORD; and that which he has given will he pay him again.

To give to the poor, means to give to God, He also rewards us for that. But, as who defies adversity of his next comes under the curse.

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

Job 22,9-10

9 You have sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

10 Therefore snares are round about you, and sudden fear troubles you.

Isaiah calls about two conditions for the blessing: loading pressure anyone and you withdraw not the plight of your fellow human beings.

Isaiah calls about two conditions for the blessing: Treat no one with harshness and do not deprive yourself of your fellow human beings.

Isaiah 58,6-9

6 Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring the poor that are cast out to your house? when you see the naked, that you cover him; and that you hide not yourself from your own flesh?

8 Then shall your light break forth as the morning, and your health shall spring forth speedily: and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

9 Then shall you call, and the LORD shall answer; you shall cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness;

Jeschuah taught us exactly this:

Luke 6,36-38

36 Be you therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and you shall not be judged: condemn not, and you shall not be condemned: forgive, and you shall be forgiven:

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your lap. For with the same measure that you measure it shall be measured to you again.

John the apostle sums it up:

1. John 4,8 He that loves not knows not God; for God is love.

1. John 4,16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.

Jeschuah taught us, that our labor of love will show the people God's goodness.

Matthew 5,16-17

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

By this Act of love, even the law of Moses is more than fulfilled.

James 2,13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that has showed no mercy; and mercy triumphs over judgment.

Paul therefore calls on the faithful to practice this. In particular he calls the Christians from the Gentiles for the brethren in Jerusalem and lays upon their heart, of which they had received also salvation. The Macedonians then helped even more willingly.

Romans 15,26-27

26 For it has pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints who are at Jerusalem.

27 It has pleased them greatly; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in material things.

Paul refers here to another important principle; we should give share to those who serve us in the spiritual goods (with the word), by providing for their livelihood.

Galatians 6,6-8

6 Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teaches in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

1. Corinthians 9,7;11 Who goes to warfare any time at his own expense? who plants a vineyard, and eats not of the fruit thereof? or who feeds a flock, and eats not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or says not the law the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, You shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that

treads out the grain. Does God care for oxen?

10 Or says he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that plows should plow in hope; and that he that threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your material things?

12 If others be partakers of this right over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this right; but endure all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do you not know that they who minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so has the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

Paul refers here to those who served in the temple, each got a share of the offerings that made an important part of their livelihood. Likewise also those who work for the sake of the proclamation of the word of God, have a right to receive their livelihood from those they serve with the word.

Paul also knew that these gifts of God are worthless if they don't come from the heart. For example he took no money for his services from the Corinthians, because he knew that they were immature. He rather took it upon himself, to work some time himself, in addition to his service, to earn some money besides.

2. Corinthians 11,7-9

7 Have I committed an offense in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and in want, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

That's why he only let the poor Christians in Macedonia support him. These were then temporarily not able to do so, and then he worked himself for his living, as not to take money from the wealthy Corinthians.

Philippians 4,10-16

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me has flourished again; in which you were also concerned, but you lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

14 Nevertheless you have done well, that you did share in my affliction.

15 Now you Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only.

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent once and again unto my necessity.

This kind of giving is the fruit of God's Spirit.

Philippians 4,17-18

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

The firstfruits are a further order of God. These are sacred to the Lord and belong to him.

Proverbs 3,9-10

9 Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the firstfruits of all your increase:

10 So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.

God has expressly promised to bless us, if we act according to these regulations. To give the firstfruits to God means to honor him, we skim the top and give the cream to him, rather than to empty the pot and then leave the dregs to him. Who saves e.g. some of his income at the beginning of the month, will have usually more than those who wait until the end of the month to see, if they got something leftover for God.

But it is worthwhile to return once again to the Corinthians. Paul recognizes them as quite fleshly. He teaches here this principle of the firstfruits, by advising them to put money aside at the beginning of the week.

1. Corinthians 16,1-3

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do you.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

He also shows them the example of the Macedonian Christians, the type that had a real need and desire to give, wherein he sees God's work in them.

2. Corinthians 8,1-5

1 Moreover, brethren, we want you to know of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their ability, I bear record, yea, and beyond their ability they were willing of themselves;

4 Begging us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we expected, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

Paul had this abundance of the fruit of the spirit in his mind, and he wanted to join such blessings also to the Corinthians.

2. Corinthians 8,6-7

6 So that we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

7 Therefore, as you abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also.

He however makes it clear that this is not a command, but an invitation. He talks to them almost as one would encourage small children.

2. Corinthians 8,10-11

10 And in this I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to desire a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which you have.

Here, it is clear, there is no measure for the donations, neither the tithe nor any other. The motivation of the giver is much more defining.

2. Corinthians 8,11b-15

11b ... so there may be a performance also out of that which you have.

12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man has, and not according to what he has not.

13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened:

14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

The whole two chapters Paul talks about giving to the Corinthians. Here he pulls out all stops really, but he does not exert pressure. First he recalls the example of the poor Macedonian Christians.

2. Corinthian 9,1-2

1 For concerning the ministering to the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you:

2 For I know the eagerness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has provoked very many.

Then he provides them the disgrace they would find, if it would not work out again with the collection, because he had told everywhere about it. The collection was but after a year always unfinished. Paul is pointing here to the fact, that the order had actually not even been started, even though they had promised it before; a disgrace to the rich church in Corinth.

2. Corinthian 9,3-4

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, you may be ready:

4 Lest perhaps if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, you) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

Paul asks: "Would you really like to look like cheapskates you wealthy Corinthians,

before the poor Macedonian Christians, which gave more of the few they have, as you?"

2. *Corinthian 9,5* Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your gift, of which you had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of gift, and not as an extortion.

We should give with a generous heart, so that God can bless it.

2. *Corinthian 9,6-15*

6 But this I say, He who sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, He has dispersed abroad; he has given to the poor: his righteousness remains forever.

10 Now he that ministers seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, who causes through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the need of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 While by the proof of this ministry they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, who long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

1. *Corinthian 13,3* And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing.

Summary of the two chapters

- Giving of course is a matter for Christians. Because, it actually is a convenient way to be a blessing.
- Thus it is also a privilege, but only if it is done voluntarily and from the heart.
- We give them who suffer hardship. While we should look first for our immediate family, then for our brethren and then also for the needy.
- We give the (actual and real) appointed servants of God, so they can be released for their service.
- There are no rules about it, according to which method and how much we should give. We should but strive to give God always, generous, and our best and not the remnants of the previous day.
- Like any other service, we need Gods guidance and mercy even to the giving for God, so it brings fourth fruit. Rigid guidelines or even iron laws, however,

dampen the Spirit only. **God loves a cheerful giver.**

Is tithing or giving now actually wrong?

Again and again Christians testify how they were blessed, because they gave the tithes. This was but a clear proof, that this is a Biblical Commandment. Is that true? Who regularly gives God the tithes, does according to many of the above biblical rules.

- He gives God first (after he has achieved income.)
- He gives the servants of God, so that they can accomplish the mission
- He is faithful in giving.

Thus, some important prerequisites for the blessing are fulfilled and God will reward that, if it is done from the heart and not only as a commandment, like every month as usual and to discharge one's duty.

It is similar to this - but with keeping a day or eating certain foods. Paul says:

Romans 14,5-6

5 One man esteems one day above another: another esteems every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regards the day, regards it unto the Lord; and he that regards not the day, to the Lord he does not regard it. He that eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he that eats not, to the Lord he eats not, and gives God thanks.

Teaching and practice of giving of tithes are often so, that they conflict with the other orders of God. Christians are namely bound by them so that they are no longer free to decide how much and where to give! Thus, it is for them also hardly still possible, in this respect, to be guided by the Spirit of God.

THE KING'S LAW

When people are ruling instead of God

Many Christians are so tied to the tenth in their conscience. Where does that come from? There is perhaps another reason why the tithe can be claimed of them?

People are ruling instead of God.

At all times God called people for special tasks. Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson and Samuel; they were all from God anointed judges over Israel, but they did not rule and reign over the people. When the kingship was offered to Gideon, he refused, because he knew, that the dominion over God's people is due to God alone.

Judges 8,22-23

22 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule you over us, both you, and your son, and your son's son also: for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.

23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.

The people of God demanded a King, to be the same as the heathen around them. This was a clear rejection of God's sovereignty. Now, similarly the community of the New Covenant has set themselves kings, to escape in this way the responsibility

before God.

1. Samuel 8,4-7

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5 And said unto him, Behold, you are old, and your sons walk not in your ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto you: for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

Although God was not well pleased in the Old- nor in the New Covenant, God has met this request and repeatedly anointed people to such an Office. Samuel had to warn the people (and therefore us) previously expressly from the far-reaching consequences:

1. Samuel 8,9-17

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: however protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

11 And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

12 And he will appoint himself captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his weapons of war, and equipment for his chariots.

13 And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

15 And he will take the tenth of your grain, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

16 And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

17 He will take the tenth of your sheep: and you shall be his servants.

The King would take the best of all and align its business so one cares first for him self. He receives great privileges and rights from God.

In plain language, this means:

The King has the authority to take tithes of the people of God and make them his servants. If we give brothers such an elevated position, we do not need to wonder if they request tithes and charges from us and rule over us: They then have the right to do so!!!

Samuel therefore had to warn the people in this way, that later it would be no reason to lament to God about this yoke of the King, because they wanted to have one.

1. Sam 8,18 And you shall cry out in that day because of your king which you shall have chosen; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

God told them ahead, later they would have much to suffer under the King, their calling on him will be in vain, yet the people did not receive the warning. They wanted to be the same as all the other peoples. But Israel should be governed by God, and not by a King.

1. Samuel 8,19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over;

20 That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

God knew about the weakness of his people and that they would enthrone kings by themselves. Therefore he warned them in advance through Moses, to keep the monarchy down and small, at least not let people come up to rule over them (like in Egypt).

Deuteronomy 17,14-17

14 When you are come unto the land which the LORD your God gives you, and shall possess it, and shall dwell therein, and shall say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are about me;

15 You shall surely set him king over you, whom the LORD your God shall choose: one from among your brethren shall you set king over you: you may not set a stranger over you, who is not your brother.

16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: since as the LORD has said unto you, you shall return no more that way again.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

But Israel's third King Solomon already, did exactly the opposite in everything. He gave himself a lot of silver and gold, women and horses. Likewise, Christian church leaders become powerful and soon gathered a tremendous wealth of splendor and wealth.

1. Kings 11,1-3

1 But king Solomon loved many foreign women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites;

2 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, You shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clung unto these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

2. Chronicles 9,13; 17; 20; 25; 27

13 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold;

17 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.
20 And all the drinking vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; for it was not counted as anything in the days of Solomon.

25 And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he stationed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

27 And the king made silver in Jerusalem as common as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the low plains in abundance.

Solomon's magnificent mega kingship was one of the main causes for a dish with very far-reaching implications, because the nation Israel was divided after his death and remains so to this day. The human kingship in no way strengthens the unity, but it destroyed it! Also the various divisions in the body of Jesus began with the disproportionate enhancement and increase of single brothers.

1. Corinthians 1,10-13

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it has been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them who are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you says, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

Later on this led to the clergy-laity system, which unnoticed leavened the dough and is even today in many communities. As a result, the body of Christ is divided in such that have a lower and others who have a higher level, and so in the name of God as Kings rule over their brothers. But they are not always the best, but those who are looking for their own benefit.

Paul laments:

Philippians 2,21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Why this is so, is illustrated to us in a parable:

Judges 9,8-15

8 The trees went forth once to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign you over us.

9 But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, with which by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

10 And the trees said to the fig tree, Come you, and reign over us.

11 But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come you, and reign over us.

13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheers God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

14 Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come you, and reign over us.

15 *And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth you anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.*

In other words; Who brings good fruit has better things to do than to be King. The expression "Allow the fruit to float to be above the trees", indicating that someone who presides over his brothers loses the ground under his feet. Its roots are in the air, which makes him infertile and withered. He, who brings no fruit anyway as the bramble, is not troubled by that.

It requires also a strict following of his brothers, otherwise he threatens them with court and perdition: "*If not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon*". Fire goes out of the Bush but sooner or later in any case, because he burns in the fire because of his infertility.

Because of the tendency to put kings themselves, also the people of the New Covenant are often victims of such ruler in religious garb. Many prefer it that way rather, as to take their own responsibility before God. Paul is The The reference of the thorn Bush and his shadow is ironic here, because he has practically only long needle lace thorns, however barely leaves.

He can donate actually no shadow. It also often happens that the bush ignites by itself in the intense heat of the desert. To find shade there is therefore not very advisable.

Matthew 3,10 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Jeremiah speaks of such when he laments:

Jeremiah 5,26

26 For among my people are found wicked men: they lie in wait, as he that sets snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

27 As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they have become great, and grown rich.

30 An appalling and horrible thing is committed in the land;

31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their own power; and my people love to have it so: and what will you do in the end?

Because of the tendency to put kings themselves, the people of the New Covenant are often victims of such ruler in religious garb. Many like it this way, rather as taking the responsibility before God in their own hands.

2. Corinthians 11,20 For you permit it, if a man brings you into bondage, if a man devours you, if a man takes of you, if a man exalts himself, if a man smites you on the face.

He therefore admonished:

Galatians 5,1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

And he reminds us:

1. Corinthians 7,23 You are bought with a price; be not the servants of men.

We should definitely not bring ourselves to subjection to those who want to rule over the people of God.

Galatians 2,4-5

4 And because of false brethren brought in unawares, who came in secretly to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we yielded in subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

The Kingdom of God through the law of the Holy Spirit

If the Lord himself is King over the congregation, how then do we understand the instructions of submission? Are we not obliged to the obedience to the senior brothers? What it means practically for us is the Kingdom of God?

In the same way as the correct subordination of giving, so is the subordination not a thing of regulations, but a voluntary dedication, because spiritual things are useless for carnal people. Only in the voluntary dedication, love becomes visible to God.

1. Corinthians 2,13-14

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

So, who are those to whom we should subordinate our self and what is the essence of their leadership?

We should subordinate to those working on behalf and in the anointing of the Lord, who lead by example and is a model.

1. Corinthians 16,15-16

15 I beseech you, brethren, (you know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

16 That you submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that works with us, and labors.

Those we acknowledge and subordinate ourselves to must motivate, build and upgrade us.

1. Corinthians 16,17-18

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge them that are such.

Real leadership is discerned only by the appropriate works and fruits of the Spirit, and not through gifts that one has, or offices in which one is transferred by people. In addition to that, the Lord lives in each of us, whose presence should fill us with awe. Therefore Jeschuah will operate through each link in his body, exhort and talk to us. When we realize the full significance of this fact, we will also esteem the seemingly small siblings and without respect of the person, with God's Spirit, submit to one another.

Philippians 2,1-3

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affections and mercies,

2 Fulfill you my joy, that you be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

Ephesians 5,21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

The elders are reminded not to exercise any dominance, but to serve the siblings as examples. The key is always humility.

1. Peter 5,1-7

1 The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for dishonest gain, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

5 Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

6 Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you.

If the elders serve, rather than to dominate, it also makes sense, to subordinate their guidance for those who are younger in the faith. This is free and without any obligation. This Jeschuah has clearly taught us:

Mark 10,42-45

42 But Jesus called them to him, and said unto them, You know that they who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their leaders exercise authority over them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever would be great among you, shall be your servant:

44 And whosoever of you will be the first, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

The subordination of the Church of God so only works with spiritually minded people. Menial obedience is just as worthless as a joyless, forced donation of money for God's work. Both bring no fruit. No one has the right to demand obedience from those who were bought by the King himself with his blood. Here is no room for human dominion, because the Messiah Jeschuah has released us, so that we can do the works in its fullness, which he has prepared for us before the foundation of the world. Only in this and in Him - and not in obedience to humans, we find this satisfied life.

Galatians 5,1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage!
