

MALACHI

A Divine Q&A

God Responds
to our Common Questions
about Him

The Path Back

Returning to God through Repentance

Malachi 3:7-12



The Path Back

Malachi 3:7-12

- I. The Desperate Need for Repentance (7a)
- II. The Definitive Call to Repentance (7b)
- III. The Defiant Neglect of Repentance (7c)
- IV. The Detailed Picture of Repentance (8-10)

E. Ray Clendenen

The Lord might have responded to Israel's question by pointing again to their insulting so-called worship (1:4); their treachery against one another (2:10), especially their wives (2:14); their profaning the Lord's sanctuary by intermarriage with pagan idolators (2:11); or their toleration or practice of sorcery, adultery, perjury, and economic exploitation of the defenseless (3:5). Instead, he brought to their attention another area in which their rebellion against God was manifesting itself—the withholding of tithes.

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- IV. The Detailed Picture of Repentance (8-10)
 - A. Recognize the Specific Sin: Withholding Tithes & Offerings**

Thomas Watson

Where there is no sight of sin, there can be no repentance. Many who can spy faults in others see none in themselves.... Persons are veiled over with ignorance and self-love; therefore they see not what deformed souls they have.

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 - A. **Recognize the Specific Sin: Withholding Tithes & Offerings**

Old Testament Tithes vs. New Testament Giving

- God commanded the people of Israel to pay three tithes
 - 1) Levitical – 10% of produce and animals to support the Levites (Lev 27:30-33; Num 18:21-30)
 - 2) Festival – 10% to support the religious festivals and worship (Deut 14:22-27)
 - 3) Charity – 10% every third year for the poor (Deut 14:28-29)TOTAL = 23 1/3%
- These tithes were essentially their required national taxes
- We are also commanded to pay taxes to our governing authorities (Rom 13, Matt 22:21)

Old Testament Tithes vs. New Testament Giving

- God also commanded the people of Israel to give freewill offerings (Ex 25:1-2; Lev 7:16; Deut 16:10)
- New Testament giving corresponds more closely to the freewill offerings of the Old Testament.
- We are commanded to give:
 - 1) Regularly (1 Cor 16:1-2)
 - 2) Proportionally (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 8:3, 12)
 - 3) Sacrificially (2 Cor 8:2-3)
 - 4) Generously (2 Cor 8:2; 9:10-13)
 - 5) Purposefully (2 Cor 9:7)
 - 6) Cheerfully (2 Cor 8:3-4; 9:7)

Old Testament Tithes vs. New Testament Giving

An unbiblical emphasis on a required tithe (10% or other):

- 1) Minimizes our focus on using all we have as faithful stewards of the Lord
 - Can think “God gets 10% and I get 90%.”
 - Instead of “Everything I have belongs to God, and I am to use it as a faithful steward.”
- 2) Heaps guilt on those who cannot give as significantly
- 3) Limits those who are able from giving more generously

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- IV. The Detailed Picture of Repentance (8-10a)
 - A. Recognize the Sin: Withholding Tithes & Offerings**
 - B. Reorient your Thinking: We have been Robbing God**
 - C. Resolve to Obey: Bring the Whole Tithe**

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- V. The Divine Response to Repentance (7b, 10b-12)
 - A. He Mercifully Restores our Relationship (7b)
 - B. He Generously Gives us Blessings (10b-11)

Does God always physically bless those who repent?

- 1) Repentance and obedience do not guarantee physical blessings (contrary to prosperity teaching)
 - As we see in this text, physical blessings were a clear part of God's covenant relationship with Israel
 - But such blessings are not guaranteed for other nations or for us as individuals
 - The consequences of sin are not always eliminated when we repent

Does God always physically bless those who repent?

- 1) Repentance and obedience do not guarantee physical blessings (contrary to prosperity teaching)
- 2) Repentance and obedience often bring physical blessings
 - Living as God intends in this world brings many benefits and blessings
 - The sowing and reaping principle
- 3) Repentance and obedience should not primarily be motivated by potential physical blessings

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- V. The Divine Response to Repentance (7b, 10b-12)
 - A. He Mercifully Restores our Relationship (7b)
 - B. He Generously Gives us Blessings (10b-11)
 - C. He Graciously Expands our Influence (12)