

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: THE 8TH COMMANDMENT – THOU SHALT NOT STEAL, part 2 quotes

1) #5 - Stealing From and Deceiving God

How can we steal from or deceive God? I find that there are at least 3 main areas: A - Not giving tithes, or B - Not giving offerings, or C - Not serving God.

#5A - By not giving tithes.

A tithe is 10% of anything of value.

“And concerning the tithe... the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.” Leviticus 27:32.

Tithe is a tenth part of the whole, and this tithe is to be taken out from any increase of value which has come to us. This increase can occur by getting paid for our work done at our job; through an increase in produce from our gardens or fields or land; from an inheritance; interest being paid to us; etc. Anything coming to us that increases our worth from the day before is to be tithed, and a full 10% of this increase is to be set aside and considered holy or sacred and then given to God.

“Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase”. Deuteronomy 14:22.

“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.” Leviticus 27:30.

2) This sacred tithe money is God's to be used according to His directions, and not how we think it should be used.

Stealing:

By not giving God a full 10% of all your increase. If you do this, then you are guilty of robbing God of part or all of this sacred money.

“Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes...Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me”. Malachi 3:7-9.

If you are not giving to God a full 10% of all your increase, then you are robbing God and will not receive His blessings, but His cursings. Why are different negative things affecting your prosperity? Why are things always breaking down and in need of repair? Why are you never able to get ahead financially? Why doesn't God hear or answer your earnest prayers? Etc. The answers to all these questions may be because you are under God's curse instead of His blessings for not giving Him a full tithe and thus stealing His sacred money.

3) Also, if you are indeed giving a full 10% of all your increase to God, but yet you are either using this tithe money in areas where it should not be used, or are sending it where it should not go, then you are also guilty of robbing God of this sacred money by misusing or misapplying this sacred money!

Where is God's sacred tithe money supposed to go and be used for?

The first Biblical recorded instance of tithe paying was with Abraham giving tithes to Melchizedek. But who was Melchizedek?

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and **he was the priest of the most high God**. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. **And he [Abraham] gave him tithes of all.**” Genesis 14:18-20.

“From the earliest times, the Lord claimed a tithe as His; and this claim was recognized and honored. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God.” Patriarchs and Prophets, p 525.

Abraham directly gave tithes of all his increase to the priest of the most high God, and Melchizedek then used this money for his support and for his continued ministry work for God. But Abraham was not the first to pay tithes.

“The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam.” Testimonies, vol 3, p 393.

After the time of Adam and Abraham, the next recorded instance of God's followers paying tithe was with Jacob.

“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 raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God...and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” Genesis 28:20-22.

After Jacob, the next recorded instance of tithe paying is with the Israelites.

“But the tithes of the children of Israel...I have given to the Levites to inherit...And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance”. Leviticus 18:24-26.

All the Israelites gave to the Lord a tithe of all their increase, and then obeyed His specific directions to give His sacred tithe directly to the Levites. But who were the Levites?

“The priests the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi...the LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.” Deuteronomy 18:1, 5.

“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.” Deuteronomy 18:21.

“And the LORD spake unto Aaron (the priest), saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them”. Leviticus 10:8-11.

“And they (the priests) shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.” Ezekiel 44:23-24.

The Levites were the priests or ministers or workers of God. Their full-time ministry work was directly connected with God’s sanctuary or church, and their duty was to serve and obey the Lord themselves, to then minister unto the people, and especially to teach them God’s law, His will and His truth. They were also to be health reformers by refusing to partake of anything that was unholy or unclean and was harmful to their mind, body and health. This meant that it was by their lives as well as by their messages, that they were to show the people the difference between what was holy and pleasing to God, versus what was profane and displeasing to God. Because of this, God commanded all the Israelites to give their tithes to the Levites as their inheritance. These Levites were totally dependent upon these tithes for the support of them and their family, as well as for their continued ministry in the work of God.

4) Tithe paying was not limited to only God’s followers who lived during the time of the Old Covenant, but it is also required of God’s followers who live in the New!

In the time of the apostles, Paul states this about God’s tithe in this New Covenant:

“Mine answer to them that examine me is this...Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?...If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?...Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple?...Even so hath the Lord ordained that **they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel**.” 1 Corinthians 9:3, 7-8, 11, 13, 14.

“It was to this plan for the support of the ministry that Paul referred when he said, ‘Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.’ And later, in writing to Timothy, the apostle said, ‘The laborer is worthy of his reward’ 1 Timothy 5:18.” Acts of the Apostles, p 336.

God still requires His followers today to give tithes to His living ministers.

“The tithe is set apart for a special use....**It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God’s message to the world, and it should not be diverted from this purpose.**” Review and Herald, December 1, 1896 (vol 3, p 418 col 2).

“God’s ministers are His shepherds, appointed by Him to feed His flock. **The tithe is His provision for their maintenance**, and He designs that it shall be **held sacred for this purpose.**” Manuscript 139, October 21, 1898, p 25, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 1, p 189.

“...a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used,-- **the support of the ministers.**” Testimonies, vol 9, p. 248.

5) Are there other areas that God has specified that His sacred tithe can be given to and used for?

MINISTER-MEDICAL MISSIONARIES

“A gospel minister will be twice as successful in his work if he understands how to treat disease. Continually increasing light has been given me on this subject. Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of mind and body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick. In response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete....

“Doors that have been closed to him who merely preaches the gospel, will be opened to the intelligent medical missionary....God works today to reach hearts in the same way that He worked when Christ was upon this earth. In reading the word of God, we see that Christ brought medical missionary work into His ministry. Cannot we understand the commission He gave to His disciples and to us?” Manuscript 58, July 7, 1901, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 14, p 269-271 (also partly quoted in Medical Ministry, p 245-246).

6) **MINISTERS AS SCHOOL TEACHERS**

“The best ministerial talent should be employed in teaching the Bible in our schools. Those selected for this work need to be thorough Bible students and to have a deep Christian experience, and **their salary should be paid from the tithe.**” Testimonies, vol 6, p 134-135.

7) **MINISTERS AS MISSIONARIES**

“Instruction has been given me that there is a withholding of the tithe that should be faithfully brought into the Lord’s treasury **for the support of the ministers and missionaries** who are opening the Scriptures to the people and working from house to house.” Testimonies, vol 9, p 52.

8) **MINISTER’S WIVES AND OTHER WOMEN THAT MINISTER**

“Women, as well as men, are needed in the work that must be done. Those women who give themselves to the service of the Lord, who labor for the salvation of others by doing house-to-house work, which is as taxing as, and more taxing than standing before a congregation, should receive payment for their labor. **If a man is worthy of his hire, so also is a woman....**

“The tithe should go to those who labor in word and doctrine, **be they men or women.**” Manuscript 149, October 24, 1899, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 1, p 263 (also partly quoted in Evangelism, p 492).

9) **MINISTER’S WIDOWS IF NECESSARY**

“The widows of these ministers are never to be forgotten, but **should if necessary be paid from the tithe.**” Manuscript 82, 1904, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 1, p 189.

10) **GOD'S INSTITUTIONS: (CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, PUBLISHING HOUSES, MISSIONS)**

"Institutions that are God's instruments to carry forward His work on the earth must be sustained. Churches must be erected, schools established, and publishing houses furnished with facilities for doing a great work in the publication of the truth to be sent to all parts of the world. These institutions are ordained of God and should be sustained by tithes and liberal offerings." Testimonies, vol 4, p 464.

11) If you are not sending these devoted full-time ministers God's tithe, but are using or sending it elsewhere, then you are guilty of robbing God, robbing these ministers and workers for God, as well as robbing others who are dying for the want of present truth!

"The tithe you have withheld I reserve for the support of My servants in their work of opening the Scriptures to those who are in the regions of darkness, who do not understand My law. In using My reserve fund to gratify your own desires **you have robbed souls of the light which I made provision for them to receive**. You have had opportunity to show loyalty to Me, but you have not done this. **You have robbed Me; you have stolen My reserve fund...**" Testimonies, vol 6, p 387.

12) All the tithes are not being faithfully given where God has clearly specified these should go. As a result there are but few ministers doing God's work when there should be hundreds. Those who are already in God's work become discouraged, or are forced to stop their God-given ministry and find other employment with which to support their families and to keep from starving. Thus God's work is being left undone, and all because of the lack of tithe being sent to them as God plainly states.

"The tithe is to be used for **one purpose,--to sustain the ministers whom the Lord has appointed to do His work**. It is to be used to support those who speak the words of life to the people, and carry the burden of the flock of God.

"But there are ministers who have been robbed of their wages. God's provision for them has not been respected....

"A very plain, definite message has been given to me to give to our people. I am bidden to tell them that **they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe is to be applied**. Those who make this use of the tithe are departing from the Lord's arrangement.

"God will judge for these things....a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used,--the support of the ministers...

“The use of the tithe must be looked upon as a sacred matter by our people. We must guard strictly against all that is contrary to the message now given....

“When a man enters the ministry, he is to be paid from the tithe enough to sustain his family. He is not to feel that he is a beggar.

“The impression is becoming quite common that the sacred disposition of the tithe no longer exists. **Many have lost their sense of the Lord’s requirements.**

“The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be...used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. For a long time the Lord has been robbed, because there are those who do not realize that the tithe is God’s reserved portion.

“Many ministers are lying in their graves, brought there by sorrow and disappointment, and by the hardship brought upon them because they did not receive sufficient for their labors....**The tithe is the Lord’s and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure, unless they repent. Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go.** Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained **but not from the tithe**. God has not changed; the tithe is [still] to be used for the support of the ministry...” Manuscript 82, 1904, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 7, p 135-138.

“God’s chosen messengers, who are engaged in aggressive labor, should never be compelled to go a warfare at their own charges, unaided by the sympathetic and hearty support of their brethren. It is the part of church-members to deal liberally with those who lay aside their secular employment that they may give themselves to the ministry. When God’s ministers are encouraged, His cause is greatly advanced. But when, through the selfishness of men, their rightful support is withheld, their hands are weakened, and often their usefulness is seriously crippled.

“**The displeasure of God is kindled against those who claim to be His followers, yet allow consecrated workers to suffer for the necessities of life while engaged in active ministry. These selfish ones will be called to render an account, not only for the misuse of their Lord’s money, but for the depression and heartache which their course has brought upon His faithful servants.** Those who are called...in God’s service, should receive for their self-sacrificing efforts wages sufficient to support themselves and their families.” Acts of the Apostles, p. 340-341.

“...it is a mistake for our churches to appropriate the tithe for any other purpose than to sustain the ministry. The Lord will not work in your favor if you do this....**When this matter is seen and realized in all its bearings, there will be no questions on this subject...**

“Every soul who is honored in being a steward of God is to carefully guard the tithe money. This is sacred means. **The Lord will not sanction your borrowing this money for any other work. It will create evils you cannot now discern.** It is not to be meddled with...Keep your hands off the Lord’s reserve fund. **That means is to do a great work before probation shall close.**” Letter 81, May 17, 1897, found in Manuscript Releases, vol 1, p 184-185.