

What The Bible Teaches on **TITHES and OFFERINGS**

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Chapter 11: Summary



11. Summary

(a) Before the Law

There is reference to Abraham and Jacob giving tithes before the Law of Moses. They did not do it under instruction but of their own free will as personal decisions between themselves and God. Also, they did not do it as a regular habit but for each of them it was a one-off experience.

(b) Under the Law

The Law required the children of Israel to pay a tithe on their crops and animal produce. In addition, they were to pay the annual half-shekel and make other free-will offerings, redeem the first-born, and pay their vows.

The three uses for all tithes and offerings are:

- to support the priests and Levites;
- to feast their own families joyfully before the Lord;
- to provide for widows and other poor people.

When the people obeyed the Law, they were blessed, when they disobeyed, they were punished.

(c) In the New Testament

The two references which Jesus made to the tithe were to do with the failings of the Pharisees. They were keen to let everybody

know how well they kept the Law, but Jesus rebuked them for their hypocrisy with regard to the Law.

There are no teachings by Jesus or any of His disciples for Christians to obey the Old Testament practice of paying the tithe.

There are many references, however, to the need for God's people to give and to give generously.

The uses of these offerings are the same as for two of the three uses of the tithes and offerings of the Old Testament:

- to support those doing God's work, and
- to provide for the poor.

The third use, feasting the family, is no longer included. Perhaps the reason for this is that the Lord's Supper has been introduced as the Family Feast in which we are to rejoice before the Lord of our salvation.