

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

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## **Chapter 5: What does the New Testament say about tithes?**

## **Chapter 6: How about tithing for the followers of Jesus?**

### **5. What does the New Testament say about tithes?**

There are only three references to the tithe in the New Testament, and two of them refer to Jesus Christ rebuking the Pharisees for their wrong understanding and observance of the Law on tithing while the third simply expands on what is said in the Old Testament.

#### **(a) Matthew 23:23 (& Luke 11:42)**

The first is in Matthew 23, and its parallel record in Luke 11. At this time the Pharisees were operating under the Law; and they were proud of what they did. Jesus rebuked them for hypocrisy in their attitude to the Law and for this He pronounced woes on them. In Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42 He referred directly to the tithe. He said they tithed the herbs, mint and cummin, which were common garden vegetables or spices, while neglecting the weightier matters of the Law such as mercy, justice and faithfulness. He explained that it was right for them to tithe the mint and cummin as the Law demanded, but they should not have neglected the weightier matters of the Law.

#### **(b) Luke 18:9-14**

This is the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector who went into the temple to pray. The Pharisee boasted of his righteousness based on how faithfully he observed what the Law required, including his tithing. The tax collector, on the other hand, recognised himself as a sinner and pleaded for mercy. The conclusion is that it was

the tax collector who went home justified before God and not the Pharisee in spite of the Laws he kept, including the tithes he paid. This reminds us of the teaching in Amos 4:1-13 quoted above.

#### **(c) Hebrews 7:4-8**

The third NT reference to tithing is an illustration based on Abraham giving his tithe to Melchizedek already mentioned above and how this relates to the Law and the Levites

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### **6. How about tithing for the followers of Jesus?**

Not once, directly or indirectly, did Jesus Christ indicate that His disciples should pay the tithe. He did not tell them to pay tithes in His straight forward teaching or by way of a parable or in any other way. Similarly, there is not a single command or encouragement in relation to tithing in the teachings of any of the writers of the New Testament – not one!