

Malachi 3:8-10 (Notes)

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“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith 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.”

人岂可夺取神之物呢？你们竟夺取我的供物，你们却说，我们在何事上夺取你的供物呢？就是你们在当纳的十分之一，和当献的供物上。因你们通国的人，都夺取我的供物，咒诅就临到你们身上。万军之耶和华说，你们要将当纳的十分之一，全然送入仓库，使我家有粮，以此试试我，是否为你们敞开天上的窗户，倾福与你们，甚至无处可容。

Israel and Judah sinned against the Lord. They were disobedient. After many prophets were sent by God to call them to repent, the Lord eventually sent them into exile into Babylon for seventy years.

Once the Babylonian empire fell to the Persians, Cyrus the king, in his first year in office, allowed the Jews to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

This should have been a cause of great thanksgiving to God, but we find that once they were there, they soon forgot Him again. Haggai was sent as a prophet to them:

Haggai 1:2-5

“Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD’S house should be built. Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.”

万军之耶和华如此说，这百姓说，建造耶和华殿的时候尚未来到。那时耶和华的话临到先知哈该说，这殿仍然荒凉，你们自己还住天花板的房屋吗？现在万军之耶和华如此说，你们要省察自己的行为。

Even after such a recent return to Jerusalem, they would rather build their own luxurious houses than bother rebuilding the Temple.

Malachi also, in his prophecy, gives a list of many things that the people were doing wrong:

They were offering up polluted offerings:

Malachi 1:6-8

“A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.”

藐视我名的祭司阿，万军之耶和华对你们说，儿子尊敬父亲，仆人敬畏主人。我既为父亲，尊敬我的在哪里呢？我既为主人，敬畏我的在哪里呢？你们却说，我们在何事上藐视你的名呢？你们将污秽的食物献在我的坛上，且说，我们在何事上污秽你呢？因你们说，耶和华的桌子是可藐视的。你们将瞎眼的献为祭物，这不为恶吗？将瘸腿的，有病的献上，这不为恶吗？你献给你的省长，他岂喜悦你，岂能看你的情面吗？这是万军之耶和华说的。

They were divorcing their wives and marrying foreign women:

Malachi 2:11,14

“Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.... Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.”

犹大人行事诡诈，并且在以色列和耶路撒冷中，行一件可憎的事。因为犹大人褻瀆耶和华所喜爱的圣洁（或作圣地），娶事奉外邦神的女子为妻。....你们还说，这是为什么呢？因耶和华在你和你幼年所娶的妻中间作见证。她虽是你的配偶，又是你盟约的妻，你却以诡诈待她。

They were calling evil good:

Malachi 2:17

“Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?”

你们用言语烦琐耶和华，你们还说，我们在何事上烦琐他呢？因为你们说，凡行恶的，耶和华眼看为善，并且他喜悦他们。或说，公义的神在哪里呢？

And here in the text they were not bringing the full tithes into the storehouse. God called this robbery:

Malachi 3:8

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

人岂可夺取神之物呢？你们竟夺取我的供物，你们却说，我们在何事上夺取你的供物呢？就是你们在当纳的十分之一，和当献的供物上。

Notice that in all these instances, the people were not aware that there was anything wrong. They were totally unaware of their sins against God.

This is a lesson for us. It is so easy to forget and become unaware that we are not serving God as we should. We need to be a lot more diligent at understanding the ways of the Lord. Our sole duty ought to be that we always please Him.

This is a very serious business. God cursed the Jews for simply not bringing in the whole tithe as they ought to have done.

Malachi 3:9

“Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.”

因你们通国的人，都夺取我的供物，咒诅就临到你们身上。

Notice that the whole nation was involved, not just one or two individuals. Another lesson we must learn is not to blindly follow everyone else around us. Just because they are cutting corners in the worship of God, does not mean that we should do that as well.

So we come to the main subject of this passage, the subject of giving. The Bible gives us practical instructions as to how we should give to the Lord, and here are a few of them.

(1.) We should do it secretly:

Matthew 6:1-4

“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.”

你们要小心，不可将善事行在人的面前，故意叫他们看见。若是这样，就不能得你们天父的赏赐了。所以你施舍的时候，不可在你前面吹号，像那假冒为善的人，在会堂里和街道上所行的，故意要得人的荣耀。我实在告诉你们，他们已经得了他们的赏赐。你施舍的时候，不要叫左手知道右手所作的。要叫你施舍的事行在暗中，你父在暗中察看，必然报答你。（有古卷作必在明处报答你）

(2.) We should give sacrificially:

Mark 12:41-44

“And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.”

耶稣对银库坐着，看众人怎样投钱入库。有好些财主，往里投了若千的钱。有一个穷寡妇来，往里投了两个小钱，就是一个大钱。耶稣叫门徒来，说，我实在告诉你们，这穷寡妇投入库里的，比众人所投的更多。因为他们都是自己有余，拿出来投在里头。但这寡妇是自己不足，把她一切养生的都投上了。

It doesn't matter how much we give, but we should give sacrificially, in proportion to our income.

(3.) We should remember what Christ gave for us:

2 Corinthians 8:9

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

你们知道我们主耶稣基督的恩典。他本来富足，却为你们成了贫穷，叫你们因他的贫穷，可以成为富足。

We can't possibly repay Him for what He has done for us, but we can give back a generous portion of our increase. It is all the Lord's anyway.

(4.) We should not give grudgingly:

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

少种的少收，多种的多收。这话是真的。各人要随本心所酌定的。不要作难，不要勉强，因为捐得乐意的人，是神所喜爱的。

Malachi 3:10

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith 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.”

万军之耶和华说，你们要将当纳的十分之一，全然送入仓库，使我家有粮，以此试试我，是否为你们敞开天上的窗户，倾福与你们，甚至无处可容。

It is clear from this verse that if we give to God in a proper way, using all the principles that we have looked at, then God will bless us. But I must be careful when I say that.

In my country there is a false gospel going around which says that if we give something to the Lord then He will give us much more in physical things in return. And this passage is used to that effect. But this is not what the passage is saying.

When this false gospel is preached, giving “to the Lord” usually means giving to the loud, aggressive preacher to line his pockets. But even if we realise that and do not get taken in by it, we must still be careful.

This verse is NOT teaching that if we give something to God we will necessarily get something back from Him physically in return. What had been happening is that because they were not bringing all the tithe into the storehouse, God had cursed the ground. Here, He is telling them that if they do bring in all the tithe, the curse will be lifted and the ground will bring forth abundantly like it should have done.

We should therefore learn from this that our motive for giving should be love for the Lord, not what we can get out of Him in return.

The blessings that God gives are usually always spiritual blessings, not physical ones.

God does not need anything from us. But our giving is the usual means He uses to build up His kingdom. Giving to the Lord’s work shows our godliness in a practical way. It shows the fear of God is in our hearts. It is also an indication of a holy life.

This passage is a challenge to us to give in a right and godly manner for the building of His kingdom.