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A Tale of Two Tables

Text: Malachi 3:8-11

**8**

“Will a man rob God?

Yet you have robbed Me!

But you say,

‘In what way have we robbed You?’

In tithes and offerings.

**9**

You are cursed with a curse,

For you have robbed Me,

*Even* this whole nation.

**10**

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,

That there may be food in My house,

And try Me now in this,”

Says the Lord of hosts,

“If I will not open for you the windows of heaven

And pour out for you *such* blessing

That *there will* not *be room* enough *to receive it.*

**11**

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,

So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,

Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,”

Says the Lord of hosts;

Throughout this book, when the prophet Malachi rebukes the people of God, Israel responds with an innocent-sounding “wherein?” or “what”? It is almost whining, in print.

1. “In what way have You loved us?” (Malachi 1:2)
2. “In what way have we despised Your name?” (Malachi 1:6)
3. “In what way have we defiled You?” (Malachi 1:7)
4. “In what way have we wearied Him?” (Malachi 2:17)
5. ”In what way shall we return?” (Malachi 3:7)
6. “In what way have we robbed You?” (Malachi 3:8)
7. “What have we spoken against You?” (Malachi 3:13)
8. “What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance?” (Malachi 3:14)

Four observations:

1. Tithing has a clear **definition**. It is one tenth (10%) of one’s income. Abraham tithed (Genesis 14:18-20). Jacob tithed (Genesis 28:20-22). If one thought that tithing was too legalistic, that it isn’t expected of “new Testament believers”, then let it be a baseline, minimum place to start grace-filled giving.
2. Tithing also has a clear **destination**. It goes to (belongs to) God (Leviticus 27:30).
3. Tithing is a **dare** from God. One can almost hear The Eternal **daring** His people to trust Him. “Try me and see....” (v. 10b)

From [preceptaustin.org](http://preceptaustin.org):

|  |  |
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| TWO WAYS  TO TEST GOD | |
| [Malachi 3:10](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Mal%203.10) | [Malachi 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Mal%203.15) |
| Testing God to see how far  He would go in blessing | Testing God to see how far  they could go in evil |

The Hebrew word, *bachan* (baw-khan’) is variously translated “to try”, “to test”, “to prove”, “to examine”.

Psalm 139:23- *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;*

Job 23:10- *But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.*

1. Tithing produces measurable/observable results.
2. The windows of heaven are open (v. 10c)
3. The devourer is rebuked (v. 11a)
4. Fruitfulness will be yours (v. 11b). Cf. 2 Chronicles 31:5-12a.

**Applying the word:**

1. Plan your spending rather than letting your money slowly disappear each month. Someone has said that a budget is a way of telling your money where to go instead of wondering where it went.
2. While planning, set aside money for kingdom purposes **every time** you receive income (each pay period; every month when you receive your income)
3. Try God. Suppose He is trustworthy? Suppose this text which we have read is true?

**Closing**

A mother wanted to teach her daughter a moral lesson. She gave the little girl a quarter and a dollar for church "Put whichever one you want in the collection plate and keep the other for yourself," she told the girl. When they were coming out of church, the mother asked her daughter which amount she had given. "Well," said the little girl, "I was going to give the dollar, but just before the collection the man in the pulpit said that we should all be cheerful givers. I knew I'd be a lot more cheerful if I gave the quarter, so I did."

This pastor’s prayer is that we will all be more cheerful when we give the first ten percent of our resources back to the God who so graciously gave to us.

Amen