

Topic is: The Blessing of Giving

Happy Sabbath! Please see our room information at <http://93.88.247.151/chat.html>

 Zahakiel : *Ok, let's get started. I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer an opening prayer.*

 Lucan : *Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the sacred Sabbath hours of rest and reverence. We ask that your Spirit be with each of us as we typify both states before your Throne. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.*

 Zahakiel : **Amen.**

 Guest_Naraiel : Amen

 Guest_Peter : Amen

 Guest_Ruthline : Amen

 **Guest_Adriel : Amen**

 Guest_Daphna : Amen

 Guest_Elyna_Family : *Amen*

 Barbli : *Amen*

 Pastor_Chick_CSDA_7 : **Amen.**

 Zahakiel : *Happy Sabbath to everyone. I had several different ideas for what to present tonight, but as I was praying over the topics I had in mind, I was given a surprising urge to speak about a topic that I have not in a while; that is, the subject of Tithes and Offerings. Now, this might seem to be a rather strange subject, especially in our current circumstances, but it reflects the thoughts I have had lately, and the thanksgiving that has filled me in the past couple of days.*

With the persecution heating up, I believe it becomes increasingly important that those who are preparing for Heaven see the love and blessings of our Father even in the darkest of times, and in the most perplexing of events.

Ultimately, tonight's study is about thanksgiving. It is about rejoicing in the salvation of our Father, and specifically through the context of giving of ourselves and our means to the work that He is completing through us and among us in the world today.

We have had a number of articles on the importance of returning the tithe to Yahweh, covering also its Biblical history, so I will be relatively brief on those aspects. We read, for example, in the earliest of books,

“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 [Abram] gave [Melchizedek] tithes of all.” (Gen 14:18-20)

In its first appearance, the sacred tenth is established as taking place when an individual gains “increase,” in this case Abram successfully conducting a rescue of his nephew, and involves rendering a tenth of that increase to a representative of the Creator.

This idea precedes the Mosaic covenant and cannot therefore be legitimately considered to have passed away with certain aspects of the Ceremonial Israelite Law. It is identified as a more ancient aspect of mankind’s covenant with the Father, much like the Sabbath, although it is recorded and explained IN the Mosaic Law just as the Sabbath is. To that end, we read, “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is Yahweh’s; it is holy unto Yahweh.” (Lev 27:30)

Like all the Ten Commandments, the fact that it is written in the Law does not mean that it was established at the time of its enshrinement in Israel’s religious system. The Law is a revelation of Yah’s character and will, it is not a creation of them.

I have previously written articles demonstrating that each particular of the Decalogue appears, and is identified with righteousness, before Moses received the stone tables on Sinai. In the time of the restoration of Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile, we find the rebuilders of the holy city concerned with two things given particular emphasis: the Sabbath, and the tithe. The two are actually very tightly bound together, for one is a blessing of time, and the other of means. Of this last we read,

“And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.” (Neh. 10:38)

In the New Testament, the tithe is again mentioned. The first time, it is explicit, as we read in the rebuke of the Pharisees by Yahshua,

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” (Mat 23:23)

Some have said, “Yahshua is criticizing the legalists for paying tithes, therefore the system is clearly abolished.” However, and firstly, this conversation is obviously taking place before the crucifixion and resurrection; even if a “New Covenant” change were to take place, it would not make any sense for Yahshua to be rebuking the teachers of the Law for failing to heed a change in that Law that had not yet even taken place. No, clearly the Messiah is examining the way that they are keeping the Law as they understood it to be at that time. Second, as He ends the rebuke He says, “These ought ye to have done.” In other words, the criticism is not about the payment of the tithes, but about the neglect of the spiritual aspects of obedience... while believing they are being faithful due to their meticulous observance of the letter. It is about showing the failings of a religion of “works.” A legalist may be legitimately criticized for being a legalist... for their belief that obedience saves them, but not for the obedience itself.

In later books, we find the principle again supported, and then directly applied to the New Covenant. Paul writes,

“Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.” (1Cor 9:13, 14)

The Israelite priests “live” of the income that the temple generates through its intake, Paul observes. “Even so,” he writes, or “In the same way,” Yahweh Himself has ordained that this also be true of the Gospel’s workers. Pastors, ministers, and evangelists received their sustenance from the very system that supported the Old Testament temple workers, and even though Paul himself worked when he was able, he points out that the proper way is as the Scriptures describe.

So, with this principle so clearly taught in both Testaments, why is it that individuals, whether they are members of the Church, or (more often) whether they are yet “friends” of the Bride who are learning and (hopefully) drawing closer to conversion and Life, neglect to consistently follow this Biblical principle?

This may not be something that we have directly addressed before, although the answer should be obvious. It is the very same reason why they generally ARE “friends” only and not “Family.”

It is because of fear... or, to put it another way, lack of the perfect love that casts out all fear. Fear is what keeps individuals from Yahshua, the acceptance of Satan’s lies about His character, His Law, and His people inspires fear. Fear of change, of the unknown, of losing the pleasures of this life... these are the reasons why even those who know the Gospel from the messengers of Yah do not run to the waters of baptism and to life everlasting. And, not coincidentally, these individuals also hold tight to what Paul calls their “carnal things” (1Cor 9:11) for the very same reasons. They fear the change it would cause. They fear the unknown of whether or not they will have enough. They fear losing the pleasures of life that would be afforded without sacrificial giving.

Knowing Yahshua, of course, is to know love, which casts out all these fears, and which re-prioritizes the life to see the work of Yah’s messengers, especially in the work of spreading the Gospel to the world, as the most important endeavor humanity can know.

But, it is better than even this. Yah does not have His people sacrifice in vain. He does not want them to be without means in this life OR the life to come. He specifically says to trust Him to take care of both their earthly and spiritual needs, for the true Christian life, though it is often challenging because of the world, is not a life of deprivation and sorrow beyond the necessities of character building. There are things we must learn from want, certainly, but the Father has pledged to us that we would have our food and clothing. (1Tim 6:8)

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith,’ saith Yahweh 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. And I will rebuke the Devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field,' saith Yahweh of hosts. 'And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land,' saith Yahweh of hosts." (Mal 3:10-12)

"Prove me now in this matter," our Father says. He invites our examination. He challenges us to rest in Him. Again, we see a connection to the Sabbath.

Now of this particular passage from Malachi... I remember hearing the verses that come just before these every week in the mainstream SDA Church. Every week, just as the plate was about to be passed, the congregation was reminded that they were "robbing God" if they did not return both tithes and offerings to the storehouse. And I'm not disagreeing; no doubt, yet such words were necessary for the rebellious, for the unrighteous... for those who were failing spiritually; and I always wondered, why should we not focus on the blessings rather than the penalties? I would rather hear these verses that I have quoted here from week to week, although even they deal more with earthly rewards rather than the spiritual benefits of knowing that we are contributing to the salvation of souls.

CSDAs do teach, as the Bible teaches, that the tithes and offerings are "holy," and belong to Yahweh; therefore not returning to Him the portion of increases is certainly a violation of the commandment against stealing. Yet, within the Family we have never really had to press this issue too much. Those who love the Father and Son have always understood the importance of this aspect of the Gospel – and it IS an aspect of the Good News – with the exception perhaps of very new converts who merely needed to be educated.

What need to be expressed are the promises of Yah, and these come with thanksgiving. As I said, tonight's study is really about thanksgiving. In my own experience, I have always felt convicted to give heavily... and especially for the past few years, while we have had a work going on internationally, I agreed to increase the amount beyond what I had before – and to subsist on even less, percentage-wise, than Israel did if the truth be known, since we have a lot of modern "taxes" that they did not.

Yet for all this, I have not known "want." Yah has "proven" Himself in this, just as He said...providing for me miraculously, opening paths before me that I had no reason to suspect I would be able to travel. I am kept humble, knowing that I depend upon Him, both directly and indirectly through those He has permitted to be in my life, but I have need of nothing He has not given to me.

In fact, Yahweh through the Church has always provided for my needs even when extra was needed, such as emergency movements from one location to another. And in these days, for those following recent developments, should I ultimately need any legal representation, this can also be provided.

In these things, I rejoice, knowing that Yah's storehouse is just that – a house of storage, for us... for days when the stored material will be needed. Yah Himself does not need anything from us...every system that He has made known to us has been specifically and entirely for our sakes. To see this, of course, requires discernment, and to participate in this, of course, requires trust.

I give thanks for all that Yah has revealed to mankind, and for all that He has allowed us to understand. He has given me everything I have needed, and beyond, showing me little things and great things that I know are not mere chance, but deliberate providence.

Tithes and offerings, which Yah has brought to my mind today, are just one area that I can use to testify that Yah is a God of love, and that we as His children – repentant, faithful, and baptized – are the most joyful of all people, a “delightful land,” just as Yah has promised.

I use tithes and offerings as an example, for it may well be applied to all things – to our time, to our efforts, to our best and most creative thoughts. Let these things be dedicated to our Father, and to the work of His Gospel. Let us see these things as blessings to give, for the truth is that not a cent, not a tear, not an ounce of energy expended on Yah’s behalf is beneath His notice.

We are not a people of works, nor do we have a religion of deeds, but the works that we do, and the deeds we accomplish, these things create an incorruptible archive of our love for our Father and our fellow man.

Like our Father, we are creators. Like our Father, we delight in revealing our love. The things that we do in Yah’s name reveal that we are not sowing to the flesh, but to the spirit. They reveal that our treasures are not on this earth, which fades and darkens ever more each day. They reveal that “self” is dead, for we are not trying – because of fear – to build thick barriers between ourselves and deprivation or loss. No, leave that to the modern Pharisees and Sadducees. Leave that to the cowardly kingdom-builders, who use the things of this world to comfort themselves. Leave that to the wicked that use the world and its principles to defend their wealth and their name.

We will trust in Yahweh the Almighty One, who knows every sigh and every groan of a people who are oppressed despite their inner joy, and One whose flame of justice grows steadily against Satan and his agents who wish to do us harm.

We will see life everlasting, not because of our giving, but because the Spirit in us that gives us life also gives to the world through us. We, among all people in the history of the world, are the most honored, the most privileged, to see the events unfolding around us. Therefore, let not your heart be troubled. We are those who will see the Messiah return, lifting up hopeful eyes to see the sky being rolled away like a scroll, and the light of eternity shining on the earth, revealing every secret thing and gleaming off the gold of our faith. We are they who are called to finish the work in the world...and let us see nothing too large or too small to add to the effort, so that we may see Yah’s promises manifest, both before our eyes now, and for ever more in the endless days to come.

Are there any comments or questions about tonight's study?

 Guest_Elyna_Family : Amen!

 Pastor_Chick_CSDA_7 : C

 Zahakiel : *Go ahead.*

 Pastor_Chick_CSDA_7 : **I get your point completely...**

 Guest_Adriel : **Amen**

 Pastor_Chick_CSDA_7 : **and I have used an analogy of sorts talking about checking oil in the engine of a vehicle. The oil is an important lubricant in the engine. It needs to be kept up to a critical level in order for the engine to run optimally, but, the oil is not what makes the engine run. On the other hand, if oil is escaping or being burned away, there is a sign of defect somewhere in the engine. In like manner, if a person is not giving of their means and talents for the Gospel it is a "sign" that some defect is centered in the soul and you have pointed to "fear" as a root issue. There is something standing between the soul and the Savior. END.**

 Zahakiel : *That is a very good analogy, yes 😊 Aare there any others with thoughts to share? Then, I hope this study will be with your thoughts and meditations in the coming hours, and I ask Pastor to close our meeting with a prayer.*

 Pastor_Chick_CSDA_7 : **Dear Father in Heaven. We rejoice in Your Provision, in Your Protection, in Your Faithfulness, in Your Salvation, in Your Love and Care. We trust You, for there is none other to rely on. We are often surprised and even shocked in our human limitations to see Your Hand work in our behalf and to experience Your Providence in action to bring about the sanctification of Your beloved children. Thank You dear Father for all of Your Benefits to the children of men. May our hearts be focused on Your Throne continually reaping the Rest of YAH, which is demonstrated in the Sabbath Rest on earth. In the Blessed Hope and holy name of YAHSHUA, AMEN.**

 Barbli : **Amen**

 Zahakiel : **Amen.**

 Guest_Peter_JR_1718 : **Amen.**

 Lucan : *Amen*

 Guest_Naraiel : **Amen**

 Guest_gadriel : **Amen.**

 Guest_Ruthline : **Amen.**

 Guest_Elyna_Family : **Amen.**

 Guest_Daphna : **Amen**

11-13-2015 The Blessing of Giving



Guest_Adriel : Amen!



Guest_Peter : Amen