

God's Passion for His People  
Malachi 3:6-12  
God's Messenger to a Disillusioned Nation, part 12

- The irony: Israel can only question God's justice because He is an unchanging God of love & grace and had not consumed them.
- By His grace, God has a passion to share the glory of His presence with us.
- This dispute focuses on God's passion for His people is highlighted by three commands:

**1. Return to Me! (v.6-7)**

- **God has a passion to fellowship with us**

Zechariah 1:3: "Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts."

Jeremiah 3:1; "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 3:22; Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God.

Isaiah 55:6; Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him **return** unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

**2. Give to Me! (v.8-10a)**

- **God has a passion to be our treasure**

A. Important Definitions:

1.) "Tithes:" what was commanded, the tenth of one's income. Tithing was done before the law (Gen.14:20; 28:22) and was compulsory under the Law to provide for the needs of the Levites in the land. The tithe every third year went to supply food for the needy as well as the Levites (Deut.14:22-23; 28,29; Deut.26:12-13).

Lev. 27:10; And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD.

2.) "Offerings:" the gifts given on either a compulsory or a voluntary, free-will basis. Exodus 25:1-8; Ezra 8:25

3.) "Storehouse:" The temple treasury where they stored the food, the grain and tithes that the people brought. (2 Chronicles 31:11-ff; Neh.10:35-38; 12:44; 13:12)

#### B. Important Questions:

- 1.) Are we as NT believers commanded to tithe/give offerings?
- 2.) Should we as NT believers tithe/give offerings?
- 3.) Should we give our tithes/offerings to the local church?
- 4.) Is it Biblical for pastors today as the Levites in the OT, to be paid a sufficient salary in order to live?  
1 Timothy 5:18; For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the laborer is worthy of his reward.

C. Important Conclusion: The identical need exists today as in OT times to supply for the needs of the pastor(s) of the church and for the on-going outreach of the local church to bring the Gospel to the world.

### 3. Prove Me! (v.10b-12)

- **God has a passion for us to trust Him for overflowing blessings!**
- The stinginess and refusal of the people to give made it harder to give. Why? because God sent plagues and storms to destroy their harvests. The less they gave the less they had!
- Giving makes no human sense but God blesses the giver and provides their need.

A. The Humble Command: Prove me now!

B. The Overflowing Promise, v.10-12

- While we are not under the Law, there is a continuity of connection with our obligation to fulfill our stewardship. The Law said one day of seven was holy, grace says all our days are set apart for Him; the law set apart one tribe in twelve to be His priests; grace says we are a kingdom of priests; the law demanded 1/10 of one's income to be given to the LORD, the Spirit makes clear that all we possess is His. May we give our all to Him for He has a passion for all of us!