

The power of the first fruit

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- Adam and Eve chose to pursue their own desires and ignore God's
- Satan impacted their lives and the lives of their descendants because of their disobedience to what God said about the first fruit

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- Long before The Law was given, Abram tithed in worship to God - Genesis 14
- Later, Jacob does the same thing
- In Leviticus and Deuteronomy, God expresses His desire for mankind to give one tenth of first "fruit" to Him
- Obediently followed throughout the Old Testament

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 - Provide for the poor, needy

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 - Was it for their benefit?

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- It positions that believer's descendants to also be blessed and not cursed

Malachi 3: 7-12

"Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the LORD of hosts.

"But you said 'In what way shall we return?'"

"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, In what way have we robbed You?"

"In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this

Malachi 3: 7-12

"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."

"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. "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.

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 - This is in spite of their lack of knowledge

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- Distinct connection between obeying what God says about first fruit and relationship with Him
- God understands their concern of trust
 - He says to "test Him on this"
 - "Worship me and see how I'll respond"

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 - Same phrase used when God poured out the rain during the flood
 - Same words used to destroy because of disobedience will be used to bless because of obedience
 - The curse is reversed
- An outpouring so great that receiving it all is impossible

But God doesn't stop there

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 - Worshipping God through first fruits breaks the curse and positions for blessing

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 - All in response to worship of Him

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- Since beginning, God has set limits on what He desires us to do, but the possibility to do otherwise exists

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- God clearly desires His people to position themselves so that the enemy's power over their resources is broken

What is our motive in tithing?

- Worshipping God by

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- Worshipping God by
 - Obeying
 - Trusting

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 - Believing
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 - Acknowledging Him as source of all
 - Acknowledging Him as Lord of all

God doesn't need our fruit...

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... but He desires that His relationship with us is redeemed and restored

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... but He desires that His relationship with us is redeemed and restored
...He desires to put the enemy in his place on our behalf because we've placed God in His