

# WILL A MAN ROB GOD?

*John W. West*

Throughout the ages, there have been men who have robbed and who have stolen from others. It is an awful thing for someone to come in and steal things from us. But on a weekly basis, many who call themselves Christians, rob and steal. When we as Christians fail to give “as we have been prospered,” we are stealing from God. Malachi dealt with the same type of “thief” in his day. In Malachi 3:8-9 it is recorded, “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 men, even this whole nation.” The Jews in Malachi's day were cursed, “even the whole nation,” because they had withheld their tithe and offering from God. This is done in the Lord's church weekly. Eventually God will curse on ALL who have stolen from Him. We want to notice the account of Malachi 3:8,9, the “robbing” that takes place today in the Lord's church, and giving as set forth in the New Testament.

## **THE JEWS ROBBED GOD**

The Jews robbed God in “tithes and offerings.” They withheld part of their offering. The Jews did not give all they should have to God and upon them was pronounced a curse. Ananias and Sapphira were guilty of the same sin (Acts 5:1-11). They, wanting to receive glory, lied about what they gave to the apostles.

The Jews not only robbed God by not giving as they should; but they also robbed Him when they offered the sick and lame of their animals. Malachi 1:8 records, “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.” The Lord said it was evil to offer the blind, lame and sick. If we offer something to anyone who is highly esteemed, we will offer them the best. But we often give God our second best.

The Lord promised to curse anyone who withheld their offering or gave him second best. In Malachi 3:9, he pronounced a curse on those who would rob him. In Malachi 1:13-14, He pronounced this same curse to those offering the lame and sick of their animals.

## **MANY TODAY ROB GOD**

Just as the Jews of Malachi's day robbed God, many today are guilty of the same sin. Many in the Lord's church rob God of their giving. We are **COMMANDED** to give on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1,2). We are commanded to give as we have been prospered (vs. 2). Many in the church today fail to give as they have been prospered when they give God the “left-overs.” Paul commended the Macedonians for their liberality in giving (2 Cor. 8:1-5). They were in deep poverty, but that did not stop them from giving liberally. Paul said in verse three that they went “beyond their power” to give. He commended them for first giving themselves to the Lord for a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1,2).

Many today rob God of their time. Some complain about “having” to spend a few hours a week worshipping God. Some rob God of their time by not doing God's work (Luke 19:10). We should be spending more time doing the Lord's work, and less time complaining. We never give God as much of our time as we should. It may be because

too much time is spent in front of a television, or playing sports, or with other things that take us away from serving God.

Many today rob God of praise. Moses and Aaron robbed God of glory when they failed to follow the commands of God (Num. 20:10,12). Because of this disobedience, they were not allowed to enter the land of Canaan. When a Christian in the pew fails to sing praises to God and fails to participate in prayer, he robs God of glory the He deserves (Heb. 13:15).

### **GIVING BACK TO GOD THAT WHICH BELONGS TO HIM**

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 3:9, "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." We must honor God today by giving back to Him as we have been prospered. Everything that we have belongs to God and we are to be good stewards. We are not good stewards when we fail to give back to God.

In Mark 12:41-44, the poor widow, that cast in only two mites, gave more than anyone else there because she gave all that she had. While others were able to give great amounts to God, they only gave a part, but she gave EVERYTHING. She put ALL of her faith in God, knowing that He would provide for her. Today, some only put a "small token" of faith in God. It is evident by the amount given to God. He has promised to take care of us when we put Him first (Mat. 6:33). Will we ever learn that valuable lesson?

### **BLESSINGS RECEIVED FROM GIVING**

God has promised to bless us in our giving. When one gives liberality to God, he will be blessed. In Proverbs 3:10 it is recorded, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." In Psalms 23, David praised God for all his blessings. David said his "cup was running over" because of blessings from God. Luke wrote in Luke 6:38, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." We have been PROMISED blessings when we give. These blessing will be "running over" when we give as we should. In 2 Corinthians 9:6b we read, "and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The more we sow, the more we will reap. We need to give "cheerfully" and liberally (vs. 7).

Let us not be guilty of the same type of robbery that the Jews were in Malachi's day. If we do not give as we have been prospered, then we are IN SIN. When we leave this earth, we cannot take our money or possessions with us. We need to use them wisely while we still have the opportunity.

Do not lose your soul because you robbed God. Give as you have been prospered. We must always remember the principle found in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."~