

# Far Eastern Division Outlook

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## Recommendations on Tithing



HEREAS, *The system of tithing is the God-given basic plan for the support of His work, and in view of the serious shrinkage of tithe which has greatly curtailed our work in every conference during recent months;*

### WE RECOMMEND—

1. *That all our church papers arrange to maintain a constant promotion of the tithing plan, drawing the attention of our people to the importance of faithfulness in this plan as the basic means of supporting our world-wide work.*
2. *That the editors of these periodicals put forth special effort to secure articles on tithing, and experiences indicating the special blessings of God where members have been faithful in their Christian duty in this matter.*
3. *That we request our ministers to preach more frequently on the importance of all our members' being faithful in returning to God that which belongs to Him, and at the same time placing special emphasis on the blessings that come to the believer who, in view of the nearness of Christ's second coming and the greatness of our unfinished task, is faithful to God in this matter.*
4. *That we urge any who have been unfaithful stewards to bring all back tithe into God's storehouse, that His work may continue with increasing success.*

—AUTUMN COUNCIL.

## Tithe Paying Statistics

Recent statistics of a definite group of nontithe-paying church members showed that 84 men out of every 100 Americans sixty-five years old are dependent on others for support, while only 1.58 of tithe-paying Seventh-day Adventists sixty-five years old are dependent upon others. Out of 342 Seventh-day Adventists in business on their own account, only eight are reported to have failed during the past seven years, and not one of these had been a regular tithe payer. Of the 334 successful business men, 818 are reported to be regular tithe payers.—*Selected.*

## A Japanese Worker's Personal Experience

On the 15th of August, 1915, in Nagoya, I started out with Brother Watanabe to do canvassing work. For four hours we worked very hard and I succeeded in selling one tract and one paper, total value six sen. At that time I was doing my own cooking, and one *sho* of rice cost twelve sen. Until the 13th of October, when I entered our Mission school, I kept on canvassing and sold only ¥12.50 worth of books. From that time until now, during eighteen years I have sold ¥15,340 worth of books, and from these book sales have paid more than ¥768 in tithe to the heavenly barns. Meanwhile the Lord has given me a wife and four children, and I have been privileged to lead my mother and the family of my younger sister into the truth. The Lord has provided for my daily needs, and is leading me on step by step to the heavenly Canaan. When I think of the great sacrifice of our Lord, I cannot break the Lord's commandment and eat of the forbidden tree (the tithe). With much joy I will bring into the heavenly storehouse the part I owe to the lord.

T. HAYAKAWA.

Hakodate, Hokkaido, Japan.

## One Prospered, the Other Failed

Two families established themselves on several acres of land where there were two houses. One house faced one road, the other another road, and the land ran between these two roads. It was the same kind of land throughout with not even a fence separating the two plots. One family farmed half of it, the other family the other half.

The two men worked at the factory, and farmed their land after working hours. Neither man professed any religion, but their wives were Adventists. Both men learned from their wives and the Bible that they should pay tithe. As a result one paid tithe, the other did not.

They purchased their seed from the same place, the factory store. They planted the same things. They cultivated the same amount of soil. They used the same amount of fertilizer. They put the same amount of labor on their crops. It was as fair and equal a demonstration as I have ever seen, or heard of during all the years of my life. And I was there and watched it all summer.

One man's farm prospered. The other man's failed. The sun shone on them both. The same rain fell on both. They had the same attention. But the tomato worms, and potato bugs, and corn borers, and cut-worms seemed almost to know that one man was a tithe payer and the other was not. And they seemed to have discovered which was which. At any rate, these devourers were all in the growing things of the non-tither, and the tithe payer was not troubled greatly with them. The result was astonishing. The non-tither complained incessantly that the land wouldn't grow anything. The tither exhibited his products all about as the prize products of the region.

CARLYLE B. HAYNES.

## All Done by Prayer

The Japanese woman, Sister Aiko Araki of Kagoshima who gave the following testimony, is blind. She is a widow who supports herself and her son by massage:

"My life is always filled with prayer. In fact, my life is prayer. If prayer were taken out of my life, all my strength would be gone. The small and the big things in the spiritual as well as in the material realm are all given to me in answer to prayer. It was almost a miracle the way the Lord made it possible for me to attend this general meeting. Already a year ago I prayed to the Lord that he might arrange it for me. As the time for this meeting drew near I would awake twice or three times at night, and I prayed to the Lord. Two days before the date of departure there was not even one sen in my possession with which to pay for the trip. I did not doubt even then that the Lord would provide the way for me. In a miraculous way kind people gave me a suit and a pair of new shoes for my boy, which fit as if made for him. In the afternoon of that day several people paid their bills to me. Money came in.

"On the morning of the day of our departure, a friend of mine came and asked me about my plans. He offered to loan me money so that I might start on the trip. I declined to accept his offer, and went out to get some work. When I returned home in the evening several of our friends were already waiting for me, eager to see how matters had turned out. The Lord had wonderfully blessed me that day. We got the money bag and counted over the money. During these last two days I had received thirty yen. We took out the tithe, and the amount left was just enough to buy the tickets for me and the boy. I had ¥2.50 in tithe left over from the previous week. Thus I sent ¥5.50 to the church treasurer.

"Nearly two days had to be spent on the train, and we had no money for food or drink. However, gladly we made our preparations to take the night train. In the meantime believers and friends of the church came and handed over to me ¥2.50 with the remark that they would go without an excursion for some time and let me have the necessary food for the trip. At the station there came a former teacher of mine, and instead of bringing fruit or some refreshments he handed over to me some money. Just before the train left another of my former teachers, in a hurry, was able to throw some money through the window to us and bid us good-bye. From the moment I had sent the tithe to the church treasurer up to the time the train left, we had gotten just double the amount I had returned to the Lord. With this money we were able to provide our food on the trip and pay the expenses during the general meeting."

A. C. KOCH.

## Their Crops Spared

Brother Elauria told me his experience with locusts, on my recent trip to Malabang. One Sabbath they saw the swarm approaching and began to shield one of our brethren's farms by digging ditches. They eased their conscience by saying this is good missionary work, but finally they were convicted that it was wrong. They returned to their home and asked God to forgive their sins and left the results with the Lord. The Lord heard their prayer and spared their crops as well as the other brother's crop that they had tried to save. Moros were startled to see how the farms of Adventists were saved. One of them said to Brother Elauria, "Your medicine is stronger than ours, give us some of your medicine."

W. B. RIFFEL, in the "Mizpa."

## Protected from the Locusts

Last week while our convention was going on in Bad-as, a great swarm of locusts infested the neighboring *barrios*. Many of our brethren hesitated to attend the meeting without one or two men to guard their farms. But a couple, both of faithful tithe-payers, residing farthest from our church left their house and everything including their fat growing rice seedlings, to attend the meeting. When they returned home in the evening many people laughed at them and told them that a swarm of locusts about four inches thick had covered their seedlings. In spite of the bad news they kept on rejoicing and thinking of the inestimable blessings they received during the meetings. They enjoyed singing hymns at night and when morning came they and the people were all very much surprised to see the rice seedlings unharmed.

ANTONIO SOMOSO, in the "Mizpa."

## Tithe Receipts Increase, Debts Vanish

R. W. Pearson, field secretary of the Chosen Union sends us a copy of his latest report of colporteur sales aggregating ¥32,343.69 for the period, Jan. 1 to Nov. 30, 1932. For the corresponding period of 1931, the sales were ¥27,889.20, thus showing a gain of ¥4,454.49.

In commenting on the report, Brother Pearson says, "We are very thankful for the way the Lord has blessed us. Aside from the small gain, we have two very interesting items in the colporteur department this year: (1) A gain of nearly 100% in tithe; colporteurs paid ¥422 last year, and now over ¥650 with a big month to go—and end of year settlement. (2) No debts among the fifty colporteurs in all Chosen." And then Brother Pearson adds, in which we agree with him, "I'm sure with the shortage of funds throughout our Division that there is no work that should be used and stressed like the literature work. I believe that the Lord will bless us if we only go forward in faith."

EUGENE WOESNER.

## The First Philippine Union Young People's Convention

It was fitting that the first Young People's Convention in the history of the Philippine Union should be held on the spacious campus of the Philippine Junior College. For what institution could have afforded a warmer welcome to the young people than that which stands for the training of the youth? Thanks to the College people for throwing their doors open to the visitors. The delegates from all parts of the Islands, together with the workers, the faculty and the student body, presented a group one might with pardonable pride call the "cream" of the Philippine Union Mission constituency. Here were assembled the leaders of today and the leaders of tomorrow.

Conventions are always busy occasions, and this one was no exception. Meetings, discussions, and committee meetings were the order of the day. But there is every reason to believe that the three busy days were profitably spent. Young people's problems, their activities and their personal relationship with God, provided a wide field for the able speakers. And if the evident eagerness of the listeners to take it in was a fair index of their readiness to impart, what a telling effect the convention would have upon the young people of the Islands!

Volunteers! 500 Missionary Volunteers singing enthusiastically and literally filling the College chapel to overflowing—an inspiring sight indeed! No wonder then that the servant of God, with a discerning eye viewing the world-wide Missionary Volunteer Movement exclaimed, "With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"

ISIDORA BLANCAFLOR, in the "Mizpa."



# FAR EASTERN DIVISION OUTLOOK



## The Privileges and Blessing of Tithe Paying

Christian theology is a system of contradictions and the Christian is the embodiment of contrary and conflicting principles. Yet the strength of Christianity and the power of the Christian lies in this very fact. And, strange though it may sound in unqualified and unexplained statement, the wonderful harmony and beautiful symmetry of the whole is wrapped up in antagonistic and contradictory elements: until one feels like exclaiming with Nicodemus of old, "How can these things be?" And yet, how simply, how beautifully, how appealingly, and how convincingly is this all set forth by Paul when he speaks of believers as being "deceivers, and yet true: as unknown and yet well known: as dying, and, behold, we live; . . . as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

To follow up the simile: We are "slaves" "bought with a price," yet "free indeed" through the very Christ whose slaves we are, enjoying "the glorious liberty of the children of God". And the law that thunders in denunciatory tones from Sinai to the sinner, "Thou shalt not," reaches the Christian's ear in the soothing comparison of, "Thou shalt not." And, carrying the comparison one step farther, the stern duties that confront the half-hearted Christian, become the blessed and undeniable privileges of the true Christian;—privileges that only a citizen of heaven and a child of God can enjoy.

Too long have we looked upon the term "privilege" in the cold light of dictionary terms as "an exemption by virtue of one's office or station, from burdens or liabilities

By EDWARD J. URQUHART

to which others are subject," when, in the seemingly contradiction of Bible terms and logic, we should have regarded it as a right gained through continual sacrifice whereby we are made "partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, (in us) (we) may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Only thus can we comprehend tithe-paying as a privilege or enter into it with real Christian joy. For tithing is a privilege; it links every soul that does it to the Infinite and thus makes all of us "laborers together with God." Therefore it may be said of us, who are faithful tithe-payers, that we are made "kings and priests unto God,"—"an holy nation, a peculiar people."

The poorest brother and the weakest or most ignorant sister is tied to the Infinite with bands as real as gold and stronger than steel.

But not only is tithe-paying a privilege to be enjoyed by the children of God as a sacrifice of joy that links each one with Christ's suffering and binds him to the very throne of God; it is also filled to overflowing with blessings. Why! the very fact that the privilege ties us to

Heaven is a blessing of the first magnitude. But that is only a tie, a relationship that brings other blessings with it. . . more tangible and more material. Thus the promise to the faithful tithe-payer is, "I will open . . . the . . . windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Not poetic fancy, not unproved theory is this,—for the Spirit of Prophecy reminds us that:

"Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly (and let us add "understand-

### THE OPEN-WINDOW BLESSING EXPERIENCED BY STUDENTS IN JAPAN

By ALFONSO N. ANDERSON

They were eleven hundred yen in debt. Pretty big sum for forty students. It seemed like a hopeless task to liquidate this large amount. How could poor students ever pay the Japan Junior College what they owed? Then it was that Professor Nelson invoked the blessed paradox, namely, give more and have more. But the motive appealed to was not the love of gain. Rather, it was the solemn duty of paying one's just obligations to God who gives us all things. So the students then and there stopped the worst of all robberies—taking for one's own personal use that which belongs to God. They could see the point, especially as they began to receive the open-window blessing from heaven. In a short time, believe it or not, every last yen of the students' arrears was paid into the treasury. This definite bit of history proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that God is true to His word and rewards richly all who bring the complete tenth into His storehouse.

ingly") carried out His plan in systematic benevolence and in gifts and offerings, they have realized the standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed His requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God, and complied with His requirements, honoring Him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings, they were made to realize that they were not only robbing Him but themselves; for He limited His blessings to them, just in proportion as they limited their offerings to Him." *Vol. 3, p. 395.*

Reports of our own times from widely separated sections of the world indicate that what has been true in past ages is manifest very markedly even today.

The following quotation bears out much that is set forth in this article, and is worthy of careful and prayerful study by every missionary:

"Wherever there is life, there is increase and growth; in God's kingdom there is a constant interchange,—taking in, and giving out; receiving, and returning to the Lord His own. God works with every true believer, and the light and blessings received are given out again in the work which the believer does. Thus the capacity for receiving is increased. As one imparts of the heavenly gifts, he makes room for fresh currents of grace and truth to flow into the soul from the living fountain. Greater light, increased knowledge and blessing, are his. In this work, which devolves upon every church-member, is the life and growth of the church. He whose life consists in ever receiving and never giving, soon loses the blessing. If truth does not flow forth from him to others, he loses his capacity to receive. We must impart the goods of heaven if we desire fresh blessings.

"This is as true in temporal as in spiritual things. The Lord does not come to this world with gold and silver to advance His work. He supplies men with resources, that by their gifts and offerings they may keep His work advancing. The one purpose above all others for which God's gifts should be used is the sustaining of workers in the great harvest-field. And if men, and women as well, will become channels of blessing to other souls, the Lord will keep the channels supplied. (What a wonderful promise for this time of world-depression). It is not returning to God his own that makes men poor; it is withholding that tends to poverty.

"*The work of imparting that which he has received will constitute every member of the church a laborer together with God. Of yourself you can do nothing; but Christ is the great worker. It is the privilege of every*

*human being who receives Christ to be a worker together with Him.*

"The Saviour said, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' For the joy of seeing souls redeemed, Christ endured the cross. He became the living sacrifice for a fallen world. Into that act of self-sacrifice was put the heart of Christ, the love of God; and through this sacrifice was given to the world the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit. It is through sacrifice that God's work must be carried forward. Of every child of God self-sacrifice is required. Christ said, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.' To all who believe, Christ gives a new character. This character, through His infinite sacrifice, is the reproduction of His own.

"The Author of our salvation will be the finisher of the work. One truth received into the heart will make room for still another truth. And the truth, wherever received, quickens into activity the powers of the receiver. When our church-members are truly lovers of God's word, they will reveal the

best and strongest qualities; and the nobler they are, the more childlike in spirit they will be, believing the word of God against all selfishness.

"A flood of light is shining from the word of God, and there must be an awakening to neglected opportunities. When all are faithful in giving back to God His own in tithes and offerings, the way will be opened for the world to hear the message for this time. If the hearts of God's people were filled with love for Christ; if every church-member were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice; if all manifested thorough earnestness, there would be no lack of funds for home or foreign missions. Our resources would be multiplied; a thousand doors of usefulness would be opened, and we should be invited to enter. Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to the earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God." *Vol. 6, pp. 448, 449.*

*Soonan, Korea.*

## Early History of the Tithing Plan

By F. A. PRATT

Tithing dates back to the very beginning of things. In reality, every thing belongs to God. We are tenants or stewards. It is only just and right that we should return something to Him. If a man wishes to use something which belongs to another, he usually pays a certain sum per month or year. We call it rent. In God's plan it is called tithe. The first place that we find mention of the tithe is in Genesis 14: 18-20. "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 he gave him tithes of all."

It is but natural to conclude that this was not the first time that Abraham paid tithe. He merely followed his usual custom. Of Jacob when making his vow at Bethel, we read, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Genesis 28:20-22.

Here again it is logical to conclude that Jacob recognized tithe paying as a very definite part of worship. Later

when God led the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, tithe paying as well as Sabbath keeping was early taught them. Thus we see that tithe paying is as old as man. It is one of the ways that individuals show their love to God. In Malachi 3:8-11 we read: "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 me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord 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 the Lord of hosts." God speaks plainer than we would dare. Those who withhold the tithe are called robbers.

In these last days God has also given to the remnant church a very definite message on the tithing question. In a little book which was published in 1906, Elder J. N. Loughborough gives an account of the beginning of the tithing system in this movement.

"An address setting forth the 'tithing principle' as the best method of gathering funds for the support of the ministry was published in the *Review* of February 6, 1859. This same ad-

dress had been adopted by a vote of the Battle Creek church, January 26, 1859. The proposed plan was so reasonable and consistent that it was readily accepted and acted upon by the generous and liberal hearted. It was welcomed as a measure well calculated to give greater efficiency to the work of the ministry. Another address on the same subject was read at a general gathering of Sabbath-keepers in Battle Creek, June 3-6, 1859. It was adopted by a vote of that body, and recommended to all as a plan to be acted upon at once. The majority of our people began immediately to carry out the principle. Some, however, delayed, and the principal cause of such delays was well set forth in the following testimony:

'Rob not God by withholding from Him your tithes and offerings. It is the first sacred duty to render to God a suitable proportion. Let no one throw in his claims and lead you to rob God. Let not your children steal your offerings from God's altar for their own benefit. . . .

I saw that in the arrangement of systematic benevolence, hearts will be tested and proved. It is a constant, living test. It brings one to understand his own heart, to see whether the truth or the love of the world predominates. Here is a test for the naturally selfish and covetous. They will put down their possessions at very low figures. Here they dissemble. Said the angel, 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.' Angels are watching the development of character, and the acts of such are carried to heaven by the heavenly messengers. Some will be visited of God for these things, and their increase will be brought down to their figures. 'There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.' . . .

'This tithing system I saw, would develop character, and manifest the true state of the heart. If the brethren . . . have this matter presented before them in its true bearing, and are left to decide for themselves, they will see wisdom and order in the tithing system.' Vol. 1, pp. 221, 222, 237.

'With a slight modification of keeping account of actual income and giving one tenth of that to the cause of God, the system introduced in 1859 is still carried out. It supplies a steady flow of means into the treasury for the gospel work. Note that from the first the Testimony called it tithes that should be rendered to the Lord.' "The Church", by J. N. Loughborough, pp. 108-109.

Personally, I can testify, after an experience covering more than twenty-

five years, that it pays to pay tithe. I well remember two young men that worked together who received the same wages. One paid a faithful tithe; the other paid tithe on his wages, but various gifts which he received from home, he failed to tithe. His relatives were well to do. In the course of time these gifts amounted to \$1,000.00, but no tithe was paid on them. The other young man lived on his salary alone, and was able to better provide for his family; his home was better furnished, his family

enjoyed better health. To me it showed very plainly that God does honor the faithful tithe payer.

In view of the present financial situation when the cause of God is suffering because of lack of funds, it seems altogether fitting and proper that we should make a mighty effort to encourage by precept and example our church members throughout the Far Eastern Division to return to God a faithful tithe.

Manila, P. I.

## Tithing in the Christian Dispensation

By Alfred Koch

### Christ's Attitude Toward Money

The example for our faith and life is Jesus Christ, our Saviour. His attitude toward money and the piling up of treasures is very significant. He knew and made it known that covetousness is a fierce foe to men. We read His solemn advice in the sermon on the mount: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matt. 6:19-21. Jesus not only taught this but practiced it in his own life. His business on earth was not to make money, but to serve God and men. Placing the kingdom of God first and making money a secondary affair, He suffered no material need at all. He expected service of the same type from his followers, and on asking them, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing?" They also agreed to a similar experience replying, (We lacked) "nothing". Luke 22:35.

Again, the Lord knew that a man who likes money will become so engaged in this money-making business that everything else will be neglected—especially the salvation of the soul. Therefore His forceful words of warning to all lovers of earthly treasures: "what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matt. 16:26. A more impressive picture embodying this thought could hardly be painted than the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12: 16-21. The reason, as given by the Lord, in this man's failure was, that "he laid up treasures for himself and was not rich toward God." Jesus put the young, self-righteous ruler, who seemingly intended to follow Him, to a test in the weakest point of his character summoning him: "sell that thou hast", "give to the poor", "come and follow me". Matt. 19:16-22. If this young man had started to carry out these instructions, Jesus doubtless would have

stopped him. He did not want his money; He wanted to save his soul. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Mark 10:23.

### Tithing a Protection Against Covetousness

This last story of the young ruler who was faithful in all the other duties except one, shows that giving of money is part of our religious life. The protection against covetousness is that man learns to regard himself only as a steward, not as the owner of the goods he has,—a principle taught so well in the parable of the talents in Matt. 25. A steward does not manage his own affairs, but serves, or oversees for another, and "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Cor. 4:2. No one can excuse himself from this divine obligation. When a steward gives to the Master, he does not give of his own, but simply returns what has been intrusted to his care.

In men's relations one with another, it is never considered proper for the tenant to dictate to the landlord what crops shall be raised, what rentals shall be paid, or the time that he shall occupy the place. Therefore we should not think it strange that God, whose right to the earth and its fullness is absolute, should determine the conditions of stewardship. In order that we may fully understand our responsibility and faithfully discharge our obligation, God has graciously recorded in His word explicit instruction, and worthy examples of faithful servants.

The tithe is holy unto the Lord. No man can misappropriate the tithe, or put it to common use without incurring the disfavor of heaven and the frown of God. In heaven such conduct is considered as robbing God. We who are dependent upon God for life, intellect, ability to work, and every gift and blessing, should recognize the Giver of all by returning to

His treasury the tithe, and liberal offerings besides.

In the strongest terms Christ enjoined the duty of tithe paying. He urged upon the scribes and Pharisees the high value of giving due regard to the weighty matters of the law, but He did not in any sense minimize the binding claims of God resting upon every man to pay his tithe faithfully. "Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin," He declared, "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." Matt. 23:23. It will be observed that the Lord did not charge them with being too particular in tithe paying. He did not intimate that tithing was a matter of small consequence. He declared they should pay it. It is heaven's own requirement. All of God's commands are of vital consequence.

#### *Early Church Recognized God's Ownership*

When at Pentecost thousands of people accepted the gospel, they were lifted out of selfishness and considered their possessions as a trust. "Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own;" but they "sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Acts 4: 32; 2: 45.

"This liberality on the part of the believers was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The converts to the gospel were 'of one heart and of one soul'. One common interest controlled them,—the success of the mission entrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for their brethren and the cause they had espoused, was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth." *The Acts of Apostles, pp. 70, 71.*

Let us add to this beautiful description of the ideal conditions in the apostolic church another statement from the Spirit of Prophecy on present day duties of the church:

"The work of the gospel, as it widens, requires greater provision to sustain it than was called for anciently; and this makes the law of tithes and offerings of even more urgent necessity now than under the Hebrew economy." *Patriarchs & Prophets, p. 529.*

#### *Rewards to Faithfulness in Tithing*

The Scriptures pronounce a curse upon all who willingly, knowingly, and determinedly rob God in tithes and offerings. Mal. 3: 8, 9. God curses negatively by removing His special care, protection, and blessing. That fig tree, which Jesus cursed, quickly withered away when it was deprived of nourishment. Matt. 21:

18-20. And how soon Job's riches and his health perished when, through no sin of his own, the Lord removed His protecting care! And so it is with the person who is dishonest with the Lord in the matter of withholding the tithe. Hag. 1. Should God remove His protection from us, our troubles would multiply, and calamity and afflictions would be upon us.

In several passages of the Bible a

degree of temporal prosperity is assured the tithe payer. But far outweighing any material consideration are the spiritual virtues and graces that bring into one's mind and heart the peace of God, the quietness of an unviolated conscience, a sense of the approval of the Lord, and a lively hope of eternal salvation. Let us be faithful to God in our tithes.

*Sapporo, Japan.*

## Are the People of God under Obligation to Follow the Tithing Plan To-day?

By W. W. R. LAKE

The tithing plan has come down to us from the Garden of Eden when God told our first parents that "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2: 16, 17. In reserving to Himself this tree, the Lord made it a test of man's loyalty and fidelity. So long as Adam and Eve heeded the command "thou shalt not eat of it", God's ownership remained unchallenged and man gave evidence of his devotion to his Creator. But if man would not heed the admonition, he not only became a defaulter but also set himself on the side against God in flagrant rebellion, and calamity and death would follow in its wake. Right at the outset of this germinal idea, God herein enshrines a Gospel concerning life's reminders. Jehovah becomes not only our Creator, but also our Redeemer. "Tithes and offerings for God are an acknowledgement of His claim on us by creation, and they are also an acknowledgement of His claim by redemption. . . . They are to keep ever before us the claim of redemption, the greatest of all claims, and the one that involves every other." Vol. 6, p. 479. It is too true and needs no emphasis that our first parents disobeyed God's command and brought upon the whole human race, as well as upon nature as a whole, calamity and death; and since then the whole creation has been in bondage awaiting deliverance: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8: 22, 23. All through the patriarchal age, tithing was enjoined upon God's children: Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God. Gen. 14: 17-20. And it is said of Abraham in Genesis 26: 5, that he obeyed God's voice, kept His charge, His commandments,

His statutes, and His laws. The blessing which followed Abraham's devotion, fidelity, and loyalty was indisputably and immeasurably great.

The tithing system was a classic in the Hebrew economy, and this was to become the palladium for the extension of God's kingship laterally and intensively until every department of human life heeded to its sway. Its purpose is clearly stated by Moses: "And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit." Num. 18: 21, 24. This purpose is iterated by the prophet Nehemiah in his book. (Neh. 13: 10-13) The laxity in tithe-paying mentioned in these verses is sun-clear, and there is a cadence of sorrow when the prophet remarked, "And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field." We cannot get away from the fact that there is here a pathos which sobs in these words: neglect to fulfil our obligation to God, on this wise, is not only fatal to the kingdom of God on earth, but calamitous to the individual. Nehemiah, however, brought about a reformation which deflected the awful tragedy that had come upon the ancient church.

It is very true, and a fact that is borne out by many evidences, that those who disobey God in any of His commands or ordinances or in any way endeavor to belittle or modify or neutralize it, "their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that come upon them (shall) make haste." Duet. 32: 35. When any of God's children begin to compromise or nullify any of God's commands their foot begins to slide. The road of truth becomes slippery and "their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them (shall) make

haste." Some may be tempted in their endeavor to argue away the tithing obligation by saying that God has changed and that we are living under grace and that calamity could not follow so simple a thing as one's negligence in following the tithing plan. But we can still hear the voice of Jehovah thundering through the years of time, "I am the Lord, I change not." Mal. 3: 6. If we should continue to read on to the end of this chapter, we would find it very illuminating. At first God brings a charge of robbery against man; then He follows it with the calamity, "ye are cursed with a curse." But His unflinching and unfaltering love gives the offender an invitation to return. One's repentance is to be shown by his obedience to the ordinance which he has violated. God then depicts very graphically the results of obedience, both immediate and ultimate. Verses 10, 11, 17. "They shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Passing on we find ourselves by logical and historical sequence in the Christian dispensation and there we observe our Lord and Master Jesus Christ giving His sanction to this divine plan of tithing. Matt. 23: 23. Paul, both in his life and teaching, accentuates the fact in his discussion with the Corinthians (1 Cor. 9: 13, 14), that this plan is ordained of God. And then he argues very ably that Jesus is "made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6: 20. Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, so Christians pay tithe to Him who is "after the order of Melchisedec".

Does Jesus miss your tithe? There is a beautiful continuity all through the teachings of the Word of God which maintains and upholds the tithing economy. The question is asked, Are the people of God under obligation to follow the tithing plan today? This may be answered by a counter question, Can the people of God afford not to pay tithe today? It is the background that dignifies the foreground, and it is obligatory upon all to observe this divinely instituted program. Just as surely as any of God's children do not obey Him in this, just so surely "their foot shall slide in due time", for with the sliding comes calamity, "and the things that come upon them (shall) make haste". Some argue that "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?" Some are even tempted to say, "the proud (are) happy; yea, they that work wickedness, are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered." Mal. 3: 14,

15. Isn't it strange that it is the life that we cannot live because of the life that we must live that is the ground of our discontent and rebellion?

The time has arrived for God's people to be in that experience spoken of in Acts 2, where they were all with one accord and were all filled with the Holy Ghost. The church of God has waited a long time for this heavenly gift. The task before us to evangelize this complex world of ours is stupendous; the laborers are pathetically few; and the harvest is visibly here. The only effectual equipment with which to finish this great work is the inestimable gift of the Holy Ghost. But disobedience brings defeat to the whole church and a blight settles upon it; and instead of the church moving forward with victories, and becoming the church triumphant, she remains the church militant. Do God's people know their divinely appointed responsibility in the proclamation of the Gospel? Do they believe that they are in partnership with God in the restoration of wholesome conditions? Our depleted funds today are a commentary of our negligence in our obligation to the tithing plan: there are vast territories everywhere where the Gospel has not penetrated. History being my witness, the church has never been triumphant except when the world swam within her vision. Do these unentitled parts of the world where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has never been heard swim before your vision? Is it not an appeal to you, my tithe defaulter, to pay God his due? There are tithe defaulters almost in every church throughout our organization and this default is holding up that dynamic flow from heaven by which alone the work of God can be finished and finished triumphantly.

One Achan can deflect the power of God upon His church. In Joshua 6: 17, 18, we read that God told His people to refrain from taking the spoil at Jericho for if they should, they would make the camp of Israel a curse. In chapter 7 of the same book there is a poignant account of Israel's lamentable defeat before the inhabitants of Ai. There was a reason for this. In verse 8 we see Joshua pleading before God on behalf of his people but in verses 10, 11, the Lord specifically points out the cause of their defeat, "Israel hath sinned . . . for they have even taken of the accursed thing." By one man's sin, Israel as a whole was accused of sinning, and so today there has fallen upon us a blight which holds us back from the triumphant march of the Message in all the world. Is it a light thing for God's people in this age of ages to treat with contempt or negligence His command on tithe paying? Solomon tells us in Proverbs 26: 2 that "the curse causeless shall not come." Is there then the cause for this curse? May those who have sinned against God in this ordinance reflect and repent. May we one and all repent of our carelessness, negligence, misdeeds and apathy, so that God may fill His people with His Spirit, in order that the church militant may become the church triumphant; and that His people may be true living witnesses in all the world. For then "all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land." Mal. 3: 12. And then and then only shall "The kingdoms of this world" become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." God speed the day!

*Kuala Lumpur, F. M. S.*

## Review of Progress in Tithing the Past Year—Plans for the Future

*(A Symposium by Mission Directors)*

### BRITISH BORNEO MISSION:

"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:17. In this text is bound up the entire gospel, for the surrender of the will to God is His plan to save man from sin. If in our everyday life we are in a state of constant surrender to the will of God, we shall be molded and fashioned into his likeness.

Our part is to will, and God's part is to give the power. Because of this, the Evil One tries to get us to set our affections on the things of earth and follow our own desires.

In the beginning God placed in the Garden of Eden the tree of knowledge

of good and evil. It was God's will that man should not know the sorrows of sin, but man willed to disobey and thus separated himself from God.

Through the ages, God has been testing men and women to see whether they would do His will or follow their own. In these days God has brought His test upon men, but many cannot endure.

It is God who gives us power to get wealth and by His power only are we able to obtain our daily bread. But in blindness many of us are slow to yield to God's will.

God brings the test upon men today in the form of one-tenth of their income. This is "holy unto the Lord"; and God says, "Bring ye all

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*Eugene Woesner, Editor*

the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord 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."

Here is a challenge from God, that if we will do His will, He will pour out blessings in such measure that we can not receive them all. One of our Kadayan sisters in British North Borneo says that since she has paid tithe, her chickens have increased so that she can hardly find food enough for them. Surely God will fulfill His promise to every one who "wills to do His will," in the pouring out of abundant blessings.

J. W. ROWLAND.

### SIAM MISSION:

"The tithe . . . . is the Lord's." Here the same form of expression is employed as in the law of the Sabbath. 'The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.' God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man's time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests." *Patriarchs & Prophets*, pp. 525, 526.

God intends the tithe and the Sabbath to be tests of our loyalty and obedience, just as was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in Eden. And furthermore, these divine institutions do become real tests of the genuineness of faith, when men are brought face to face with the stern problems of life. And it is indeed sad to see how many fail to pass the tests, and thus fail of receiving the blessings. Some even begrudge the time lost from their work on the Sabbath when they could earn a few cents.

But we mean to work for greater faithfulness in these two points, in as many ways, here in Siam. In the first place, we shall continue to instruct the members in the importance of rendering to God His own, urging those who are unfaithful to a complete surrender of their all to God that they

may receive the rich spiritual and temporal blessings that He so emphatically promises in His word. And further, we shall endeavor to see that new converts are thoroughly instructed in these things, requiring faithfulness in Sabbath keeping and tithe paying over a period of months before such are baptized. In this way we trust that our members will gain the rich blessings from heaven's storehouse, and that more means will flow into the treasury so that the work may soon be finished.

A. P. RITZ.

### NORTHERN LUZON MISSION:

We regret to state that our tithe for 1932 is a little below that of 1931. The largest part of this decrease, however, comes from the loss in workers' tithe; the tithe coming from the churches being practically the same as 1931. Considering the fact that the natural income of the average person has been greatly decreased, we conclude that there has been an increased faithfulness on the part of our people. Unquestionably, however, many have not realized the blessings and responsibilities devolving upon them as Christian stewards. In bringing this home to the hearts of our church members we realize that the *greatest* need is to feed the flock of God that they may be built up in individual spiritual life. We believe that when this objective is more fully attained, they will naturally respond in the support of the gospel.

In working toward this end, we propose that the following shall be some of the methods to be employed in the Northern Luzon Mission during the year 1933:

1. More thorough instruction of candidates for baptism, not only in theoretical acceptance of the message, but in actual practice in all lines of Christian conduct,—including Stewardship.

2. More thorough instruction of churches elders and leaders, in connection with institutes conducted for this purpose.

3. More fully spiritualizing all sermons, and promotion material.

4. Special mention of tithe in each celebration of the Lord's Supper.

5. The worker to personally talk with each member in his district as to his relationship to this question, calling attention to the necessity of faithfulness, and teaching the individual member just how to pay tithe.

6. The publication of tithe reports quarterly in the Union paper.

7. Keeping reports of evangelism constantly before our people and endeavoring to stimulate the evangelistic spirit.

8. Publishing tithe experiences from time to time, and relating such experiences in sermons frequently.

E. N. LUGENBEAL.

### NORTH SARAWAK MISSION:

On the 24th day of September, 1932 there was organized the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the land of the head-hunters, on the Tatau River, Kingdom of Sarawak. On this day it was our privilege to witness the baptism of the first convert from the Sea-Dyaks, a young man of about eighteen years. At the same time we also baptized the first Dyak woman to unite with our believers in Sarawak.

Our new church is but an infant among its sister churches of the Far Eastern Division, having only eleven members. Seven of these are charter members and the other four were admitted on the same day, by baptism.

We trust that through the good hand of our God upon us, this little church may grow through daily assimilation of His word, and we expect it to make a healthy growth, not only in spirituality but also in numbers.

The Tatau River church is especially determined to be faithful in the matter of Stewardship. Even though the members are poor in the things the world calls riches, everyone is a tithe-payer and a giver to the cause. The best we have, and the most we can give is little enough; and we believe that the work will be finished when God's people have reached the place where they are ready to make a covenant with Him by real sacrifice.

The tithing system strikes right at the root of the heart's entrenched selfishness, and has proven to be one of the most blessed of the ordinances of God in holding the hearts of His children in tenderness and humility. We believe that until a new believer is so thoroughly converted that he really delights to pay tithe, he is not ready for fellowship.

Our courage is good, and we find much satisfaction in the Lord's work, knowing that its triumph is assured and the victory already ours in Christ.

G. B. YOUNGBERG.