

Tithing

What can you tell me about tithing from a Messianic perspective? How am I to honor God with my money and resources today?

There are a wide variety of opinions given as to what “tithing” means, even though all of us should agree that we need to honor the Lord with our resources. One of the things that we should keep in mind is that the instructions regarding tithing in the Torah, specifically with land, produce, livestock, etc., were intended to be kept in the Land of Israel in conjunction with the priesthood and Tabernacle/Temple service. Since most of us live in the Diaspora, and there is no operative Tabernacle/Temple service today, we can only keep these commandments in principle and have to find another way to apply them.

The Book of Acts is probably the best place to start, where we see that the early Messianic community shared many of their possessions and gave money, supplies, and goods to one another as they needed them. This too, of course, would be a challenge since today’s Messianic community is spread abroad, and most of us are not in need for someone else to provide us with daily wares. Furthermore, we do not live in an economy that would largely allow for common ownership to this extent. When we see the early Messianic community growing beyond the borders of Judea we see that as congregations were established, monies were regularly collected for the expenses of the local assembly and for the traveling Apostles. Paul’s letter to the Philippians, for example, is largely written thanking them for a generous contribution that they made to his ministry work.

Today, these are all things we have to consider as we return to the Hebraic Roots of our faith and the Messianic movement continues to grow. Many people do not have local assemblies and as such do not consider it important to give a tithe. These individuals are largely served and taught by independent Messianic ministries, but sometimes do not support them financially *in any way*. Is this right? Many people feel convicted to tithe, but do not know how to do it.

We see the issue of tithing and giving offerings applied in some unique situations in the Apostolic Scriptures. We would encourage you to support those who teach and minister to you just as the Apostles did. From the Apostles’ work our faith was able to survive and last almost 2,000 years. In today’s Messianic movement, which has quite a bit going against it, there is a great deal of difficult work ahead to establish a theology and discipline that will last for future generations. People who are on the front lines in Messianic ministry need the financial support of others so they can continue the work that God has given to them. Pray to the Lord and ask Him how He would have you serve Him with your finances.