

Is The Church The Storehouse?

By Denise Bostic

Fact or Fiction? Is the Church the storehouse that we are to bring our tithes into today according to *Malachi 3:10*?

Fiction - Those that teach that the storehouse is the local church today are lacking in knowledge of the differences between the Old and New Covenants. There is no evidence in the scriptures that the storehouse is the local church today. At the time that God spoke this through the prophet Malachi, the New Testament Church was not yet in existence, but the Temple at Jerusalem was. Under the Old Covenant, the Temple was where Israel went to worship God and the Levitical priesthood officiated in the temple. Under the Law of Moses, each tribe was given an inheritance from God except the tribe of Levi. God made special provision for this tribe, however. Their portion and inheritance would be the tithe from their brethren. (*Numbers 18:20-21, Hebrews 7:5*)

The nation of Israel was commanded by God to bring the tithes to the Levitical Priesthood and because Israel was an agricultural society, their tithe was brought in the form of harvested crops and livestock. Of course there had to be storage space for all of these things, such as corn, wine, oil, wheat, fruit and livestock. (*Leviticus 27:30-34, II Chronicles 31:5-6, Nehemiah 10:35-39*) In scripture sometimes this storage space was called chambers or the storehouse. This was a literal room or building that stored all of the tenth or tithe of Israel for the Levites. This is how they were financially supported so that they could work in the Temple day and night. According to the New Testament though, the priesthood has been changed because there has been a change in the law. (*Hebrews 7:11-12*) The Levitical priesthood is no longer in effect because of its inability to perfect believers in Christ. There is now a new priesthood after the order of Melchisedek with all believers being kings and priests under Jesus Christ, our High Priest. (*Hebrews 7:11-28, I Peter 2:9, Revelation 5:10*)

Yes, God has established a new order of priesthood in the New Covenant with Jesus as our High Priest, a Church government made up of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers and also all believers are now made priests. (*Ephesians 4:11-12, I Peter 2:9*) The Old Testament Temple was a physical building made of man's hands, the New Testament Church is a house not made with man's hands. (*II Corinthians 5:1*) The Church is not a physical building, but made up of a body of believers that house the Spirit of God.

Many times the tithes that are taken in by Churches today are spent on the physical buildings and the spiritual building (the people) is neglected. You may ask, "If believers do not tithe, how are we to support the local Church and the preaching of the Gospel?" The answer is, the same way the Church has always supported God's work-by grace giving. New Testament scriptural examples of giving are by grace only. Money and material provisions given to the Church are to be distributed amongst all of the newly formed priesthood and are usually given to churches (brethren) in need, for the work of the ministers/ministries that preach the Gospel and the poor (widows and orphans) in order to build up the Kingdom of God. (*II Corinthians 8 & 9*)

We are to obey the New Testament pattern of giving. In the Church today we are no longer commanded to tithe but to give by grace. (*II Corinthians chapters 8 & 9*) We are free to give liberally or free from condemnation if we do not have anything to give. We are to each give according to our ability.

(II Corinthians 8:12-14) We are to share in all things so that no one has too much or others do not do without. As a matter of fact, when the Church was first birthed, many gave far beyond a mere ten percent; they shared everything they had for the sake of the Church and the Gospel of Christ. I wonder when we in the Church today will make those same kinds of sacrifices? Bottom line, tithing is an Old Covenant ordinance, not a New Testament one. You are not under law, but grace.