

119

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Tithing: Is It For Today?

TEACHING SUMMARY

Tithing means giving a tenth. In the Torah, Israel's tithes were connected to agricultural produce, herds, flocks, the Levites, pilgrimage feasts, and care for vulnerable people. The teaching identifies several distinct tithes rather than treating them as one simple payment.

The Levites received a tithe because they had no land inheritance and served at the tabernacle and temple. They taught Scripture, handled services, served as musicians and overseers, repaired the temple, and helped resolve disputes. Levites also gave a tithe from the tithe to the priests.

Yeshua affirmed the authority of Torah and said tithing should not be neglected, while also identifying justice, mercy, and faithfulness as weightier matters. The teaching says the literal system cannot presently be carried out as prescribed because its full land, sanctuary, priesthood, and Levitical framework is absent.

The teaching affirms support for gospel ministry as a commanded application of the principle behind tithing, while leaving freedom over the amount and manner of giving. Ministers still teach, shepherd, lead worship, and equip the body. Paul appeals to the temple service and the law about the ox to support the right of gospel ministers to receive support.

Modern giving may support pastors, teachers, evangelists, local congregations, and ministries serving those in need. The teaching gives priority to local congregations and people in need over teaching ministries such as 119. It allows liberty in amount, recipient, gross or net income, and whether to call the gift a tithe, offering, or support.

The teaching concludes that giving should serve God's purposes rather than enrich false teachers. Ministers should serve regardless of financial support, avoid stumbling blocks, and live modestly. Giving should be prayerful, directed toward ministry and the vulnerable, and tested by Scripture.

SUMMARY POINTS

- A tithe is a tenth.
- The Torah describes more than one type of tithe.
- Levites received a tithe because they had no land inheritance.
- Levites served at the tabernacle and temple.
- The literal tithing system cannot be fully performed today.
- Yeshua said tithing should not be neglected.
- Justice, mercy, and faithfulness are weightier matters.
- Paul supports ministerial support by analogy to Torah.
- Support for gospel ministry is affirmed as commanded, with liberty in the amount and manner of giving.
- Ministers should not serve for financial gain.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The word tithe means a _____.
2. The tribe that received the tithe was _____.
3. The Levites had no land _____.
4. The festival tithe was used for rejoicing before _____.
5. The third-year tithe helped the widow, orphan, sojourner, and _____.
6. Yeshua called justice, mercy, and faithfulness the _____ matters.

Challenging

1. The law Paul applies to ministers concerns an _____ treading grain.
2. Paul says gospel ministers should get their living by the _____.
3. The temple service was funded by the _____.
4. The teaching says the literal system cannot operate without a functioning _____.
5. The tithe from the Levites went to the _____.
6. The teaching gives priority to local congregations and people in _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What different purposes for tithing does the Torah describe?

2. Why did the Levites receive the tithe?

3. Why does the teaching say literal tithing cannot be performed today?

4. How does Paul apply the principle of the ox and the temple service?

5. What liberty does the teaching allow in modern giving?

6. What safeguards does it give concerning money and ministry?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. tenth — Teaching definition of tithe
2. Levi — Numbers 18:21–24
3. inheritance — Numbers 18:23–24
4. YHWH / the LORD — Deuteronomy 14:22–27
5. Levite — Deuteronomy 14:28–29
6. weightier — Matthew 23:23

Challenging

1. ox — Deuteronomy 25:4; 1 Corinthians 9:8–9
2. gospel — 1 Corinthians 9:13–14
3. tithe — Numbers 18:21–24; teaching discussion of temple support
4. sanctuary / temple (with its priesthood) — Teaching section Can We Tithe Today
5. priests — Numbers 18:25–32
6. need — Teaching final questions on priorities for giving

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION NOTES

Suggested responses follow the teaching. Invite discussion and personal application; these are not additional required answers.

1. The source distinguishes support for Levites (Numbers 18:21), festival rejoicing (Deuteronomy 14:22–27), provision for vulnerable neighbors (14:28–29), and the Levites' contribution to priests (Numbers 18:25–32). Ask what each purpose contributes before treating all giving as a single payment to one organization.
2. Numbers 18:21–24 connects the Levites' provision with their service and lack of a tribal land inheritance. The source also lists teaching, worship and practical responsibilities. Discuss why supporting those who serve can benefit the whole community rather than simply the recipient.
3. The source says the complete prescribed system requires the land, designated Levites, sanctuary and priesthood. It distinguishes inability to perform that system from abolishing the command. Ask how keeping a principle today differs from claiming to have fulfilled every literal requirement.
4. First Corinthians 9:8–14 uses the working ox and temple servants to support provision for gospel workers; 1 Timothy 5:17–18 applies the labor principle to teaching elders. Trace the analogy, then discuss what fair, useful support could look like in the group's own community.
5. The source suggests ten percent as a possible analogy but explicitly stops short of setting a required modern amount. It leaves details to prayerful judgment and suggests festival savings, local relief and ministry support. Ask how to make a thoughtful giving plan without imposing an unprovided percentage on others.
6. First Corinthians 9:15–18 supplies Paul's willingness to forgo support. The source urges ministers to avoid financial stumbling blocks and gives priority to local congregations and people in need. Discuss accountability and modest service, while avoiding pressure to disclose anyone's income or private giving.