

## Does Hebrews 7:8 Teach Tithing Today?

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A point of possible confusion on the subject of tithing exists with the phrase “but there he receiveth them” in Hebrews 7:8, “And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth,” which evaporates when the original is consulted. The Greek text does not contain the phrase “but there he receiveth them” which might indicate that Christ continues today to receive tithes from men. Here is an instance where knowledge of the original language in which the New Testament was written is necessary to clear the air and end any possible confusion.

As a supplemental observation, there are a number of published Greek texts available today. In Hebrews 7:8, the phrase under discussion does not appear in these Greek texts. (The ones consulted for this article were The Textus Receptus, The Majority Text, The New Testament in the Original Greek of Westcott and Hort, the Nestle-Aland 26<sup>th</sup> edition, and The Greek New Testament of the United Bible Societies 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> edition). This is the basis of the explanation as to why other translations render this particular verse as they do.

“...but there he receiveth them...”

### **INCLUDED**

#### **King James Version**

“And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”

### **EXCLUDED**

#### **American Standard Version**

“And here men that die receive tithes; but there one, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.”

#### **English Standard Version**

“In the one case tithes are received by mortal men, but in the other case, by one of whom it is testified that he lives.”

#### **McCord’s New Testament**

“Here, indeed, mortal men receive tithes; but there, the testimony is that he lives!”

Tithing, commanded under the Old Law is not enjoined upon Christians today. A “tithes” was one tenth. The first biblical reference is in Genesis 14:20, the background of the discussion in Hebrews 7:8.

Moses commanded the children of Israel to tithe as recorded in Leviticus 27:30-34, “And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithes of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be

good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. *These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai*” (emphasis added).

In contrast, Christians are to give upon the first day of the week “as God has prospered” them (1 Corinthians 16:1-2) and “every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). The contrast? In the Old Testament the amount was specified, ten percent of one’s increase; in the New Testament the amount is not specified with reference being made to the principle which says, “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” (v. 6).

Christians are not commanded to “tithes” today; neither in Hebrews 7:8 by implication or anywhere else in the New Testament. One final exploratory question: “Is it wrong for Christians to give 10% of their income to the Lord’s cause?” One thought provoking answer: “A Christian can give 100% of not only his or her income but of everything he or she owns!” (See the widow’s example in Luke 21:1-4, and bear in mind that Jesus once told a man to do exactly that because his possessions stood between him and God, Matthew 19:21-22). But, whatever amount he chooses to give he is instructed to do so as he has purposed in his heart “not grudgingly, or of necessity” because God loves a cheerful giver.