

The Love Shuttle Unit 9
Chapter 47
Malachi and God's Message of Tithing
Malachi 2:2a; 3:7-10

"Handsome," Woodstock said as he leaned back against the wall. Handsome bobbed his fist up and down to sign that he was listening. "It's like this, tithing is about so much more than just money. It's about giving back to God. Giving is a way that we can say 'thank you' to God for all He gives to us. That's why the offering is such an important part of the church. It's our chance to give back to God. Don't you want to do it, Handsome?"

Handsome waved, "No."

"Oh, come on Handsome, it'll be fun," Woodstock encouraged. "You can try it when we go to church next..."

Woodstock stopped mid-sentence as the computer announced, "Time travel alert! Time travel alert!" A very old man with a long white beard and hair and a dark brown robe slid down the tube.

"Whoa! Lord God, where have you sent your servant today?" The man asked as Woodstock helped him to his feet.

Woodstock greeted his newest visitor, "Hello, old dude! Welcome aboard the Love Shuttle! I'm Dr. Woodstock P. Havens!"

The man shook the hand Woodstock offered. "Hello, my name is Malachi."

"Malachi? I've heard of you!" Woodstock grinned. "You're like an expert on giving! I was just teaching my friend Handsome about giving."

Malachi also smiled. "What a coincidence, the Lord sent me to teach the high priests His message about giving."

"Groovy, baby, let's open up the Power Source and check that out!" Woodstock suggested. He removed the Bible from behind the panel and turned the pages until he found Malachi's book. "Here it is! Wow, Malachi, this says God sent you with a message for all of Israel!"

"Yes," Malachi nodded. "That's how important giving is to God. He wants all of His people to know that giving is a way to show Him respect and honor!"

"Is that what you said to the high priests?" Woodstock asked.

"Yes, and I also said, "'If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name,' says the Lord Almighty, 'I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your

blessings," Malachi recited from his own writing in chapter 2, verse 2. At the sound of the warning siren, he looked around.

Woodstock pointed at the flashing red lights. "Hey, Malachi, you set off the warning lights."

Malachi stared at the lights for a moment as if considering its meaning. "Well, God is warning us that He cannot bless us if we do not put Him first in our hearts. That is why God commands us to tithe."

"Oh, we're learning about tithing!" Woodstock explained. "That's when we give a percentage of what we earn back to God."

"That's right!" Malachi stated. "God asks us to give Him 10% out of the 100% that He gives to us."

Woodstock turned around when we heard Handsome return to the room. "Oh hey, Handsome! Malachi, this is my friend Handsome that I was telling you about."

"Pleased to meet you, Handsome," Malachi said sincerely as they shook hands.

Handsome signed at Woodstock, then held up a coin. "What's that Handsome? You went to get your tithe? Great!" Woodstock leaned over and looked at the coin. "Handsome! That's only ten cents!"

Malachi shook his head. "Not ten cents, Handsome. God asks us to give ten percent."

"Handsome, are you holding out on God?" Woodstock crossed his arms over his chest. Handsome held up a second dime. "Another dime! Handsome! That's still only twenty cents! I know you make a lot more than two dollars."

"Handsome, I don't think you realize how important our offerings are to God," Malachi said; then recited God's words found in Malachi 3:10a, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house."

Woodstock grinned as the choice bell rang. "Malachi, you set off the choice lights!"

Malachi looked very kindly at him. "Of course! The wisest choice we can make is to obey God's wishes and honor Him with our gifts. In fact, it's the one area in the Bible that God asks us to test Him."

Woodstock eyes grew wide. "God actually asks us to test Him?"

"Yes!" Malachi exclaimed. "'Test Me in this,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.'" Malachi quoted from Malachi 3:10b. He nodded approval as the sound of hands clapping filled the air and the green promise light flashed.

"Did you hear that, Handsome?" Woodstock asked. "God promised us that if we honor Him by giving our tithes and offerings, He'll give us more blessings than we can handle!" Handsome replied by pulling out a stack of bills and waving them in the air.

"Wow, Handsome," Malachi exclaimed. "it looks like you are becoming a godly giver!" Handsome gestured to say he was ready for his blessing of more money.

"Handsome, God didn't promise that the blessings would be money!" Woodstock explained. Handsome snapped his fingers in disappointment.

"That's right. God has so many ways to bless us! Money is just one of them!" Malachi said.

"Yeah," Woodstock agreed. "And when we trust God with our most excellent treasures, we grow much closer to Him and we get to help build His Kingdom. Those are the greatest blessings of all!" Handsome waved that he liked that idea.

"It's good to receive God's blessings but the reason we give our tithe is to show our love and respect to God," Malachi continued.

"That's right!" Woodstock nodded. "Dude, giving is all about love. Remember, God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son..."

"That reminds me of the other part of God's message," Malachi interrupted. 'The Lord you are seeking will come...in the meantime, live thankful lives that truly respect and honor God as the Lord of all.'

"Thanks Malachi!" Woodstock offered his hand to Malachi and they shook again. "So that's our challenge from God! Let's give our tithes and offerings to God's house, and watch the blessings flow! Right, Handsome?" Handsome signed that he agreed. "And let's not forget that, no matter where you are in time, God is good all the time!" Woodstock turned to Malachi. "Now my new groovy prophet friend, can I get you something to eat before we send you back to your time?"

"That sounds wonderful!" Malachi agreed and he followed Woodstock to the galley.