

Nor are the Levites themselves exempted from the obligation of this law of tithe. Of that which they receive from their brethren, they must set a part a tenth for the maintenance of the priesthood. "Speak unto the Levites and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave-offering to the Lord, even the tenth-part of the tithe. And ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave-offering to Aaron the priest." Num. 18: 26-28.

But God's claim upon his chosen people was not limited by the first fruits, the firstlings, and a single tithe. Over and above these, in addition to the tenth to which I have just referred, which was devoted to the maintenance of the Levites, another was levied, to uphold their various feasts and sacrifices. Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of their seed that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt eat it before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose to place His name, the tithe of thy corn, of thy vine, and of thy oil, and of the firstlings of thy herds, and of thy flocks, that thou may learn to fear the Lord thy God alway." Deut. 14: 22, 23. A moment's reflection will convince any one, that this tithe is different from the former. That was appropriated exclusively to the maintenance of the Levites as their regular income. This was to be used by the officer in the courts of the temple, in feasting with his own family as well as in entertaining the Levites. In Deut. 14: 28, 29, we read of another tithe to be laid aside every third year and to be shared by the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, but as it is disputed whether this is an additional tithe or merely a special appropriation of the second, and as I do not wish to press matters of doubt into my argument, I pass it by without further notice. Yet without it I have shewn by the citation of plain precepts and positive statutes that the Israelites under the Mosaic dispensation, were required to give, at the very least, one-fifth of their annual income to the cause of God; while many who have investigated the sub-

ject are thoroughly persuaded that God insisted upon their rendering not less than one-third. And now let us inquire, Was the payment of this tribute to Jehovah a matter of trivial consequence? Was it a duty which could be neglected without grievous sin? Let the burning words of reproof which fell from the very latest of their prophets tell. "Will a man rob God? Yes, ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Mal. 3: 8, 9. It would appear that no legal machinery had been provided for collecting the tithes in case of the people neglecting to bring them. The duty of presenting them was laid upon the conscience of the Israelites, and each man was left to manifest his piety or impiety, by his obedience or neglect. Alas, with Israel of old as too often still, the spirit of covetousness frequently prevailed, and the ordinances of heaven were ignored. What was the consequence? God's curse rested upon his heritage. Blasting, blights, and mildew withered the fields. The vine cast her fruit before the time. The fig trees shook off their untimely figs. Only by the rugged path of repentance and reformation could Israel regain the forfeited blessing. Bring ye the tithes into my store house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I WILL REBUKE THE DEVOURER FOR YOUR SAKES, and shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, and all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. 3: 10-12.

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THE forms of external honour to Christ are of no avail. "Kiss ye the Son"—Judas kissed him with a caressing embrace; yet it was the cruel kiss of betrayal. Jesus endures still the kiss, the caress, of many false members of His church.