

When God Asked to be Tested

Malachi 3:8-12

In my college days I attended a small church, close to the campus dorms where I lived. One Sunday morning I was shocked to hear the pastor announce that he was going to speak on the subject of tithing and he wanted to apologize for it. I thought to myself that tithing would be a difficult subject for a pastor to speak about – and I was feeling sorry for him until he explained that he was not apologizing for preaching about tithing – he was apologizing for not preaching **enough** about tithing. That got my attention. And by the time he had finished the message – I understood why he said it. And so this morning I am going to speak about tithing because there are significant blessings that go along with it.

I want to start by showing you the origin of tithing and why it was practiced. And so we need to look at the book of Genesis – the book of beginnings. After Adam and Eve rebelled against God and some really bad things began to happen, such as Cain murdering his brother Abel, we read in **Genesis 4:25-26**,

“Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, ‘God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.’²⁶ Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.”

With the births of Seth and Enosh, God began to build a community of people who sought Him and desired to see His name honored and magnified on the earth. Genesis goes on to give us more examples of people who called upon the name of the Lord. In Genesis 12, we meet