

# Forsaking all.

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The Old Testament contains many types and shadows that are realised in fullness in the new covenant which is in the blood of Jesus the Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

If we try to insert any of the shadows and types from the old covenant literally into the new covenant we adulterate or spoil the new covenant. Every shadow has a counterpart that is transformed into an essential component of the good news of the kingdom of God.

## *Tithing – Separating the tenth part.*

Deuteronomy 14:22 “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide (Septuagint; make His name to be called upon), the tithe of your grain and your wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry *the tithe*, or if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name (Septuagint; have His name called upon) is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange *it* for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your soul desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar (strong) drink, for whatever your soul desires; you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household. You shall not forsake the Levite who *is* within your gates (cities), for he has no part nor inheritance with you.

At the end of *every* third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store *it* up within your gates (cities). And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* within your gates (cities), may come and eat and be satisfied, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

The sharing of wealth, blessings and finances is an integral part of the old covenant made with Israel. It's central aim is to bless those who are poor and without the means of supporting themselves as here, the widows, the fatherless and the Levites – those dedicated to serve the Lord their God who have no potential to support themselves. Also it was to be used in observing and celebrating the feasts as commanded by the Lord.

2 Chronicles 31:4 Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute support for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the LORD. As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. And the children of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and sheep; also the tithe of holy things which were consecrated to the LORD their God they laid in heaps. In the third month they began laying them in heaps, and they finished in the seventh month. And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. And Azariah the chief priest, from the house of Zadok, answered him and said, “Since *the people* began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left, for the LORD has blessed His people; and what is left *is* this great abundance.”

Malachi 3:6 “For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’ “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, *even* this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing that *there will not be room* enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the LORD of hosts; “And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land,” says the LORD of hosts.

So, what corresponds in the new covenant with this ordinance of setting aside ten percent of all produce and of the firstborn of the oxen and sheep for specific occasions and people?

## *Forsaking All.*

Mark 10:17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, *that is, God.* You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.” Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men *it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.*” Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.” So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

To follow Jesus at that time whoever wanted to go with Him must literally leave everything and everyone behind. You could not be in two places at the same time. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is ascended into heaven and has given His Holy Spirit to those who repent and obey Him. He is with us until the end of the age. In the current dispensation – the age of the Spirit, Christ in me, the Hope of glory – in repentance we give control of all we possess over to Him Who gave all for us.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life (Greek psyche= soul) will lose it, but whoever loses his life (soul) for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul (psyche)? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Our soul is the part of each one of us that hates or desires things. Our soul wants to be in control. Our soul may worry or hope.

Matthew 25:31

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’ “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ “Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’

From this we can see that sharing what we have, in time, care and goods with those in need is an integral part of being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 6:38 “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

There is no loss in giving everything to the Lord Jesus Christ which is realised through giving what is needed to whoever needs it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 12:16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.’” “But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. (In Greek can be translated : don’t let your soul be anxious about what you will eat nor about what you will wear.) Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O *you* of little faith? And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Forsaking all, especially our worldly goods, is only possible when we truly seek first the kingdom of God with our whole heart and humble our souls before Him Who is holy and righteous.

Luke 14:25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, *If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own soul also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it— lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him, “saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.*

If we do not forsake all we have then we will find that it is simply not possible to take up our cross (not comfortable, not pleasant) and follow Jesus wherever and into whatever He may lead us by His Spirit. Here Jesus is describing what repentance looks like.

Luke 21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, “*Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.*”

In the new covenant it is not about how much we give, but how much we keep back.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*”

Jesus had spent over 3 years teaching His apostles practical instructions for how they should carry on as His assembly. He commands them to pass these on to the new disciples that were to be born from above.

Acts 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them

among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.

Here the apostles teach the new disciples three essential foundational practices with regard to continuing together as the assembly of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Fellowship – Greek *koinonia* – sharing or communality. Sharing resources, time and food together.
2. Breaking bread in remembrance of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ house to house.
3. Prayers – together wherever they were gathered, house to house or in the outer court of the Temple site.

This order is not without significance. Sharing all they had is fundamental. Without community – ‘loving one another as I have loved you’ – the other instructions are ineffective. By this all men will know that we are the disciples of Jesus Christ – that we have love one for another.

This level of sharing is the result of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, one of the fruits being love. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit this would be just another cult. With the Holy Spirit these instructions, when observed, are life and health to the body of Christ.

Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

While Peter had no silver or gold on him, He shared responsibility for a vast fortune due to the disciples that had property selling it and bringing the proceeds to the feet of the apostles.

Finances do not vanish, they are managed in the name of Jesus Christ for the good of the poor, the needy and whatever the Lord should require, for the glory of God.

Acts 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid *them* at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet.

It should be noted that those who had property sold it so that needs could be met. Those without property did not have anything to sell and donate. This was not a rule or requirement but entirely at the discretion of those with property which they viewed as held in trust but belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ for Him to use as He instructed. As the new assembly consisted of mainly non-locals who were suddenly remaining in Jerusalem this was an unusual state of affairs. It was not like this in Antioch, Ephesus or Samaria or anywhere else.

Acts 11:27 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.

Here note each disciple according to his own ability determined themselves to send aid to their brothers in need in another province. There was no compulsion, as each disciple was in reality a disciple of the Lord Jesus, being taught directly by Him who dwelt within by His Spirit. Having in repentance given all things to the Master, sharing assets with those brothers in need would be very natural to them.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I *am* innocent of the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not

sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'**"

'I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel' Paul showed by example to all the flock, especially to the elders, that those with opportunity to exploit the flock for financial or material gain should instead be the ones who give the most.

1 Timothy 6:7 For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

Obsession with wealth and material gain is the enemy of godliness and will hinder us from taking up our cross and following Jesus Christ, the Lord. It is the evidence of an unrepentant and carnal heart and an unbridled soul.

May the Lord Jesus Christ grant us grace to lay those things which are passing to one side so they may not stop us running the race to which we have been called.

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