

HOLY TO THE LORD!

APRIL 2, 2022

Proverbs 3, 9, 10—“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.”

We worship God with our offerings because offerings are holy to the Lord. The adjective “holy” is often associated with the Sabbath and the tithe, but rarely with offerings. However, the Scripture is full of references regarding the holiness of offerings. Among other passages, the Bible declares that two expiatory offerings, the sin and guilt offerings, are “most holy” (Lev. 6:25; 7:1); and the grain and food offerings are described as “most holy part” and “sacred” (Lev. 2:3; 22:10). The offering is a means, a very special means set aside and established by God for His children to worship Him and enjoy a unique encounter with Him. It was an indispensable component of the life of the children of Israel; neglecting the practice of offering was equivalent to robbing God (Mal. 3:8) of the honor due to Him.

In ancient Israel, through the giving of offerings, God’s children were worshipping and praising Him; celebrating Him as the Giver of the Holy One; affirming Him as Lord; acknowledging Him as Owner, Provider, and Sustainer; showing a willingness to obey; supporting the holy ministry; and being a blessing for many. God set the amount or value of some offerings, and for other offerings God left it to the personal choice of the worshipper. Nonetheless, the general principle was always to give in proportion to what one has received (Deut. 16:17) and to give the very best to God as offerings (Lev. 22:20).

Today, it is common knowledge that the ratio of tithe to offerings is often in favor of tithe. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we observed a clear trend: there was a significantly higher reduction in offerings than in tithe, although in many regions both declined. On many other occasions, we are simply giving what is left over as offerings. This week, as we worship with our regular offerings, called Promise, let us acknowledge the holy functions of offerings.

PRAYER

Lord, we praise You for the privilege to worship. Please help us to value the holy practice of offerings.