

THIRD TITHE (TITHING TO WIDOWS, ORPHANS, AND TEACHERS/LEVITES)

A particular part of tithing that you rarely hear about was called **the third tithe for the widows, orphans, and teachers**. A widow was a woman (over 60) who had lost her male protector and her source of financial support. In days of old, she was put under the protection of the community.



Deut 14:28-29 *“At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. 29 “And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Adonai your Elohim may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do”.*

Deut. 26:12 *“When you have finished paying all the tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and to the widow, that they may eat in your towns, and be satisfied.”* This verse is referring to the poor of your brethren, (the household of the faithful), like minded Believers, not the general public. When all your brethren are looked after, then those in the general public who are poor, should also be helped. Helping the general public is known as humanitarian aid. The first priority mentioned in this verse is the one who is teaching and preaching torah (considered to be the Levite in that day and age), and then your like minded brothers and sisters whom you don't know (strangers), and then including the orphans and the widows of the brethren.

Once every three years, in addition to the regular gleanings of the annual harvests, a tithe of the harvest was shared with the widows, orphans, Levites, and strangers (Deut. 14:28-29, 26:13). Can you imagine the peace that widows or orphans would experience within a community such as this? They would also be free to serve Adonai, and not have to struggle so much for their daily survival. We should freely give if we are obedient to the Torah, living in a community and freely giving our tithes to those whom Yah designates. Deut. 14:29 says that we will be blessed in all that we do. Can you imagine what a testimony a community like that would have? **Prov. 14:31** says, *“He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him”* **Lev. 25:35** says, *“If one of your countrymen becomes poor and is unable to support himself among you, help him.”* Prov. 19:17 says that whoever is kind to the poor lends to Adonai. And Yah will reward them for what they do.

The highest form of giving is of your life. When we give offerings and tithe it is part of our life. When we give more than required, it is taking away from our own life, so it is much more important. Yeshua gave His life for us, that is far more than any offering or tithe anyone is expected to give. The highest form of giving is of your life. When we give offerings and tithe it is part of our life. When we give more than required, it is taking away from our own life, so it is much more important.

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