



*“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house” (Malachi 3:10).*

# Learning God’s Law

BY PATRICIA R. JONES ■ BASED ON A TRUE STORY

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT A. MCKAY

This will be the 10th load of hay,” David’s father called to him. “Drive over to the higher ground.” Young David O. McKay looked across the field to where his father was pointing. The first nine loads they had gathered were full of lesser-quality hay. David knew his father meant for this 10th load of the best hay to go to the bishops’ storehouse as their tithing. But he didn’t understand why they couldn’t give the Lord the same hay they were collecting.

David called back to his father, “No, let us take the hay as it comes.”

David’s father didn’t answer. David was about to repeat himself when he saw his father turn and begin walking straight toward him. Suddenly, the breeze in the hay field was gone, and the sun became feverishly hot. David wiped the sweat from his forehead and the back of his neck. He knew his father was not crossing the field to give him a pat on the back for his snippy answer. He was coming all this way to be sure that David understood something.

“No, David.” His father spoke sternly, yet the calm in his voice made David pay extra close attention. “This is the 10th load, and the best is none too good for God.” David’s father looked closely at his son’s face to make sure he had been listening. Then he turned and walked away.

David swallowed the lump in his throat and then guided his team to the higher ground. As he loaded the cut hay onto the wagon, he began to think of what

his father was trying to teach him. While he knew that tithing is a law, just as much as obedience and sacrifice are, David wanted to put their own needs first. But God had said to take the firstlings of the flocks—the very best—and give them to Him (see Deuteronomy 12:6).

“My father gives the best to God, and we get the next best,” David thought. “Perhaps this is how we make the Lord the center of our thoughts and our lives.”

There were times when David had watched his mother pay money for tithing. Instead of spending what she needed and then hoping there was some left for tithing, she immediately sent the tithing money to the bishop and then made do with what was left. The first and the best was always given to God.

David turned the hay wagon down the dusty road toward the bishops’ storehouse. He drove into the yard and unloaded the hay. It was a sacrifice for his father to give his best hay to the Lord, but David knew his father would have it no other way. He

wanted to give his best for the Lord, just as Heavenly Father gave His perfect Son for the world.

As David turned his team back toward home, a good feeling came over him. He was glad his father had taught him the law of tithing. It was a lesson he would remember all his life. ●

*Adapted from Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay (2003), xv. President McKay (1873–1970) served as ninth President of the Church, from 1951 to 1970.*



“Tithe paying is evidence that we accept the law of sacrifice. It also prepares us for the law of consecration and the other higher laws of the celestial kingdom.”

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Tithing,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 34.**