

# Malachi 3-4

Bible Study

## Review

### Chapter 1

Malachi means: My messenger

(5) Messengers in Malachi

God shows his love for his people

By his acceptance of Jacob but indignation for Esau-(greatest enemy of Israel)

Corruption of the priesthood addressed: 1) **offering seconds**  
2) Corrupt **attitude**: "it does not matter what we offer"

**1 Peter 2:5** (lesson for us)  
**you** also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

### Chapter 2

Priests were admonished to change their corrupt ways...should show the same faithfulness as their ancestor Levi

v. 7 How the ministry of the priest should be:

"For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, And *people* should seek the law from his mouth; For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

God also addressed the fact that they were divorcing their wives and marrying foreign pagan wives

## Chapter 3 Intro.

### **Malachi 2:17**

You have **wearied** the Lord with your words;

Yet you say, “In what way have we wearied *Him*?”

In that you say,

(1) “Everyone who does evil *is* good in the sight of the Lord, And He delights in them,”

Or, (2) “Where *is* the God of justice?”

God will answer this is chapter 3: 5

God will answer this skeptical question in chapter 3: 1

First part of Ch. 3: 1 is quoted in the New Testament  
(**Matthew 11: 10**; Mark 1: 2; Luke 7: 27)

### **Matthew 11:10**

*‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,  
Who will prepare Your way before You.’*

## Chapter 3

Chapter 3 begins prophecy of the Messiah's first and second coming....with both appearances joined together

### Verse 1

Begins with "**Behold**"—an alerting word (3 verses "beholds" in chapters 3-4)

(There are two messengers described in verse 1)

"I will send **My messenger**" (1)

"And he will prepare the way before **Me**"

**John the Baptist** would prepare the way for Christ

### Isaiah 40:3

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight <sup>£</sup>in the desert A highway for our God.

John the Baptist's **work** prepared the way for the first coming of Christ...and a **work** continues in our day...preparing for the second coming

"And the Lord whom you seek"

God's answer to their skeptical question of chapter 2: 17:  
("Where is the God of justice?")

"Will **suddenly** come to His temple" — (at his appointed time rather than in Malachi's day)

Was partially fulfilled at his first coming

Will be completely fulfilled at his second coming

"come to His temple"

Actual temple

The Church

Individuals as  
temples

“Even the Messenger of the covenant” (2<sup>nd</sup> messenger in this verse)

|  
(Christ)

### Hebrews 9:15

<sup>15</sup>And for this reason He is the Mediator of the **new covenant**, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

The New covenant

v. 1 (middle part)

“In whom you delight (‘desire’ NIV)”

The people of Malachi’s day, though corrupt, expected the Messiah to come

Verse 1 (last part)

“**Behold, He is coming**” ..... “says the Lord of Hosts”

Verse 1 describes the Messiah’s first coming.... ( the Messenger of the covenant)

Verse 2 describes his second coming...



Verse 2

“But who can **endure the day of his coming?**” (The Day of the Lord)

**Amos 5:18**

<sup>18</sup> Woe to you who **desire** the day of the Lord! For what good *is* the day of the Lord to you? It *will be* darkness, and not light.

Verse 2 (middle part)  
“Who can **stand** when he appears?”



Because he brings judgment

**Revelation 6:17**

For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to **stand?**”

Verse 2 (last part)

Christ’s return described like two purifying /cleansing agents:

“He is like a refiner’s fire”—that removes impurities and imperfections

The wicked cannot stand and will be removed

“And like launderer’s soap”—to clean and purify his people

Verse 3

The Messiah “will sit”—as judge (no mention of other nations)

“refiner and purifier of silver”—like metal being purified of dross

“He **will purify**” beginning with the house of Levi

→ A purified Church brought through trials

I Peter 4: 17

“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God”

Verse 3 (middle part)

“purify the sons of Levi”—the Levitical priesthood had been slack in their duties and worship

“That they may offer...an offering in righteousness”—in contrast to the unacceptable offerings of Malachi’s day

Verse 4 (Millennium)

“**Then**” the entire nation will offer pleasing offerings to God

A righteous offering from the heart...“as in the days of old”—when Levi was right before God



## Verse 5

“I will come near you for judgment”  
“judgment”= justice

An answer to chapter 2: 17—where they asked “where is the God of Justice?” ...and that God rewarded those who do evil

Social injustices included in the judgment: exploiting wage earners, widows and orphans...mistreating aliens

## V. 5 last part

The **reason** for the evil doing: “they do not fear me”

## Verse 6

God is consistent with his people...as a result they “are not consumed”

God does not change in his promise to the nation... or his plan and purpose

### **Hebrews 13:8**

Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.

### **Psalms 102:27**

But You *are* the same, And Your years will have no end.

(Feinberg) “All the nations’ hope, as ours as well, is grounded in the never failing, unchangeable character of our covenant- keeping God”

## Verses 7-12 Address tithing

### Verse 7

The people have “gone away” from God despite the fact that he is consistent

“Ordinances”= statutes



“have not kept them”

“Return (repent) to me, and I will return to you” (be blessed)

But the people do not see that they need to repent and ask:

“In what way shall we return?”

God shows them a specific of their disobedience in verse 8

### Verse 8

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me!”

“In what way have we robbed you?”



“In tithes and offerings”

Verse 9

Stealing from God brought the people of Malachi's day under a curse...the whole nation

**Nehemiah 13:10**

"I also realized that the portions for the Levites had not been given *them*;"

By robbing God they robbed themselves—a curse which resulted in bad harvest and famine

Verse 10

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse"

**Leviticus 27:30**

And all the **tithe** of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD'S. It *is* holy to the Lord.

The temple served as a warehouse where the people brought the produce

God promises to bless for tithing— "If we want God to open his storehouse, we must first open ours" (Feinberg)

Verse 11 (Millennial)  
How the blessing would be realized

(Paraphrase) “Your crops will be large, for I will guard them from insects and plagues. Your grapes won’t shrivel away before they ripen, says the Lord of hosts”

Verse 12  
Because of obedience and God’s blessing— “All nations will call you blessed”

“For you will be a delightful land”—ultimately to be fulfilled in the millennium

Verses 13-15 (shifts back to Malachi’s day)  
Summarizes the **attitude** of the people—What good is to serve God? (they ask)  
They say: He rewards evil doers and punishes the righteous



But the rest of chapter 3.... and chapter four shows that the righteous will receive just reward...and the wicked will be destroyed

Verse 13

The same **attitude** displayed by the priests has infected the people as well

God says: "Your words have been harsh against Me"

The people say: "What have we spoken against you?"

Verse 14

They say: "It is useless to serve God"

"What **profit** is it that we have kept his ordinance?"

→ Instead of serving God they were interested in profit and self

They **claim** to "have walked as mourners" i.e. (In obedience)...all to no profit

Verse 15

(NIV) "But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evil doers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape"



Similar to the complaint in the book of Job: "Why do the evil prosper and the righteous suffer?"

Verse 16

God now shows who the righteous are—those who **properly fear him**

'spoke to one another'

→ In fellowship and worship

Their **conduct** and conversation revolved around God and his ways because

→ "the Lord listened and heard them"



God does not need records to remember...so this is for our encouragement

"A book of remembrance was written before him"

→ To continue to fear and meditate upon his name

God does not need books...but he does have them:

Dan. 12:1; Rev. 20: 12, 15

“In the midst of spiritual failure and corruption on every hand, the godly remnant are drawn together by their mutual spiritual needs and desire, in the fear of the Lord” (Feinberg)

### Verse 17

Two things are mentioned about God’s people:

1) “They shall be Mine” —in a peculiar, special sense

2) He will protect them like a father does his son...

### Verse 18

The results will be shown

Between the wicked and the righteous

The next chapter will continue to compare the wicked with the righteous...some say there should be no chapter break

# Chapter 4

Verse 1

**“Behold, the day is coming”** 2<sup>nd</sup> behold in Malachi

(Dual meaning)

“Burning like an oven”  
1) Lake of fire

**Revelation 20:15**  
And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

“And all the proud...all who do wickedly will be stubble”

2) Christ blots out wickedness at his return:

v. 1 (middle part)  
“And the day which is coming shall burn them up”

v. 1 (last part)

“That will leave them neither root nor branch”



Verse one—description of the fate of the wicked

Verse two—description of the fate of the righteous

Verse 2

“You who fear my name”

“The Sun of Righteousness shall arise  
With healing in his wings”  
(Metaphorical)

The warmth the sun brings is compared to  
the healing the Messiah brings to the world

“No use of this figure is used in the New  
Testament.  
For that reason **most translations** have  
**not capitalized** ‘sun’ (Expositors)

Sun is used figuratively of God in scripture

“Sun” is capitalized in the KJV/NKJV with  
the idea of the figure as a Messianic one

**Revelation 1:16**

He had in His right hand seven stars, out of  
His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,  
and His **countenance** *was* like the **sun** shining  
in its strength.

“In the Kingdom, righteousness will  
prevail like the sun” (BKC)

**Psalms 84:11**

For the Lord God *is* a **sun** and shield; The Lord  
will give grace and glory;

Verse 2 (last part)  
“you shall go out and grow fat like stall fed calves”

Expresses the joy and satisfaction of the righteous in the kingdom

Verse 3  
The righteous will achieve victory over the wicked

Ashes indicate the complete burning of the wicked (not tormented in hell fire)

Verse 4  
“Remember the Law of Moses”....as Malachi has been doing in the entire book

“Malachi began with an illustration from Genesis (Jacob and Esau) and spent most of the first half of the book reminding priests and people of the need to keep the Mosaic law.

Now, close to the end of the book, he gives another terse reminder of their continuing obligation to those laws” (Expositors)

Verse 5  
(the 3<sup>rd</sup> “Behold”)—Ch.3:1; 4: 1; 4: 5

Ch. 3:1—“Behold I send My messenger”

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet” (5<sup>th</sup> messenger of Malachi)

The work of Elijah is one of **restoration**...and to avert the curse from God

**Matthew 17:11**  
Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is **coming** <sup>£</sup>first and **will restore** all things.”

V. 5 (last part)  
“**Before** the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord”

Day of the Lord—after the tribulation and after the heavenly signs

## Verse 6

“He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers”

### Luke 1:16-17 (Description of John the Baptist's mission)

<sup>16</sup>And he will **turn** many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

<sup>17</sup>He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, *‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’* <sup>£</sup> and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, **to make ready a people prepared** for the Lord.”

John the Baptist did not fulfill this prophecy

### John 1:21

And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

In an end time setting, before the day of the Lord—  
an Elijah-like work will be **making ready a people...preparing** for the return of Jesus Christ—

The work of the Church today

An Elijah-like work that stands behind, restores and teaches the value of family life



The end-time Elijah directs the hearts of the fathers to the children by teaching the instructions of **God's ways**....  
Just as Elijah did among northern Israel...and John the Baptist did among the Jews of his day



**(Luke 1:16)**

And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God (in obedience)

“Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse”

(Feinberg) “The book of Genesis shows how the curse entered the human race, and Malachi indicates the curse still threatens”

## Lessons from the book of Malachi

We are a special chosen priesthood ( 1 Peter 2: 5)—we must give our best to God and our service must be acceptable

We must properly fear God with worship and fellowship

We must continue faithfully the Elijah-work..... of teaching our children **and** the world the importance of walking with God in obedience