

malachi

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Study Outline

Historical & Scriptural Placement:

The prophet Malachi ministered during the ministry of Nehemiah (397 B.C.) making him the final prophet of the Old Testament. Ezra the priest had lead a spiritual revival while Nehemiah charged the people with the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Malachi's prophecies came towards the end of this historical period and provided God's final Word preparing the people for Jesus.

Main Point: Malachi is the final of the three post-exile prophets and God's final word before the coming of Jesus. Though the people had been doing many of the right things following their exile (returned to the land, rebuilt their temple, restarted their religious rituals, and completed the construction of the walls), it became clear their hearts were not right before the Lord. Without the Godly influence of Nehemiah (who had returned to Babylon), the people's hypocrisy rose to the surface. Malachi was raised up by God to expose the people's dead religion and incomplete restoration by calling them to account for their hypocritical behavior and encouraging them to remember God's character, law, and future coming. Though history illustrated the reality the people ultimately rejected the message of Malachi, we do see two basic results in the process of restoration. People either repent of their hypocrisy or they become more hypocritical and self righteous.

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI

PEOPLE'S PROBLEM: DEAD RELIGION & HYPOCRITICAL LIVING

CH 1:1-5	QUESTION THE LOVE OF GOD & HIS COVENANT PROMISES
CH 1:6-14	POLLUTED OFFERINGS: GIVING GOD THEIR LEFTOVERS
CH 2:1-9	CORRUPT PRIEST: LACK MORAL INTEGRITY
CH 2:10-12	SPIRITUAL COMPROMISE: MARRYING UNBELIEVERS
CH 2:13-17	DISOBEDIENCE: UNLAWFUL DIVORCE
CH 3:8-12	ROBBING FROM GOD
CH 3:13-18	COMPLAINTS CONCERNING GOD'S GOODNESS

GOD'S SOLUTION: REMEMBER GOD'S CHARACTER, LAW & COMING

CH 1:1-5	GOD HAS PROVEN HIS LOVE FOR ISRAEL
CH 3:6-7	GOD'S UNCHANGING NATURE
CH 1:6-2:16	REMEMBER THE LAW AND OBEY
CH 3:16-18	BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE
CH 3:1-4:3	PROMISE OF ELIJAH & COMING OF THE LORD
	PROMISE OF TWO MESSENGERS
	THE REFINING WORK OF THE MESSIAH
	GREAT DAY OF GOD'S COMING
CH 4:4-6	SUMMARY: LAW, ELIJAH & JESUS

Key Verse: Malachi 3:1, "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, who you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in who you delight. Behold, He is coming. Says the Lord of Hosts".



Day 1: Polluted....

Malachi 1:6-14 // THINKING POINTS: (1). What was God's basic problem with the sacrifices the people were giving to God? (2). What does God care more about: the sacrifice itself or the heart behind the sacrifice? (3). In what way have you been guilty of giving God your leftovers? Shouldn't the best be reserved for God?

Day 2: Refiner....

Malachi 3:1-5 // THINKING POINTS: (1). By referring to Jesus as a "refiner's fire" or a "launderers' soap", what is Malachi trying to reveal about Jesus' character? (2). In what ways does Jesus practically work to purify our lives of sin and impurities? (3). What is the Refiners purpose in the long refining process? What is the end result?

Day 3: Immutable....

Malachi 3:6-7 // THINKING POINTS: (1). God brings up the fact He's unchanging. What is the context? And why mention this attribute? (2). What spiritual process is God referring too when He encourages the people to "return to Me"? (3). What are the encouraging realities when you truly consider the immutable nature of God?

Day 4: Robbing God....

Malachi 3:8-12 // THINKING POINTS: (1). In what way had the people of Israel "robbed from God"? (2). Is the concept of tithing relevant for the Christian who has been freed from the Law of Moses? What is the core issue when it comes to tithing our income to God? (3). What was the tangible consequence when the people refused to give to God the first-fruits of their labor?

Day 5: Profound Influence....

Malachi 4:4-6 // THINKING POINTS: (1). Though it's a surface application from this passage, what hierarchy of influence is being described in these verses? (2). What kind of influence has your parents had on your spiritual growth? (3). In what way is your life having an impact for the cause of Christ on your parents?

Day 6: The Final Curse....

Malachi 4:4-6 // THINKING POINT: (1). Knowing they are God's final words in the Old Testament, what application and truth can you pull from these verses? (2). Why are the first 39 books of the Bible referred to as the Old Testament? (3). The last word of the Old Testament is "curse." Do you think this reality carries any significance?

DEVOTIONS

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