

Book of Malachi

Study BIBLE



Introduction

Book No	39
Name	Malachi
Written By	Malachi
Testament	Old
Category	Minor Prophets
Date Written	Approx. 430 BC
Place Written	Jerusalem
Audience	To the people of Israel
Purpose	To confront the people with their sins and to restore their relationship with God
History Covered	430 BC
Chapters	4
Verses	55
Key Verse	<p>For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.</p> <p>But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. (4:1, 2)</p>
Key People	❖ Malachi
Key Places	❖ Jerusalem

Purpose of the Book

God loves perfectly and completely. And his love is a love of action—giving, guiding, and guarding. He is altogether faithful, true to his promises to his chosen people. But consistently they spurn their loving God, breaking the covenant, following other gods, and living for themselves. So their relationship with him is shattered. But the breach is not irreparable; all hope is not lost. God can heal and mend and reweave the fabric. Forgiveness is available. And that is grace.

This is the message of Malachi, God’s prophet in Jerusalem. His words reminded the Jews, God’s chosen nation, of their willful disobedience, beginning with the priests (1:1–2:9) and then including every person (2:10–3:15). They had shown contempt for God’s name (1:6), offered defiled sacrifices (1:7-14), led others into sin (2:7-9), broken God’s laws (2:11-16), called evil “good” (2:17), kept God’s tithes and offerings for themselves (3:8-9), and become arrogant (3:13-15). The relationship was broken, and judgment and punishment would be theirs. In the midst of this wickedness, however, there were a faithful few—the remnant—who loved and honored God. God would shower his blessings upon these men and women (3:16-18).

Malachi paints a stunning picture of Israel’s unfaithfulness that clearly shows the people to be worthy of punishment, but woven throughout this message is hope—the possibility of forgiveness. This is beautifully expressed in 4:2—“But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture.”

Malachi concludes with a promise of the coming of “the prophet Elijah,” who will offer God’s forgiveness to all people through repentance and faith (4:5-6). The book of Malachi forms a bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Malachi’s criticism of abuses and religious indifference is still valid today. God’s people always need to confess their inadequate response to divine love. Initial devotion to God and enthusiasm may diminish.

Genuine worship frequently turns into mechanical observance of religious practices. Delinquent tithing, divorce of faithful spouses, and intermarriage between God’s covenant people and nonbelievers often create havoc in families. Selfish desires, combined with proud and arrogant attitudes, lead to serious problems for which God is blamed.

Instead of acknowledging our neglect and changing our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit, we ask the question, “Where is the God of justice?” (2:17). However, true repentance still prepares the way for necessary reforms and Holy Spirit-inspired revivals.

As you read Malachi, see yourself as the recipient of this word of God to his people. Evaluate the depth of your commitment, the sincerity of your worship, and the direction of your life. Then allow God to restore your relationship with him through his love and forgiveness.

Overview

- ❖ 39th book of the BIBLE, Old Testament, 12th of the 12 minor prophets and 17th of the 17 prophetic books
- ❖ Directs his message to people who are:
 - Plagued with corrupt priests.
 - Plagued with wicked practices.
 - Have a false sense of security regarding their privileged relationship with God.
- ❖ Malachi uses the question-and-answer method to probe into the problems of:
 - Hypocrisy
 - Infidelity
 - Mixed marriages
 - Divorce
 - False worship
 - Arrogance
- ❖ The people have become so sinful that messages sent from God no longer have any impact.
- ❖ The Book of Malachi is a prelude to the 400 years of prophetic silence broken finally by the words of the next prophet, John the Baptist
- ❖ Malachi ends on the bitter word “Curse” (3:14).

Hebrew Names of GOD used in Malachi

❖ TSUR

❖ FATHER

Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

In this last book of the Old Testament we find clear prophetic utterances regarding the sudden appearance of Christ—the Messenger of the (new) covenant (3:1). That day is a time of judgment. “Who can stand when He appears?” (3:2). No one can in his own strength, but for those who fear the Lord, “the Sun of Righteousness [‘the Messenger of the covenant,’ Jesus (3:1)] shall arise with healing in His wings,” that is, in victorious triumph (4:2).

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

The working of the Holy Spirit in Malachi is evident in his own personal life and prophetic ministry. His writings show him to have been a dedicated prophet—a person clearly in tune with the Holy Spirit. As such, he could be used effectively to warn people of their sinful behavior and to urge them to conform their lives to the law of the Lord. The Holy Spirit furthermore granted to him the privilege of bringing the line of faithful, dedicated writing prophets to a close by allowing him to proclaim with clarity and fervency his telescopic vision of Christ’s coming.

Mega Themes of Malachi

GOD’S LOVE

God loves his people even when they ignore or disobey him. He has great blessings to bestow on those who are faithful to him. His love never ends.

Because God loves us so much, he hates hypocrisy and careless living. This kind of living denies him the relationship he wants to have with us. What we give and how we live reflects the sincerity of our love for God.

THE SIN OF THE PRIESTS

Malachi singled out the priests for condemnation. They knew what God required, yet their sacrifices were unworthy and their service was insincere; they were lazy, arrogant, and insensitive. They had a casual attitude toward the worship of God and observance of God’s standards.

If religious leaders go wrong, how will the people be led? We are all leaders in some capacity. Don’t neglect your responsibilities or be ruled by what is convenient. Neglect and insensitivity are acts of disobedience. God wants leaders who are faithful and

sincere.

THE SIN OF THE PEOPLE

The people had not learned the lesson of the Exile, nor had they listened to the prophets. Men were callously divorcing their faithful wives to marry younger pagan women. This was against God's law because it disobeyed his commands about marriage and threatened the religious training of the children. But pride had hardened the hearts of the people.

God deserves our very best honor, respect, and faithfulness. But sin hardens our heart to our true condition. Pride is unwarranted self-esteem; it is setting your own judgment above God's and looking down on others. Don't let pride keep you from giving God your devotion, money, marriage, and family.

THE LORD'S COMING

God's love for his faithful people is demonstrated by the Messiah's coming. The Messiah will lead the people to the realization of all their fondest hopes. The day of the Lord's coming will be a day of comfort and healing for a faithful few, and a day of judgment for those who reject him.

At Christ's first coming, he refined and purified all those who believed in him. Upon his return, he will expose and condemn those who are proud, insensitive, or unprepared. Yet God is able to heal and forgive. Forgiveness is available to all who come to him.

Life Lessons in Malachi

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>Sometimes believers tend to be spiritually nearsighted. We face the same temptation today as did God's people in Malachi's day: the temptation to look at ungodly circumstances around us and question God's integrity and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Be careful to seek God's perspective about the situations in which you find yourself. Set your heart to see God's eternal perspective. Know certainly that evil will be punished in God's perfect time. ❖ Do not confuse God's patience with indifference.

<p>character. We must not mistake God's patience for apathy. We need God's eternal vision and to set our eyes on His desired outcome. His ways are higher than our ways, so let us walk in godliness, honoring the Lord.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do not grow weary in well doing. Be encouraged; the Lord knows those who fear Him. He has kept a record of all you have done because you honor and esteem His name (Gal. 6:9).
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>In Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, we see that Israel once again turned away from God and His ways. Yet, God, in His infinite mercy and compassion, continues to keep His eye on the faithful few who remain dedicated to Him. Stay fully devoted to the Lord. He promises to honor, heal, and bless you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Honor the King by giving Him the best you have to offer. Worship Him with all your heart, soul, and strength. ❖ Take heart; you are a jewel, a precious treasure to the Lord. He loves you and calls you His own (Is. 62:3). ❖ Honor the Lord, devote yourself to Him. ❖ Receive His promise that the Sun of Righteousness will arise over you with healing in His wings. Trust that His intention is to bless you. Worship the Lord, and thank Him for His immeasurable love and faithfulness.
<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>In great mercy, Jesus comes to us as the refiner and purifier of His people. It is a precious expression of His grace that He does not leave us in our sin, but promises to cleanse us. Today, when you sense the conviction of the Holy Spirit, respond with repentance. Allow the Lord to purify you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Yield yourself to Jesus. He has come to purge you so that you can worship Him in righteousness. ❖ If you have sinned, return to the Lord and He will return to you. Welcome His conviction, for by His grace, Jesus makes you pleasing and acceptable to God.

<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>Through a series of insincere questions, God’s people tried to deflect the conviction of sin in their lives. This temptation continues today. Beware of trying to rationalize your sin. Self righteousness will not save you. Welcome God’s conviction; and respond with faith in Jesus, who promises to cleanse you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand that Jacob represents the things of faith, the things of the Spirit, while Esau represents the things of the flesh. Know that God’s love never fails. If you feel unloved by God, there may be an area of sin or striving in the flesh that needs to be brought before the Lord. ❖ Receive His love and forgiveness. ❖ Do not feign ignorance when God convicts you of sin. Respond to conviction with a sincere, faithful, humble heart. ❖ Uphold the covenant of marriage. Remain faithful always to your spouse. ❖ Raise your children in godliness and faith.
<p>Keys to Generous Living</p> <p>Malachi contains one of the most frequently quoted scriptures on the subject of tithing. Tithing was included in the law, but was also part of the Abrahamic life of faith before the law (Gen. 14:20). Therefore, New Testament believers are challenged to present our tithes to the Lord as expressions of our faith, recognizing God as our only true source. Honor the Lord with your tithe, and believe that He will bless you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Do not dishonor the Lord by withholding or compromising your tithe. It belongs to Him. ❖ Take God at His Word. He has generously promised to bless you abundantly, to rebuke the devourer, and to cause you to be fruitful. If you are not tithing now, ask God to forgive you and give you the faith and ability to honor Him with your tithe.
<p>Steps to knowing GOD and HIS ways</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ be assured that GOD never honors evil conduct. ❖ Do not speak against the justice of GOD

<p>GOD sees and rewards not according to our timetable but by HIS. We must not think that either good or evil conduct goes unrecognized or unjudged. GOD will honor the faithful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Believe that GOD differentiates between good and evil behaviour
<p>Steps to covenant life</p> <p>The covenant relationship of marriage is highly esteemed by the Spirit of GOD. HE instructs believers to seek a believing partner to insure holiness in the marriage. HE also requires just and faithful behaviour within the marriage bonds. GOD hates the hard hearted attitudes that destroy this sacred covenant and produce divorce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Obey GOD marry only in the LORD ❖ Be loving and faithful to your marriage partner ❖ Reject divorce as an answer to marital problems ❖ Honor your covenant with GOD ❖ Trust HIM to recover the hope in a seemingly hopeless marriage ❖ Be willing to relearn love, understanding and forgiveness
<p>Keys to personal purity</p> <p>CHRIST comes as the purifier and refiner of HIS people that they being clean may offer service and worship acceptable to GOD. To offer the LORD less than our best is unworthy of HIS holy name</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Give the best way that you have to the LORD ❖ Submit to the work of the LORD as refiner and purifier ❖ Worship GOD from a purified heart and serve HIM from clean motives ❖ Commit to true worship and avoid mere formalism
<p>Lessons for leaders</p> <p>The personal conduct of GOD's chosen leaders and the example of their ministry causes GOD to be received or rejected by the world. If leadership rejects the law of GOD the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Leaders make sure that your conduct and your ministry cause people to give the LORD honor and glory

people will not be taught justice and so can not live in peace	
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Praise Points in Malachi

- ❖ People from every nation who honor his name (1:11)
- ❖ Life and peace mediated through god's covenant (2:5)
- ❖ The love of our father and creator (2:10)
- ❖ His call to be faithful to each other (2:14-15)
- ❖ His promise to return to those who return to him (3:7)
- ❖ His blessings and provision, which far outweigh our gifts to him (3:9-11)
- ❖ His remembrance of those who revere and honor his name (3:16)
- ❖ His deliverance of the righteous (3:17)
- ❖ The sun of righteousness, who heals those who fear god (4:2)
- ❖ His desire to reconcile his people to each other (4:6).

Worship Insights in Malachi

- ❖ God is not pleased when we do not give him the honor he deserves and worship him half heartedly (1:8).
- ❖ The Lord established his covenant with us so that we might have life and peace (2:5).
- ❖ Those who lead God's people in worship must be especially careful to follow God's laws, for many people look to them as God's messengers (2:5-9).
- ❖ Those who desire to worship God should reflect his faithfulness to their spouses (2:13-16).
- ❖ It is purely because of God's changeless mercy that his people are not destroyed (3:6).
- ❖ The Lord regards his children as his own special treasure (3:17).
- ❖ The Lord desires to heal those who fear his name (4:2).

An Outline of Malachi

I. A Call to Respond to God's Love [Mal 1:1-5](#)

A. Our God's Election-Love [Mal 1:1-3](#)

B. Our God's Justice-Love [Mal 1:3-4](#)

C. Our God's Universal-Love [Mal 1:5](#)

D. Conclusion

II. A Call to Be Authentic [Mal 1:6-14](#)

A. In Our Profession [Mal 1:6-7](#)

B. In Our Gifts [Mal 1:8-9](#)

C. In Our Service [Mal 1:10-12](#)

D. In Our Time [Mal 1:13-14](#)

E. Conclusion

III. A Call to Love God Totally [Mal 2:1-9](#)

A. Love for God's Glory [Mal 2:1-3](#)

B. Love for God's Word [Mal 2:4-9](#)

C. Conclusion

IV. A Call to Be Faithful [Mal 2:10-16](#)

A. We Must Be Loyal to the God of the Covenant [Mal 2:10](#)

B. We Must Be Loyal to the People of God [Mal 2:11-12](#)

C. We Must Be Loyal to the Partner of Our Marriage [Mal 2:13-16](#)

D. Conclusion

V. A Call to Trust an Unchanging God Mal. 2:17-3:12

A. Our God is Just Mal. 2:17-3:6

B. Our God is Faithful [Mal 3:7-12](#)

C. Conclusion

VI. A Call to Take Inventory Mal. 3:13-4:6

A. Is It Vain to Serve the Lord? [Mal 3:13-18](#)

B. Is There No Difference Between the Righteous and the Wicked? [Mal 4:1-3](#)

C. Are There No Guides for the Righteous? [Mal 4:4-6](#)

D. Conclusion