

MALACHI – CHAPS 1-2 – Israel Beloved of God; Polluted Offerings; Corrupt Priests; Treachery of Infidelity

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

Mal 1:1 The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

Israel Beloved of God; (vs. 2-5)

Mal 1:2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved; Mal 1:3 But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness."

Mal 1:4 Even though Edom has said, "We have been impoverished, But we will return and build the desolate places," Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever.

Mal 1:5 Your eyes shall see, And you shall say, 'The LORD is magnified beyond the border of Israel.'

Polluted Offerings; (vs. 6-14)

Mal 1:6 "A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'

Mal 1:7 "You offer defiled food on My altar, But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.'

Mal 1:8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts.

v. 1 *Malachi* means "my messenger." He brings the last message from God to the people of Israel. His last words for a 400 year period until He speaks again to the Jews through John the Baptist.. A "burden" is a judgment, a judgment from God, and it will be a **very strong, astonishingly sober and rigorous rebuke** that God will give to them. But we need to be aware this rebuke is given to them because of His love for them (and for us!). We need to pay attention!

v. 2 *"I have loved you"* - I do love you, I will love you, says the Lord. *'In what way have You loved us?'* This question reveals an alarming lack of trust in God - the kind of question rarely spoken, but often harbored in the heart. It asks, God, if you really love me why are things the way they are?. The Israelites were implying that God had been unfaithful to His covenant. If You really love us, why are still under foreign oppressors, waiting for the promised kingdom? **One of the most dangerous things we can do is to take decisive actions based on doubting God's love for us!**

v. 3 *I hated - I loved not Esau's posterity as I loved Jacob's.* His heritage - Mount Seir with the neighboring mountains. Waste - By Nebuchadnezzar's arms five years after the sacking of Jerusalem, and whereas Jacob's captivity returned, and their cities were rebuilt, Esau's never were. The jackals - Creatures which delight in desolate places, by which the utter desolation of Esau is signified.

v. 4 *Throw down - So he did in the times of the Maccabees.* The border of wickedness - They will be a most wicked people, and so notorious, that all their neighbors shall brand them for it. Hath indignation - They will so highly provoke God, that his indignation will be kindled against them for ever.

v. 5 *Beyond the border of Israel - Let Israel from all his borders give God praise.*

Vs 6-7 *Where is My honor? Cf. Gen 28:11 (Jacob) 50:15-20 (Joseph's brothers) v. 7 b. To you priests who despise My name:* The priests of Israel presided over the sacrifices and it was their duty to uphold the honor and dignity of the sacrifices. Yet they offered **defiled food** to God. Their attitude was one of contempt toward the table of the Lord. **In ministry, it is easier than many people think to blindly continue in sin or mechanical indifference.** God wanted Israel's priests to think about their service to Him, and He wants today's ministers to think just as carefully.

v. 8 *And when you offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?"* It is clear now that He is talking about animal sacrifices. God made it clear to Israel at the very beginning that nothing which was in any way maimed or defiled or any of that sort of thing was to be offered to Him. Passages such as **Lev. 22:20-23** and **Dt.15:21** clearly prohibited offering blemished sacrifices.

v.2 Do we demand proof of God's love for us? Do we really come to the cross of Calvary every day?

v. 5 Let this be our aim continually—to magnify God. We often seek to magnify ourselves. Our truest greatness is in making Him great!

v. 6 Is there anything in my life, my witness that would give, even a hint, that rather than magnifying God's name it would be despising His name?

v. 7 Do we offer God our best in worship, or do we just go through the motions?

OLD RUGGED CROSS – Ernie Ford
*On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross
The emblem of suffering and shame
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain*

*Refrain: So I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay down
I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it someday for a crown*

*To the old rugged cross I will ever be true
Its shame and reproach gladly bear
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away
Where His glory forever I'll share
Refrain*

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Mal 1:9 "But now entreat God's favor, That He may be gracious to us. While this is being done by your hands, Will He accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts.

Mal 1:10 "Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you," Says the LORD of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands.

Mal 1:11 For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the LORD of hosts.

Mal 1:12 "But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; And its fruit, its food, is contemptible.'

Mal 1:13 You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it," Says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" Says the LORD.

Mal 1:14 "But cursed be the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished— For I am a great King," Says the LORD of hosts, "And My name is to be feared among the nations.

v. 9 Is it possible that these people could continue giving an outward show but not realize that in their hearts they are not right with God? Their hearts are polluted, and their offering, therefore, is polluted. **“Do you think that with such unacceptable offerings God will be pleased with you?”** Their prayers could never be fruitful as long as they were presenting such sacrifices.

v. 10 God says, "All this ritual that you are going through is meaningless. It is for nothing. It doesn't profit." But they continue on in it. The wish is expressed that someone would shut the doors of the Temple, so that fire might not be kindled upon the altar in vain. God thought it was better to **shut the doors** rather than to continue worthless worship. Not everything that is offered to God as worship is accepted by God as worship. Sometimes He would prefer that it just stop and simply says, **I have no pleasure in you.**

v. 11 *from the rising of the sun...* Meaning not from morning to night; for it designs not time, but place, **even all the space from east to west, or that lies between the rising and setting sun; even all nations, and the inhabitants of them;** and who ought to praise the Lord for the rising sun, and the benefit Israel was bringing the name of God into disrepute by the way they were serving Him. The unsaved were not impressed because it was just a form and a ceremony. God will not go without worship. If the priests and people among the Jews will not worship Him in Spirit and in truth, God will find worshippers **among the Gentiles.. This is not the accomplishment of this present age, but a prophecy relating to the millennial era. Cf. Ps 113:3**

v. 12-13 What an attitude towards God and the things of God. It's a wonder God didn't just wipe them out but He is gracious and He is merciful. It's a wonder that God doesn't wipe us out but He is gracious and merciful. *Contemptible . . . Oh, what a weariness!* Their selfish, insincere worship was also unsatisfying to the worshippers. Because they did not meet God in their worship it was as hollow for them as it was for God. True worship is never **contemptible** or a **weariness**.

v. 14 The people weren't being indicted for their lack. They were being indicted for their failure to give back to the Lord the best of what He had already given them. In any area of our walk, the Lord only asks of us that which He has already provided. Jesus didn't condemn the widow for giving only two mites. He commended her as He did no other for giving what she had **(Mark 12:42-44).** *Cursed be the deceiver:* In bringing God less than their best, they were deceivers, like Ananias and Saphira who pretended to surrender everything to God but really did not. *I am a great King:* They simply did not treat God like a great King, one to be feared and honored. When we offer shallow, insincere worship to God we don't honor Him as a great King.

v. 9 Are there any inconsistencies in our lives between having a cold heart toward God, ungodly practices, and then asking God to bless us?

v. 10 Is there anything in my worship, in my life toward the Lord, where He would say or is saying “I have no pleasure in you – just shut the door”!

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Corrupt Priests; (vs. 1-9)

*Mal 2:1 "And now, O priests, this commandment is for you.
Mal 2:2 If you will not hear, And if you will not take it to heart, To give glory to My name," Says the LORD of hosts, "I will send a curse upon you, And I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, Because you do not take it to heart.*

Mal 2:3 "Behold, I will rebuke your descendants And spread refuse on your faces, The refuse of your solemn feasts; And one will take you away with it.

Mal 2:4 Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, That My covenant with Levi may continue," Says the LORD of hosts.

Mal 2:5 "My covenant was with him, one of life and peace, And I gave them to him that he might fear Me; So he feared Me And was reverent before My name.

Mal 2:6 The law of truth was in his mouth, And injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, And turned many away from iniquity.

Mal 2:7 "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.

Mal 2:8 But you have departed from the way; You have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi," Says the LORD of hosts.

Mal 2:9 "Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base Before all the people, Because you have not kept My ways But have shown partiality in the law."

v. 1 It was the priests who were leading the people astray. Had they honored the Lord in their sacrifice and worship, the people would have followed.

v. 2 They were not taking their office seriously. And **God was going to judge them more severely than he would judge the people.** Why? Because of their position of responsibility. They were permitting this sordid condition to exist. They were shutting their eyes to the fact that people were bringing lame and sick animals for sacrifice. God had given them the law of truth, and they were to teach it to their people.

v. 3 God had been blessing the people with abundant harvests at this time. Now God says that He will corrupt the seed so that they wouldn't be getting the tithe that they had been getting. Their affluent society was about done with. Their sacrifices and solemn feasts were so far from being acceptable to God, that he would reject both them and their persons, and would cast the very dung of the creatures brought for sacrifice into their faces, and spread it over them: a phrase expressive of the utmost contempt of them, and of exposing them to the greatest shame and confusion for their sins

v. 4 My covenant - If you will not confirm, and keep Levi's covenant among you, I will make it firm on my part, by punishing the violators of it.

v. 5 literally “the life and the peace;” that, which alone is true “life and peace.” The covenant was not with Levi himself, but with Aaron, his representative, with whom the covenant was made in the desert, and, in him, with all his race after him, God is saying through Malachi that Levi previously feared Him, but now the tribe doesn't. He had taught the truth of God. But these priests were failing to teach the truth of God, as well as breaking the commandments of God.

v. 6 There is a real application in this for us today. No one can serve God without a reverence for His name. That means that Christ must be lifted up before the people.. He is lifted up by our witness, and that must be by our lives as well as by our words. Our example is just as important as what we say.

v. 7 Should keep knowledge - It is this that their office binds them to; it is the duty of all God's people to know his law, but the priest's duty to know it more than others.

v. 8 But you - Priests. Stumble at the law - By your false expositions of it. Have corrupted - You have violated it, have contradicted the great intentions of it, and done what in you lay, to defeat them. (*Num. 25:12-13-Phinehas-foreign wives*), for at Sinai, **Levi was faithful in spite of the sin of Israel at the golden calf.** For this fidelity to God's honor the Lord made a covenant with Levi and his descendants. (*Ex 32:25-29; Dt. 33:8-11.*)

v. 9 have made you contemptible and base - Because the priests of Malachi's day fell so far short of Gods ideal for them, the people held them in contempt. Have shown partiality - You have perverted the law to please great men, or to serve some unworthy design. When we inquire into "the reasons of the contempt and baseness of the clergy," ought we to forget this?

v. 5 God offers a covenant to you, right now, of life and peace in Christ Jesus. What a glorious covenant! Jesus said this cup is a New Covenant in My blood shed through the remission of sins. And tonight God is offering to you eternal life. He'll make a covenant with you. That if you will just believe in His son Jesus Christ and allow Him to be the Lord of your life. God will give to you eternal life. You'll experience peace with God and the peace of God within your life. God said I have established this covenant,

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Treachery of Infidelity (vs. 10-17)

Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another By profaning the covenant of the fathers?

Vision of the High Priest (vs. 1-5)

Mal 2:11 Judah has dealt treacherously, And an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, For Judah has profaned The LORD's holy institution which He loves: He has married the daughter of a foreign god.

Mal 2:12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob The man who does this, being awake and aware, Yet who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!

Mal 2:13 And this is the second thing you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears, With weeping and crying; So He does not regard the offering anymore, Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.

Mal 2:14 Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant.

Mal 2:15 But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

Mal 2:16 "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

Mal 2:17 You have wearied the LORD with your words; "Yet you say, "In what way have we wearied Him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil Is good in the sight of the LORD, And He delights in them," Or, "Where is the God of justice?"

v. 10 This is a simple assertion that because we are all made in the image of God, we must respect and deal honorably with all. When we try **to live apart from God, we then become controlled by our own lust and greed and our lust and greed lead us to war.** And leads to bloodshed and leads to violence. Oh that we could all of us submit to the covenant of God to the laws of God and live as God would have us to live; in love and in peace and in giving to one another. One Father one God makes us all children of the Father, One family.

vs. 11-12 The offenses of the priests would have been sufficient if they had included only the ones already mentioned. **But in addition to these the priests and the people had committed grievous sins against their fellow countrymen, especially their wives. They were offenders in the matter of unholy and unsanctioned marriages. May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this,** being awake and aware, yet who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!

v. 13 And this - Beside that first fault, you have committed another, you misuse, and afflict your Jewish wives, whom alone you should have cherished. *You cover the altar of the LORD with tears . . . so He does not regard the offering anymore:* The neglected and divorced wives of the priests came and wept at Gods altar. When their priestly husbands then offered sacrifice to God at the same altar it offended God.

v. 14 *For what reason? Because the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously:* The priests sinned by forsaking the wife they married in their youth, breaking the goal of marriage (**she is your companion**) and the bond of marriage (**your wife by covenant**). They kept their wives till they had *passed their youth*, and then put them away, that they might get *young ones* in their place.

v. 15 *One (echad) - But one man, and one woman. Yet - Yet he could have made more. Wherefore one - One couple, and no more. A godly offspring - A holy seed born to God in chaste wedlock, and bred as they were born, in the fear of God. Take heed - Keep your heart from wandering after strange wives. Cf. Gen 2:24 "become one (echad)"*

v. 16 The men of Israel were dealing treacherously with their wives. They had covered them with their garments in marriage, but now they were covering their garment with violence. In other words, they had divorced their wives.

v. 17 God says, "I'm so tired of those long, pious prayers that you say. And I am so tired of your testimonies. You really make Me weary." We see again the feigned injured innocence of these people. They are offended that God would *dare* say this of them—they are entirely ignorant of their sins. They ask, "In what way have we wearied Him?" This is the **fifth sarcastic question of the people to God's charge of their phony and pseudo worship.**

Contemptuously and impudently, they contradict God—"In what way have we wearied Him?"

vs. 11-16 The LORDs holy institution which He loves:

This tells us exactly how God feels about marriage. It is **holy** to Him; it is an **institution** to Him; and God **loves** marriage. **When we sin against our marriage or our marriage vows,**

1) We sin against something **holy** to God. He has *set apart* marriage for a special meaning, a special purpose in the life of His people.

2) We sin against an **institution** that God has established. Marriage is Gods idea, not mans; He formed and established the first marriage as a pattern for every one afterwards (Genesis 2:20-25). Because it is an **institution**, we are not allowed to define marriage any way that pleases us; God has established it and we must conform to what He has established.

3) We sin against something that God **loves**.

God **loves** marriage: For what it displays about His relationship with us; For the good it does in society; For the way it meets the needs of men, women, and children. Most of all, as a tool for conforming us into the image of His Son.

He hates divorce: There is no doubt that God **hates divorce** because it destroys what He *loves*- marriage is *the LORDs holy institution which He loves* (Malachi 2:11). Specifically, God **hates divorce** for **at least three reasons:**

1) It **breaks a solemn vow.**

2) Because **it is harmful.**

3) Because **it illustrates apostasy and damnation.**

v.17 Do my manner of prayer and worship every "weary" the Lord? Is there any phony-ness in them? Am I constantly dealing the sin issues that keep coming up? How grateful, how thankful am I for His loving me and dying for my sin?

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TIMELINE: (600 B.C. to the birth of Christ)

605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar begins to reign in Babylon
605 B.C. Some Judeans are taken captive
586 B.C. Jerusalem falls to Babylon
539 B.C. Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon
538 B.C. The return of the Jews to Judea begins (Zerubbabel)
538-458 B.C. The Book of Ezra
520 B.C. Temple rebuilding resumes after 14-yr lapse (Haggai & Zechariah)
515 B.C. The temple is completed
483-473 B.C. The Book of Esther
458 B.C. Ezra comes from Babylon, leads a group of returnees (2nd return of Jews from Babylon)
444 B.C. Artaxerxes allows Nehemiah to rebuild walls of Jerusalem, leads a group of returnees
444-425 B.C. The Book of Nehemiah
443 B.C. Jerusalem's wall is reconstructed
432 B.C. Nehemiah leaves Jerusalem, returns to Babylon
425 B.C. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem for his 2nd time
420 B.C. Malachi's ministry
167 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes desecrates temple
166 B.C. Judas Maccabee revolts
164 B.C. Hanukkah celebrated
63 B.C. Roman Pompey takes Jerusalem; Julius Caesar was elected *Pontifex Maximus*
37-4 B.C. Herod the Great
4 B.C.? Jesus the Christ is born!

MALACHI Background to Malachi: Written in about 420-400 B.C., the Book of Malachi brings down the curtain on the Old Testament. And as the curtain comes down, the voice of God rings out. Of the fifty-five verses that comprise this book, forty-seven are spoken by God directly. That's a higher percentage than that of any other book in the Bible. Truly, God's voice penetrates and resounds through the book before us. **Malachi is the only prophet to end his prophecy with a warning.** Other prophets ended on a note of hope. But in Malachi, the Old Testament closes with a warning **because it's setting the stage for the blessing, the redemptive work of Christ Jesus as seen in the first book of the New Testament—the Gospel of Matthew.** It had been a hundred years since Zechariah and Haggai had been on the scene encouraging the people of Judah to finish the work of reconstructing the temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Zechariah and Haggai encouraged the people to return to work—and the people responded. The temple was rebuilt; the walls were restored. Yet success had its own dangers because, after the temple was rebuilt and the walls restored, **the people began to kick back a bit. They were unraveling in all their ways, becoming like the pagan nations around them. As they did, their cutting edge was lost. They began to lose their fire, their passion and their way! A mediocrity had crept into them.** So the Lord sent Malachi to speak to His people concerning the lukewarm state of their hearts. May we pay close attention and look at this Book of Malachi as it affects us personally!

The prophecy of Malachi is built around seven questions the people asked God. These questions revealed their doubting, discouraged, sinful heart.

In what way have You loved us? (Malachi 1:2)
In what way have we despised Your name? (Malachi 1:6)
In what way have we defiled You? (Malachi 1:7)
In what way have we wearied Him? (Malachi 2:17)
In what way shall we return? (Malachi 3:7)
In what way have we robbed You? (Malachi 3:8)
In what way have we spoken against You? (Malachi 3:13)