

## **Malachi: Jesus the New Covenant**

### **I. Chapters 1:1-1:5**

### **II. Chapters 1:6-3:15**

### **III. Chapters 3:16-4:6**

The book of Malachi was written almost 100 years after Haggai and Zechariah (the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of the post-exile prophets). He writes during the seven year absence of Nehemiah who went back to Persia prior to his return to deal with the issues that God spoke of through Malachi. The book closes out the Old Testament in 55 verses 47 of which are spoken directly by God to the people (a higher percentage than any other book in the Bible). The work of rebuilding the temple that God used Haggai and Zechariah to motivate the people to do has long ago been completed and its completion caused the people to slip from compliancy to compromise and corruption. And it is to this that God speaks through Malachi. His name means messenger but beyond that nothing is known of him as the focus is upon the message and not the messenger. This book bridges the gap of 400 years silence until the coming of John the Baptist and 50 years until Matthew would write his account.

### **I. Chapters 1:1-1:5**

In these first 5 verses God tries to soften the hardening hearts of the nation as they have grown complacent as they question how God loves them. Saints, this is always where we will falter and fall into compromise and corruption, right where we begin to question God's love for us. In 1:2-3 God answers their questioning heart of "*In what way have You loved us?*" By saying, "*I have loved you*" "*Was not Esau Jacob's brother? Yet Jacob I have loved; But Esau I have hated, and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the*

*jackals of the wilderness.*” These were twin brothers and Paul in Romans 9:11 tells us that this choice of God choosing Jacob was before they “born, nor having done any good or evil”. So God says, *“Hey you doubt I love you look at your heritage, I choose to love you when you were a scoundrel and I’ve continued to love you look at your brother’s Esau’s land its uninhabited and here you all are back in the land”*. Some folks have a problem with this passage as it says that God hated Esau but the word here means to love less. Having read the Bible and the life of Jacob I too have a problem with this verse but its in how God could ever love Jacob! Hey saint’s, have you ever heard someone say, *“To know me is to love me”*? I think that it is the opposite if any of you really knew what a dirt bag I really am you wouldn’t love me you’d run from me. Ah but consider this truth that no one knows you better then God as we are told in Isaiah 66:18 *“I know their works and their thoughts.”* Yet the One who knows us best is the very One who loves me the most. Amazing Love! God’s point to these people is to not look at the moment to determine God’s love look to the truth of His word and you will see His love. I’m afraid that far too often God’s children are so spoiled that they think that God owes them something more then He has already given them His only begotten Son. *“God we cry out, don’t you care for me, how come you haven’t given me what I asked for, how come Sally gets blessed and I don’t?”* And God says, *“Hey child of mine I love you the same but differently, what’s good for Sally isn’t good for you. How can you doubt My love for you haven’t I already given both you and Sally my very best, My only begotten Son?”*

One thing is certain dear ones, doubt and depression will come knocking at your door but don’t open the door instead open the windows and take a look towards the heavens and see His blessings poured out towards you!

## II. Chapters 1:6-3:15

**Chapters 1:7-2:9:** Here God address the fact that the people have only followed the priests in their life styles as they offered imperfect animals on the altar. They cared more to give the Persian governors better then they were willing to give God. It was far this reason they were lacking in blessings. Malachi 1:6 says, *“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?”* Then they ask *“In what way have we despised Your name?”* to which God says in 1:7 *“You offer defiled food on My altar.”* They were bring God their *“leftovers”* of their *“time, talent and treasure”* and were complaining that they were lacking. You see in Exodus 23:19 God had told them they were to offer the *“firstfruits”* the best of their time, talent and treasure. God says in 1:8 *“You offer the blind the lame and sick, if it’s so good offer it then to your governor!”* But not only that we are told in 1:9-10 they then turned around to *“Entreat God’s favor, that He may be gracious to us.”* God says, *“Who is there even among you who would shut the doors”*. They were doing the bare minimum as an act of religion then complaining to God that they didn’t have enough. So God says, I’m just going to *“shut the doors on you and bless others who are willing to give what I’ve already given you”*. Saints let me make certain that you understand what God is saying here, **He is not upset at their lack of giving it was the quality of the giving not the quality of their giving.** In Mark 12:42-44 when the widow came into the temple to give only two mites Jesus didn’t condemn her He commended her for Giving the BEST of what she had. Dear ones God never asks us to give what He hasn’t first already given us. The worst part of this that the people were only following the examples of the priests. In 2:2 God says, *“If you will not hear, and if you will not take*

*it to heart, to give glory to My name, I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings.*” There are folk’s whom God has blessed but they continue to rip God off giving Him only the “*blind, lame and sick*” of their “*time, talent and treasure*” and they will soon find that God’s blessings have become a curse. God has given us that we might give away friends!

In **2:10** God asks them “*Have don’t you all have the same Father?*” “*So why are you ripping each other off?*” No society that puts God first by giving to Him of their time talent and treasure will be able to treat their fellow man any different than they would want to be treated. The problem on both sides of the health care issue is self centeredness! The Insurance companies have for too long ripped off their clients and now the government wants to do the same. No greater area was this seen than in the area of divorce as the people were divorcing their godly spouses to remarry people of the world. They had made a covenant with God and a commitment to their wife’s but now emotion was what caused them to pull away after the ungodly women. Job said in 31:1 “*I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?*” This had in affect upon the children now as well as there were now children who had a compromised father and an unbelieving mother. That is why God says in verse 16 that “He hates divorce” but did you notice that it doesn’t say that God hates the “divorced”? I’m afraid that for far too long we have treated those who have divorced with contempt . The words translated here “*violence*” in verse 16 can is also translated “*bitterness*” and quite often the break up of a marriage ends up in one or both of these emotions.

God says in 2:17 “*You have wearied the Lord with your words...In that you say,*

*"Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delights in them".*

Those that teach God's word are called to a higher standard and these priests were distorting God's word by say that those that practiced evil need not change their ways. God indeed loves us sinners but He loves us far too much to allow us to stay in our bondage and death!

**Chapter 3:** God says in 3:1 that He will *"send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming"*. God was going to send John the Baptist 400 years later to prepare the way before Jesus who was coming suddenly to His temple with a "New Covenant" of grace. Of Him God says in 3:3 *"He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness."*

All this was yet to come because God says in verses 6-7 *"I do not change"* and the people needed to return to Him so that He would return to them. Now in verse 8 God again brings up the area of tithing as He says in 3:8 *"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings."* God says in 3:10 *"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."* **Did you know in the Bible there are over 450 verses on faith, over 500 verses on prayer but there are over 2,100 verses on giving?** 1 out of every 10 verses in the N.T. deals giving, money or possessions. Folks' apparently giving is very important to God but it's not His way of raising income. No, it's His way of testing hearts as Luke

12:34 says, “*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” You see God is a giver and He calls His children to be like Him, He wants us to give not because He wants our money but rather because He wants our hearts. The word Tithe means a 10<sup>th</sup> and the people had been holding back on giving God a 10<sup>th</sup> because their hearts weren’t right. The concept of giving a 10<sup>th</sup> goes back before the law to the time of Abraham as he gave a 10<sup>th</sup> of all he owned to Melchizedek. In the Old testament law the amount the people were to give was actually 23% (10% to the Levites, 10% to the Lord, 10% every three years, and 1/6<sup>th</sup> of all crops). Here is the point **God wants you to give only 10% of what He has already given you so that He can bless the other 90%.** All of this has to do with our hearts of worship before the Lord! Giving to the Lord makes great sense financially as well because God isn’t going to ever become our debtor, you will never be able to out give God, and He will never owe you one!

### III. Chapters 3:16-4:6

God says in 3:17 “*They shall be Mine,*” says the Lord of hosts, “*On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.*” As a goldsmith I realized that **the difference between a gem and a rock was time, pressure and testing and polishing!** Folk’s that is what God is doing while we are here in this world changing us from a stony hearted person to a gem by pressure, testing and polishing! Malachi ends on some tough words but the next words they would hear is that of the Messiah. In 4:2 God says, “*But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.*” But before that God says in 4:5-6 “*I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the*

*fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”*

