

Malachi

Introduction

The name Malachi means “Jehovah’s messenger”. He was the last messenger of God until the Messiah – the connecting link between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfillment. During this time, the second temple was completed, the altar was in use, and the Jews were under the jurisdiction of the Persians. The enthusiasm that was started by Haggai and Zechariah was gone. The people were again cold and backslidden. Malachi’s message was directed at the moral and religious decline of this period. 47 of the 55 verses are written in the first person. God has a direct message to His people. This is important because He is about to be silent for the next 400 years. He also foretold the coming of the Messiah in judgment and the dawning of a new age.

The Old Testament begins with a man in the Garden, free from sin and happy in His creator’s love; but it closes with fallen man miserable and unhappy. It opens with a man in paradise and closes with him under a curse. The book of Malachi provides a snapshot of the entire Old Testament. The final words of which are “Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse”. The end picture is of a people unable to keep the law and longing for redemption.

Structure –

1. The Love of God Stated (1:1-5)
2. The Love of God Scorned (1:6-2:17)
3. The Love of God Shown (3:1-4:6)

Key Verse – “Behold, He is coming” (3:1)

Key Message – The Sin of Man and the Silence of God

I. What We Have Learned about Ourselves in the Old Testament

A. We are dead in our sins!

1. We are prone to defame God (1:6,12)
2. We are prone to defile one another (2:10-17)
3. Sin is too subtle for us (see Nehemiah 10:28-39)
4. Sin is too strong for us (see Nehemiah 13:4-25)

In this parallel passage we see the people make a genuine commitment to serve and obey God. However, after a short time the same people have backslidden and are as bad or worse than before their commitment. The things that they once considered unthinkable had become the normal. We have these very same tendencies. We are prone to make commitments to God that we intend to keep, only to find ourselves back where we were or worse. This leads them and us to the same conclusion.....

B. We are desperate for a Savior! (3:1) – “Behold He is Coming!”

We do not need someone to come on the scene and give us new laws.
We need someone to come and give us **new life!**

We do not need someone to come and call us to reform.
We need someone to come and cause us to be **reborn!**

II. What We Have Learned About Our God in the Old Testament

A. He is overwhelmingly gracious (1:1-5) – God points them to the fact that He has been faithful to His people for 16 consecutive centuries!

B. He is inexpressibly holy

Lord of Hosts occurs 24 times in 55 verses. Jehovah Sabaoth is the name for God related to His power and strength. The name indicates that He alone is God and that we are completely dependent upon His power and provision to accomplish His purposes.

C. He is consistently faithful (2:14-16)

God hates divorce because God loves faithfulness and wants His people to show faithfulness to a watching world

D. He is completely just (3:2-3)

1. He will demonstrate His righteousness
2. He will demand our repentance
3. He will display His wrath

E. He is unquestionably supreme (1:11)

God reminded His people that if they did not give Him the praise He deserved that He would still receive His due praise.

F. He is the only Savior (3:16 – 4:6)

1. He will preserve a remnant (3:16-18)
2. He will provide a Redeemer (4:1-5)
 - He must live the life we could not live.
 - He must die the death we deserved to die.
 - He must rise in victory over death and sin and Satan.

And so the Old Testament ends with these final three verses that will reverberate for 400 years until in Matthew 11:14 Jesus says of John the Baptist, “He is Elijah who is to come”.