



# Esteeming His Name

A Royal Priesthood

## The Historical Context of Malachi

- 460 – 450 BC to post-exilic Judah still under Persian rule
  - Before - peace & prosperity in Babylon
  - After - poverty, famine, conflict & oppression in Jerusalem
- Timeline of Return
  - Decree by Cyrus; 539 BC
  - Completion of temple; 515 BC
  - Reconstruction of city walls; 445 BC
- Serious adversity has been going on for a long time.
  - Many decades with no sign of relief.

## The Structure

1. God's Love 1:2-5
  2. **Denunciation of the Clergy 1:6-2:9**
  3. Idolatry and Intermarriage 2:10-16
  4. The God of Justice 2:17-3:5
  5. Withholding Tithes 3:6-12
  6. The Righteous and the Wicked 3:13-18
  7. Day of the Lord 4:1-6
- The first, fourth and sixth are God's response to the complaints of his people against him.
  - The second, third and fifth are accusations directed by God against the people for their sins.

## The Literary Context of Malachi

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 1:2** "I have loved you," says the LORD.
  - Word for 'love' here is the basis for God's choice of Israel.
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **Deuteronomy 4:37** Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power
  
- <sup>NAS</sup> **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
  
- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 John 4:9** By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ... <sup>19</sup> We love, because He first loved us.

# The Problem Priests

Malachi 1:6 – 2:9

## The Disputation Speech

- A disputation speech form has four elements: assertion, questioning, response, and implication.
  1. Assertion (by God) → “Where is the honor due me?... Where is the respect due me?” (1:6a-b)
  2. Questioning (by Israel) → “How have we despised your name?” (1:6c)
  3. Response (by God) → “By offering polluted food on my altar.” (1:7a)
  4. Questioning (by Israel) → “How have we polluted it?” (1:7b)
  5. Response (by God) → by offering defective animals on the temple altar (1:7c-8a)
  6. Implication → The priests will learn that God’s law is not to be condemned and will be punished for their disobedience to the priestly covenant. (1:8b-2:9)

## The Assertion

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 1:6** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name.
  - "says the LORD of hosts" x 11 in this passage
  - Lit., Jehovah of armies
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Luke 6:46** "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 7:21** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **Matthew 7:20** Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

## The Questioning

- <sup>NIV</sup> **Malachi 1:6** ... 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' 7 ... 'How have we defiled you?'
  - We've carried out every duty you have commanded of us, what's the problem? You should be happy.
  
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 7:22** "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"
  - I'm a church member, I go to church every week, I read my Bible and pray, what more could God want from me? He should be happy.

## The Response

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 1:7** ... In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is to be despised.'<sup>8</sup> "But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts.
  - "If work is being done slovenly it must be the Lord's work."
  
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 7:23** "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'
  
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 2:28** For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.<sup>29</sup> But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

## The Implication

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 1:10** "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from you."
- <sup>ESV</sup> **Malachi 2:2** If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart. <sup>3</sup> Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

## Nothing Has Changed

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 4:1** Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it. <sup>2</sup> For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Galatians 5:19** Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Galatians 6:7** Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

## The Hope

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 2:4** "Then you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant may continue with Levi," says the LORD of hosts. <sup>5</sup> "My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me, and stood in awe of My name. <sup>6</sup> "True instruction was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity. <sup>7</sup> "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Numbers 6:22** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>23</sup> "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them: <sup>24</sup> The LORD bless you, and keep you; <sup>25</sup> The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.' <sup>27</sup> "So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them."

## Our Hope

- <sup>ESV</sup> **Matthew 12:17** This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: <sup>18</sup> "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles ... <sup>21</sup> and in his name the Gentiles will hope."
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 8:24** For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees?
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Ephesians 1:18** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Colossians 1:27** ... Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- **Hebrews 11:1** faith is the foundation of continuous hoping, conviction of deeds not seen

# Conclusions

## A Royal Priesthood

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Malachi 1:11** "For from the rising of the sun, even to its setting, My name will be great among the nations [Gentiles], and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering that is pure; for My name will be great among the nations," says the LORD of hosts.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 Peter 2:5** you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ... <sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 Chronicles 16:8** Oh give thanks to the LORD, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples.

## A Living Perpetual Sacrifice

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 12:1** I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.
- <sup>KJV</sup> **Psalm 136:1** O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Psalm 50:14** "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High;
- <sup>ESV</sup> **Psalm 141:2** Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Hebrews 13:15** Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. <sup>16</sup> And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased.