

UNCOMPROMISING FAITH

... the just shall live by his faith Habakkuk 2:4



Malachi

Faith In His Love

Fears God
Malachi 3 & 4
Lesson 23

Background Information

Though Malachi may question God's ways he is confident in God's justice. Chapter three opens with the promise of the "messenger" who would prepare the way for the Lord's return. The ancient Near Eastern custom of sending messengers ahead of a visiting king to inform local inhabitants of his coming, was in order for them to "pave the way" (remove all obstacles) for the monarch. The idea was to fill in holes and remove the rocks that could cause stumbling, in order to have a straight path for the king to travel on.

The Lord will return for a people who have been refined and purified. His coming will be a time of judgment and purification that will sift all people and prepare for His reign on this earth. Sinners will be burned up, the way fire eats up the stubble; they will become like ashes under the feet of the saints! The righteous remnant, who fears God and responds to Him in obedience and constant faith, will find Him a refuge through every circumstance that comes their way. The true believers will see the dawning of a new day as the "Sun of Righteousness" will return to take the throne and reign as King of Kings.

The voice of the prophet closes the Old Testament age, and for 430 years God's voice remains silent toward His people. History marches on exactly the way God said it would, until that time when God once again begins to speak, through John the Baptist to prepare the hearts of God's people to return to Him.

Treasures of the Heart

**In His presence, a scroll of remembrance was written
to record the names of those who feared him
and always thought about the honor of his name. NLT
Malachi 3:16**



What does it say?

The first step is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Malachi 3:1-7

1 "Behold, I 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," says the LORD of hosts. 2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He [is] like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. 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. 4 "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, as in the days of old, as in former years. 5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, and against those who turn away an alien--Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts. 6 "For I [am] the LORD, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. 7 Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept [them]. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'



Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps and cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. **What does God want you to know about Himself?**

Malachi 3:8-15

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. 9 You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, [Even] this whole nation. 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]. 11 "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts; 12 "And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.

13 "Your words have been harsh against Me," Says the LORD, "Yet you say, 'What have we spoken against You?'

14 You have said, 'It is useless to serve God; What profit [is it] that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts? 15 So now we call the proud blessed, for those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free.' "



Malachi 3:16-18

16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard [them]; so a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name. 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." 18 Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.



Malachi 4:1-6

1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 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. 3 You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do [this]," says the LORD of hosts.

4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, [With the] statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 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."



What does it mean?



What lesson can I draw from my observations? Ask yourself, “What was the intended meaning of the original author?” Is there a command to obey, or a warning to heed? An example to follow or avoid? **State each lesson in a simple sentence that you could share with someone else.** (aim for 10 words or less).

Malachi 3:1-7 _____

Malachi 3:8-15 _____

Malachi 3:16-18 _____

Malachi 4:1-6 _____

How can I apply it?



Ask yourself, “What course of action do I need to take to apply each lesson?” How should it change me? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? (aim for 10 *words* or less)

Malachi 3:1-7 _____

Malachi 3:8-15 _____

Malachi 3:16-18 _____

Malachi 4:1-6 _____

Challenge: Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up a main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.

What **D**id **G**od **S**ay?

God's Words to us reveal what He wants us to understand Who He is and know His ways. **See if you can discover God's sovereign rule behind the scenes – and how He expects His people to act. Simply state what God is trying to communicate about Himself.**

What words or phrases are repeated? Repeated words help us discover the main point.

Define three words: does it supply any added meaning to the text?



Getting The Point

See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Malachi 3:1-7 _____

Malachi 3:8-15 _____

Malachi 3:16-18 _____

Malachi 4:1-6 _____

Title State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

Flex Your Muscles Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?

Radiating His Truth...

There is always a faithful remnant who fears the Lord, obeys Him, ponders His truth and exercises spiritual discernment. - Warren Wiersbe

