

# MALACHI



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## OVERVIEW

1. Author – Malachi (“God's messenger“)
2. Date - Sometime shortly after 433 BC
3. Historical Context – Exiles had returned approximately 80 years before. About 100 years after the prophets Haggai and Zechariah.
4. Summary - God’s people, chosen because of His mercy, must live upright and holy lives, and though we may not see it in this world, in the end there will be justice and punishment for sin.

4. Format - "disputational" or "dialectic" and is a repeating pattern of:

- Dispute
- Objection
- Refutation

This repeating pattern occurs 6 times in Malachi. These 6 disputes relate to:

1. 1:2-1:5 – God’s love for Israel
2. 1:6-2:9 – God’s Charges Against the Priests - Unacceptable Sacrifices
3. 2:10-2:16 – God’s Rebuke of Religiously Mixed Marriages and Divorce
4. 2:17-3:5 – Wearying God with Words (The Day of the Lord is Coming)
5. 3:6-12 – God’s Rebuke of Withholding of Tithes (Robbing God)
6. 3:13-4:6 – God’s Contrast of the Righteous and the Wicked

## **First Dispute: God's Love for Israel - Malachi 1:2-1:5**

**Malachi 1:2-3** *"I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob 3 but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert."*

Why did God love Israel?

**Deuteronomy 7:7-8** *It was not because you were more in number than any other people **that the LORD set his love on you and chose you**, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 **but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers**, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

What should our response be when that temptation comes?

Preach the Gospel to ourselves and remember God's long history of grace and mercy in our lives and how He has redeemed us from sin.

**Ephesians 1:4-6** *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.*

**Romans 9:13-16** *As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." 14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.*

## 2nd Dispute: God's Charge Against the Priests - Offering Unacceptable Sacrifices - Malachi 1:6-2:9

**Malachi 1:6-1:13** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?' 7 By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD's table may be despised. 8 When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. 9 And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts. 10 Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. 11 For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. 12 But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. 13 But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD.

## **What if we are coming with half-hearted worship?**

**Hebrews 10:10-14** *And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

## **God's Final Words to the Priests**

**Malachi 2:7-9** *For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. 8 But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts, 9 and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction."*

## **3rd Dispute: God's Rebuke of Religiously Mixed Marriages and Divorce - Malachi 2:10-2:16**

### **Religiously Mixed Marriages**

**Malachi 2:10-12** *Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? 11 Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. 12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob any descendant of the man who does this, who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!*

**2 Corinthians 6:14-18** *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."*



## **Divorce**

**Malachi 2:13-16** *And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. 14 But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. 16 "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."*

## **Principles Regarding Marriage**

1. God makes the husband and wife “one” or “one flesh” (2:15).

**Genesis 2:24** *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

**Matthew 19:3-6** *And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."*

2. Marriage is a covenant (2:14)

"To have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part."

Or

“for richer, for healthier, until I decide we should part.”

3. One of the purposes of marriage is to bring forth godly offspring (2:15).

Rendering favored by the KJV and NASB:

*2:16 For I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the Lord of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.”*

Causes the focus to be upon God's hatred of the practice of divorce.

Rendering favored by the ESV

*2:16 “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”*

Causes the focus to be upon the man's loss of affection toward his wife and thus divorcing her for that reason.

Either translation is consistent with God’s high view of marriage.

## **5th Dispute: Withholding of Tithes (Robbing God) - Malachi 3:6-12**

**Malachi 3:6-12** *"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. 7 From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' 8 Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. 9 You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. 10 Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. 11 I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. 12 Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.*

**4th Dispute: Wearying God with Words - God's Prophecy of the Coming of John the Baptist and Jesus - Malachi 2:17-3:5 and  
6th Dispute: God's Contrast of the Righteous and the Wicked - Malachi 3:13-4:6**

God's Disputes with them:

**Malachi 2:17** *You have wearied the LORD with your words...*

**Malachi 3:13** *"Your words have been hard against me..."*

The People's Objections

**Malachi 2:17** ...*"How have we wearied him?"*...

**Malachi 3:13** ...*'How have we spoken against you?'*

God's Refutations

**Malachi 2:17** ...*By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is the God of justice?"*

**Malachi 3:14-15** *You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? 15 And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.'*

## God's Refutations Continued

### He Is Coming

**Malachi 3:1** *"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; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.*

**Malachi 4:5** *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes*

## What will that coming be like?

**Malachi 3:2-5** *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 fullers' soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. 4 Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. 5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.*

**Malachi 4:1-6** *"For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. 3 And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts. 4 "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. 5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. 6 And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."*

Is all Israel Israel?

**Romans 2:29** *But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.*

**Deuteronomy 30:6** *And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.*

**Romans 9:6** *But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,*



Where is the God of justice?

**Romans 3:21-26** *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

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