

# Listening to the Prophets

## Old Testament Minor Prophets

### Malachi

#### Bibliography

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#### Introduction (Ryrie)

- Malachi means “**my messenger**” and is not mentioned anywhere else in the Old Testament.
- About 100 years had passed since the Jews returned to Palestine from Babylon.
- Both the temple and Jerusalem had been built and the revival under Nehemiah had begun to **wane**.
- The people had backslidden and had become mechanical in their observance toward the law.
- In spite of this, the people could not understand why God was dissatisfied with them.
- Malachi **rebuked** the people and was calling them to repentance.
- Malachi used a question-and-answer method in his writing (1:2)

#### Chapter 1:1-5-God’s Compassion for Israel

- God declared his **love** for Israel in verses 1-5.
- Israel had turned from God yet God still chose to love Israel as opposed to the Edomites (descendants of Esau).
- Edom was invaded by King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. and the Nabataeans drove the Edomites from their territory in 550-400 B.C.

## **Chapter 1:6-3:15-God's Complaint against Israel**

### **Cheating**

- God listed **cheating** as His first complaint against Israel since they were sacrificing sick, blind, and lame animals to the Lord.
- God reminded Israel of His greatness and that He was worthy to receive sacrifices and praise above and beyond any earthly king (1:11).
- The people were becoming **tired** of offering sacrifices to the Lord and did not value His majesty and power (1:13).

### **Unfaithfulness**

- God rebuked the priests for their unfaithfulness (2:1-3).
- The priests were to preserve knowledge and give instruction.
  - The priests were causing the people to **stumble** because of their false instructions and favoritism.

### **Spiritually Mixed Marriages**

- The Jews were profaning their relationship with God by marrying foreign women and accepting their **religions** (2:11).

### **Divorce**

- God stated His disapproval of divorce among His people (2:13-16).

### **Impiety**

- The Jews were saying those who did evil were good since God was not delivering immediate judgment upon them (2:17).
- God was being gracious and **slow** to anger.
- God gives everyone a chance to repent.
  - However, this should not be taken as a license to do evil.

## **Chapter 3:1-6-The Coming of John the Baptist**

- This section **digresses** from the list of complaints.
- Malachi prophesied about the coming of John the Baptist (3:1; Matthew 11:10).

- Malachi stated the messenger, Christ, would come into His **temple** (3:1). This is why Jesus was exempt from paying the temple tax (Matthew 17:24-27).
- The New Covenant in 3:1 referred to Christ's second coming.
- Malachi 3:6 promised Israel would not be consumed when Christ comes.

### **Robbery**

- Israel was robbing God by not bringing their tithes and offerings.
- Malachi 3:10 is a favorite verse telling of God's blessings to those who are faithful in giving their **tithes** and **offerings**.

### **Arrogance**

- The people felt if they could not see **immediate** blessings and rewards for their righteousness, then their actions were in vain (3:13-14).

### **Chapter 3:16-18-God's Condemnation of the Ungodly People**

- There were Jews who did not fear the Lord.
- These Jews were **remembered** by God and their names were put into a book and they will be remembered when the Day of the Lord arrives.

### **Chapter 4: 1-6-The Nature of God's Judgment**

- Malachi spoke about the judgment against unbelievers when Christ returns (4:1).
- During the Millennial reign, righteousness will **rule** throughout the earth (4:2-3).
- God gave the Jews a last reminder to follow His statutes (4:4).
- Malachi prophesied of John the Baptist (4:5-6; see Matthew 17:11-12).

### **Summary**

- The Old Testament is one complete message of God's plan for mankind.
- Because of sin, God prepared a people, the Jews, to bring salvation to the world.
- The Jews rejected their Messiah which caused them to lose their position of bringing redemption to the world.
- The Church was born to carry out the failed mission of the Jews.
- Christ will rapture the Church and will restore Israel again in the Millennium.

- During the Great Tribulation, many Jews will turn to Christ and will preach the Gospel throughout the earth.
- After the 1000 years (Millennium), God will create a new heaven and a new earth and all believers will dwell with Him for eternity.
- The Old Testament demonstrated God's love for all people; He is slow to anger and is full of grace and mercy.
- God's actions should not be construed as a license to do evil but as a chance for all to repent.