

Malachi 3-4

I Coming Day of Judgment -- Malachi 3:1-5

1. What 2 messengers do you think Malachi was referring to in verse 1?
2. In Malachi 1-2 there were talks of corruption of the priesthood. What imagery is used to describe the purification of the priests? (vs. 3-4)
3. What will the Day of Judgment entail? (v.5)

II. Withholding Tithes -- Malachi 3:6-9

4. Read Numbers 18:21-29

What were the requirements for the tithes in the time of the Old Testament? What practical benefits did this give to the Levites? To the laypeople?

5. What does Malachi mean when he says that God's people rob Him (vs. 8-9)

6. III. Blessings from God --Malachi 3:10-12

Read Psalm 34:8

Why does God ask to be tested in verse 10?

7. A. Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

B. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-8

What do these texts reveal about Christian giving?

8. Do you think it is right for a Christian to give an offering or tithe in the expectation of receiving a blessing from God in exchange? State your reasons.
9. What blessing would the nations observe in Israel if her people remained faithful?

IV. Arrogant People -- Malachi 3:13-14

10. Read 73 (summary)

What is the best comfort for those who are discouraged because the wicked seem always to prosper?

11. Read Matthew 20:1-16 (summarize)

In what ways are believers tempted to begrudge God's generosity? How can you fight that temptation?

V The Faithful Remnant --Malachi 3:16-18

12. What was the Lord's promise to those who remained faithful to Him?

13. What did the imagery of the "scroll" represent for the people of that time?

14. How does Malachi describe the “distinction between the righteous and the wicked”?

VI. Judgment and Covenant Renewal-- Malachi 4:1-5

15. Describe the imagery Malachi uses to illustrate the Day of Judgment.

16. Read Matthew 11:7-15

When was “Elijah” sent before the Day of the Lord?

17. Read Luke 3:17

How was John the Baptist turning “the hearts of fathers to their children andchildren to their fathers” (v 6)? What similarities to Malachi do you see in John’s preaching?

Readings

4. Numbers 18:21-29

²¹ “To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do their service in the tent of meeting, ²² so that the people of Israel do not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. ²³ But the Levites shall do the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the people of Israel they shall have no inheritance. ²⁴ For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.”

²⁵ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶ “Moreover, you shall speak and say to the Levites, ‘When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷ And your contribution shall be counted to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress. ²⁸ So you shall also present a contribution to the LORD from all your tithes, which you receive from the people of Israel. And from it you shall give the LORD’s contribution to Aaron the priest. ²⁹ Out of all the gifts to you, you shall present every contribution due to the LORD; from each its best part is to be dedicated.’

6. Read Psalm 34:8

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

7. A. Read 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Now concerning[Ⓜ] the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. ² On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

7 B. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-8

We want you to know, brothers,[Ⓜ] about the grace of God that has been given among the

churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor^{of} of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. ⁶ Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you^{all}—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine.

11. Read 73

Summary

The psalmist fully admitted to the Lord his envy over the prosperity of the wicked, but he emphasized how his enemies were offending God most of all. He found perfect understanding when he went into the holy sanctuary for worship—he knew then that the Lord would act justly against His enemies. Even though flesh and heart may fail, God is always going to be the strength of our hearts and also our refuge.

12. Read Matthew 20:1-16- Laborers in the Vineyard (Summarize)

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius^{all} a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I

give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?¹⁶ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last.”

16. Read Matthew 11:7-15

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? A man⁹ dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet?¹⁰ Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,¹³ and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear,¹⁵ let him hear.

17. Luke 3:17

¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.