

Malachi 3: God's Faithfulness, Israel's Faithlessness

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Author: Malachi
Recipients: Israelites generally, priests specifically
Major Themes: Sincere faith and insincere worship
Date: 500-400 BC
Primary Literary Device: Covenant Lawsuit

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- 1. God's Justice Foreseen in Jesus (2:17-3:6)
- 2. God's Justice Trusted through Giving (3:7-12)
- 3. God's Justice Promised to Believers (3:13-18)

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1. God's Justice
Foreseen in Jesus (2:17-3:6)

Mal2:17--You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet you ask, "How have we wearied him?" When you say, "Everyone who does what is evil is good in the Lord's sight, and he is delighted with them, or else where is the God of justice?"

4

Bottom Line Up Front:

John the Baptist will be the sign that Jesus is about to arrive, and when he does, he will perform a great cleansing work that will allow his covenant people to please God in their service.

5

Malachi 3:1

"See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me. Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his temple, the Messenger of the covenant you delight in—see, he is coming," says the Lord of Armies.

6

See, I am going to send **my messenger**,
 and **he** will clear the way before **me**.
 And suddenly **will come** to his temple
the Lord whom you seek,
the Messenger of the covenant in whom
 you delight.
 Behold, **he comes!**

הנני שלח מלאכי
 ופנה דרך לפני
 ופתגם יבוא אל היכלו
 האדון אשר אתם מבקשים
 ומלאך הברית אשר אתם חפצים
 הנה בא

7

Heb2:2-3

² If the message spoken through angels was legally binding and every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment, ³ how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

8

Mal3:2

But who can endure the day of his coming? And who will be able to stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire and like launderer's bleach.

9

Mal3:3-4

³ He will be like a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴ And the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will please the Lord as in days of old and years gone by.

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Heb7:23-25

²³ Now many have become Levitical priests, since they are prevented by death from remaining in office. ²⁴ But because he remains forever, he holds his priesthood permanently. ²⁵ Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, since he always lives to intercede for them.

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God's People as a Kingdom of Priests

Exo19:6--You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation.

1Pe2:9--But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

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Mal3:5

"I will come to you in judgment, and I will be ready to witness against sorcerers and adulterers; against those who swear falsely; against those who oppress the hired worker, the widow, and the fatherless; and against those who deny justice to the resident alien. They do not fear me," says the Lord of Armies.

13

Mal3:6

Because I, the Lord, have not changed, you descendants of Jacob have not been destroyed.

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2. God's Justice
Trusted through Giving (3:7-12)

Mal3:7-12--7 "Since the days of your ancestors, you have turned from my statutes; you have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord of Armies. Yet you ask, "How can we return?" 8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me!" "How do we rob you?" you ask. "By not making the payments of the tenth and the contributions. 9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing me.

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2. God's Justice Trusted through Giving (3:7-12)

Mal3:7-12--¹⁰ Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way," says the Lord of Armies. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure. ¹¹ I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not ruin the produce of your land and your vine in your field will not fail to produce fruit," says the Lord of Armies. ¹² "Then all the nations will consider you fortunate, for you will be a delightful land," says the Lord of Armies.

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3. God's Justice Promised to Believers (3:13-18)

Mal3:13-15--¹³ "Your words against me are harsh," says the Lord. Yet you ask, "What have we spoken against you?" ¹⁴ You have said, "It is useless to serve God. What have we gained by keeping his requirements and walking mournfully before the Lord of Armies? ¹⁵ So now we consider the arrogant to be fortunate. Not only do those who commit wickedness prosper, they even test God and escape."

17

Mal3:16

At that time those who feared the Lord spoke to one another. The Lord took notice and listened. So a book of remembrance was written before him for those who feared the Lord and had high regard for his name.

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The Heavenly Books

Ps56:8--You yourself have recorded my wanderings. Put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?

Ps139:16--Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began.

19

The Heavenly Books

Rev20:12-15--¹² I also saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works by what was written in the books... ¹⁵ And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

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Mal3:17-18

¹⁷ "They will be mine," says the Lord of Armies, "my own possession on the day I am preparing. I will have compassion on them as a man has compassion on his son who serves him. ¹⁸ So you will again see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him."

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So What?

1. Be a priest to someone.
2. Trust in God's provision.
3. Rejoice that your name is in the ledger.
