
Malachi 3:1-11

Topic: the book of Malachi is so important because it's the last time God sent a prophet to Israel before He cut them off because of their behavior and attitude. So this is the last warning God gave Israel.

Vs1: A: God is sending a messenger to prepare the way before Me: this is John the Baptist. He was a wild looking man wearing animal skins and eating locusts. He went right to the king and told him the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. That's all. B. Then we skip to the second messenger, Jesus Christ, to our present time, skip right over the church age. The old prophets didn't see the church age. We see this in the 2nd verse.

Vs2: Jesus won't come back as a helpless little baby. He will come back this time in power, might, and majesty. No one will be able to stand before Him; He will be so mighty and scary. He'll be like a refiner's fire. This is a very hot fire jeweler's use to get rid of impurities. Fuller's soap: this is getting a kettle boiling with hot water, and then you added soap made from fire place ashes and pig lard. This got the clothes really, really clean, unlike Tide or other products made today. This is what Christ will be like when He comes back again – to judge, purify, and clean.

Vs3: notice He is getting right back to this priesthood who were supposed to be teaching and leading the people of Israel, but who strayed from the truth. Jesus will purify the nation of Israel again, get them back on track.

Vs4: God says, it's going to go back to like it was in the time of Levi. The offerings will be pure and clean, not the trash they are today. Offerings and sacrifices will be reinstated. The problems in the Mideast will continue to get worse and worse. No man on earth will be able to resolve the Mideast conflict, not on man's terms.

Vs5: Psychics, mediums, occultists, and those who try to communicate with the spirit world by taking drugs, God will judge them quickly and harshly. Those who lie and ruin other men's lives and livelihood will be judged fiercely. Harsh judgement will come to those who hire individuals and don't pay a decent wage. Warnings are plentiful in the treatment of widows and orphans. God will judge the abusers of widows and orphans especially harshly. Those who come to you in need and you turn them away without seeing if you can help, you will be punished. Don't let strangers in your house, of course, be discriminate. If someone needs more help than you can provide, refer them to a professional agency.

Vs6: if I was a God of change, Israel wouldn't be My people and you would be totally consumed and destroyed. But I am not a God of change, so Israel is My people forever, period.

Vs7: God says, "Listen, is you get back in fellowship with Me, I'll get back in fellowship with you." But every time God offers a deal, Israel comes back with a smart-ass reply. This happens all throughout the book of Malachi. They say, "Thanks, but we're ok. We don't need you, God".

Now here are the thankless verses:

Vs8: we have robbed God in tithes and offerings. This is one of the most abused verses in the entire bible. Remember, when you rob someone, you're looking them in the eye and taking their stuff.

When you steal from someone, you take their stuff from behind their back. God told the Israeli people they have robbed Him of tithes and offerings, and the Israeli's came back with a smart reply again "When did we rob You??" The great bible scholars don't agree on the rules of tithing. Check the book of Leviticus. There are 3 tithes: to the tribe of Levi, to the priests, and to the poor. Check the book of Deuteronomy and figure out those tithes rules, too. No one yet understands it, so if you do, please notify Carl. In the context of this tithe, this is from the nation of Israel, not the church. We have what Carl calls "New Testament giving". By this Carl means giving what you want out of the goodness of your heart.

But God told the people of Israel they stopped tithing to the tribe of Levi so the priests are not getting their just due and are unable to upkeep their land and churches.

Vs9: God cruses them because they robbed Him.

Vs10: God is talking to the nation of Israel. If they go back to fellowship with God, He will bless them so much they will not be able to hold it all, even in their biggest storehouses. Instead, they kept blaming God for their chastising instead of accepting responsibility for their actions, straightening up, and moving on.

Vs11: If Israel gets right with God again, God will bless them and remove all the curses. He will remove all the bugs from their crops, send plenty of rain to water the crops, and make your blessings plenty. If there is something going wrong in your life, take time out and look closely at your life and see if you're doing something wrong and the Lord is trying to get your attention. Go into a quiet spot and pray and straighten yourself up.