

## Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

### Part 469 – The Messenger Through Then Shall Ye Return (Malachi 3:1-18)

1. What role was the Lord's messenger supposed to play when he (the messenger) came?

A refiner and purifier changing the sinful acts that had come: *“(1) Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. (2) But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: (3) And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness” (Malachi 3:1-3).*

- **Malachi 4:5** speaks again of a messenger and refers to him as Elijah. It is John the Baptizer (**Matthew 11:1-14**; cf. **Isaiah 40:1-11**, **Mark 1:1-3**, **Luke 3:1-4**, and **John 1:15-28**). John prepared the way for Christ.
- The Lord coming to His temple provides various thoughts (**John 7:14**, **I Corinthians 3:17**, and **Hebrews 3:1-6**). Remember, things are clear in O.T. prophecies for a reason (**Ephesians 3:9**).
- The messenger of the covenant (**Luke 16:16**). They did not delight in Jesus, so this is apparently about John (**Mark 12:10** and **Luke 17:25**).
- Who shall abide his coming (**Luke 3:9**)?
- He was a refiner and purifier (**Luke 3:16** and **Acts 13:24**).

2. What was going to change once the messenger did his work?

*“(4) Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. (5) And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts” (Malachi 3:4-5).*

- Following John's work, Judah and Jerusalem would be pleasant to the Lord. Remember how significant Jerusalem was for the kingdom to be established in Christ (**Isaiah 2:2-3**, **Micah 4:1-2**, **Luke 24:44-53**, and **Acts 1:1-2:42**).
- After the days of preparation of Judah and Jerusalem, the swift testimony against various things that had run rampant in Judah in times past (**Jeremiah 27:9**, **Ezekiel 22:7**, and **Jeremiah 22:13**).
- The New Covenant is against sorcery (**Acts 19:11-20** and **Galatians 5:19-21**).
- The New Covenant is against those that oppress the hireling of his wages (**James 5:1-4**).
- The New Covenant is against afflicting the widow and fatherless (**James 1:21-27**).

- The New Covenant is against defrauding (**I Thessalonians 4:6**).
  - Fear ye not me... (**II Thessalonians 1:7-9**, **Hebrews 10:26-31**, and **Hebrews 12:28-29**).
3. Why weren't the sons of Jacob consumed?  
*"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6).*
- God made a covenant with Abraham (**Genesis 12:1-3** and **Genesis 22:1-18**).
  - He keeps His word (**Numbers 23:19**, **I Samuel 15:29**, **Hebrews 6:13-20**, and **Titus 1:1-3**).
  - The concept of "I change not" (**Hebrews 13:8**).
4. Had they returned to the Lord, would He have accepted them back?  
*Yes: "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return" (Malachi 3:7)?*
- From the days of their fathers they had gone away from the Lord (**Deuteronomy 9:6-24**, **Deuteronomy 31:20**, **Jeremiah 11:7-8**, **Lamentations 5:7**, **Daniel 9:16**, **Matthew 23:31-33**, and **Acts 7:51**).
  - He wanted them to return to Him (**Isaiah 55:1-9** and **Jeremiah 3:12-14**).
  - But... (**II Chronicles 34:14-16** and **Isaiah 65:2**).
5. Why were they cursed with a curse?  
They had robbed God of His tithes and offerings: *"(8) Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. (9) Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation" (Malachi 3:8-9).*
- They were supposed to tithe a tenth of what they had from their first fruits (**Leviticus 27:32**, **Numbers 18:26**, and **Proverbs 3:9-10**).
  - Their disobedience got them a curse (**Deuteronomy 28:15-19**).
6. What did they need to do to have blessings from God and nations to see them as blessed?  
*"(10) Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. (11) And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. (12) And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 3:10-12).*
- Bring the tithes into the storehouse (**Nehemiah 10:33-39**; **13:5**).
  - If they did as God expected... **Deuteronomy 28:8-14**

- God would rebuke the devourer (cf. **Amos 4:9**) turning back their punishment to restore their comforts (**Isaiah 57:14-18**).
- As seen before, nations recognize their blessings (cf. **II Chronicles 32:20-23**).

7. What stout words had they spoken against the Lord?

*“(13) Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? (14) Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? (15) And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered” (Malachi 3:13-15).*

- It is amazing that Israel had, at various times, spoken arrogantly against God (**Isaiah 5:18-19**, **Isaiah 37:21-23**, **Jeremiah 5:12-13**, and **Ezekiel 12:22**).
- They said it was vain to serve God (**Isaiah 58:3**).
- They ignorantly thought the wicked prospered in disobedience (**Psalms 73:1-28**).

8. Looking forward, concerning those that feared the Lord and returned, what discernment capability were they going to have?

*Between the righteous and wicked: “(16) Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. (17) And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (18) Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not” (Malachi 3:16-18).*

- Those that feared the Lord spoke to one another. AWESOME for so many reasons (**Psalms 66:16**, **Psalms 119:63**, **Proverbs 13:20**, **Ephesians 4:16**, **I Thessalonians 5:11-14**, **Hebrews 3:13**, etc.)!
- A book (**Exodus 32:32**, **Psalms 56:8**, **Luke 10:20**, **Philippians 4:3**, etc.).
- The Lord’s jewels (**Isaiah 62:1-4** and **Titus 2:11-14**).
- As a man spareth His own son (**I John 3:1-3**).
- Chapter two concluded with them wearying God by saying that those who did evil were good in the sight of God (**Malachi 2:17**).
- Looking forward, God’s people would have discernment as not to fail in that regard (**Hebrews 5:12-14** and **I John 4:1-6**).