

Welcome TO FELLOWSHIP



A SURVEY OF THE

BIBLE

Context · Content · Conviction



MALACHI

HEARTS OF STONE



MALACHI

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF A BELIEVER
IS A RESPONSE TO THE ALREADY PRESENT
GRACE OF GOD.



MALACHI IS THE LAST BOOK IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, BUT IT BRINGS THE OLD TESTAMENT TO A CLOSE ONLY WITH A COMMA, AND NOT A PERIOD. THAT IS, MALACHI POINTS FORWARD TO THE COMING DAY OF THE LORD, AND HE DECLARES THAT THE PROPHET ELIJAH WILL SIGNAL THE INAUGURATION OF THAT DAY. WE THEN TURN THE PAGE FROM MALACHI TO MATTHEW, AND SOON JOHN THE BAPTIST SHOWS UP, WHOM THE NEW TESTAMENT ASSOCIATES WITH ELIJAH. THUS THERE IS VERY LITTLE BREAK BETWEEN THE PROPHETS (AS CONCLUDED BY MALACHI) AND THE GOSPELS, WHICH DESCRIBE THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE.



DANNY HAYS

Israel Taken Captive
Judah Into Exile

Alexander The Great

Antiochus Epiphanes

Pompey Takes Jerusalem

Death of Herod
Fall of Jerusalem

ASSYRIA

BABYLON

MEDO-PERSIA

GREECE

ROME

722
B.C.



586
B.C.



539
B.C.



515
B.C.



333
B.C.



Ptolemies
Seleucids

175
B.C.



MACCABEES
Hasmonean Rule

63
B.C.



4
B.C.



33
A.D.



70
A.D.



H E L L E N I Z A T I O N

Jews Dispersed

Daniel

Ezekiel

536
CYRUS' DECREE



Jews Return

515
Temple Completed

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

Septuagint
(LXX)



Apocrypha



Sadducees
Pharisees
Sanhedrin
Essenes
Zealots



BIRTH OF JESUS
(Winter 5/4 BC)



CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS
(April 1, 33 AD)

New Testament Books
(circa 45-96 AD)



Synagogues



Samaritans

BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WRITING PROPHETS

PRE-EXILIC

TO ISRAEL:

OBADIAH
(840?)

AMOS
(760)

JONAH
(760)

HOSEA
(755)

NAHUM
(660)

THREE PROPHETS
SPEAK TO ISRAEL/JUDAH
ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES.

OBADIAH
(EDOM)
JONAH
(NINEVEH/ASSYRIA)
NAHUM
(NINEVEH/ASSYRIA)

TO JUDAH:

JOEL
(835)

ISAIAH
(740)

MICAH
(735)

ZEPHANIAH
(630)

JEREMIAH
(627)

HABAKKUK
(607)

LAMENTATIONS
(586)

EXILIC

EZEKIEL
(593-571)

DANIEL
(605-537)

OBADIAH
(586?)

JOEL
(???)

POSTEXILIC

HAGGAI
(520)

ZECHARIAH
(520-514)

MALACHI
(520)



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POSTEXILIC PROPHETS RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION TO THE POSTEXILIC PROPHETS (Danny Hays in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Handbook*)

After the death of King Solomon, a civil war divides the nation into two countries: Israel (in the north) and Judah (in the south). The northern kingdom, Israel, falls into idol worship immediately, never again to return to a true worship of God. The southern kingdom, Judah, soon follows suit and slides into idolatry and social injustice. A few kings struggle against this slide, but without success. The preexilic prophets like Isaiah, Amos, and Jeremiah preach and preach, but to no avail; no one really listens to them. By the time of Jeremiah and Zephaniah, both the leaders and the people have completely abandoned God. Even though God pleads with them through his prophets, the people remain rebellious and hostile, refusing to repent and to return to God. Thus the judgment comes. The Assyrians destroy the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, and the Babylonians later destroy the southern kingdom of Judah in 587/586 BC. The Presence of God departs from Jerusalem (Ezekiel 10-11), and the Babylonians raze Jerusalem to the ground, carrying most of the population into exile; thus the Israelites lose the Promised Land.

But then the Lord begins to unfold his plan of restoration. Cyrus, king of Persia, overruns the Babylonians, and in 538 BC he decrees that exiled people like the Israelites can return home. In several waves over the next one hundred years or so, the shattered Israelite exiles return back to the Promised Land. This is the context in which the postexilic prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) write.

With Israel back in the land, some people might have thought that the great time of restoration predicted so often by the preexilic prophets had begun. Numerous things, however, point out that the great deliverance remained in the future. Yes, Israel is back in the land, but there is no Davidic king on the throne, and the Persians continue to dominate Israel politically (a fact stressed throughout the postexilic literature). Also important is that even after the Israelites rebuild the destroyed temple, the Presence of God does not return to the temple. In contrast to the spectacular entry of God's Presence into the Solomonic temple described in 1 Kings 8:10-11, nothing at all is mentioned about the

Presence of God in the rebuilt temple during the time of the postexilic prophets. Indeed, the post exilic prophets proclaim that the situation created by the struggling group of Israelites back in the land does not represent the great time of restoration and deliverance predicted by the preexilic prophets, or a return to "the way things were" under the blessings of Deuteronomy. They also underscore that the terrible sins of their forefathers should be seen as lessons, exhorting the current community to follow God in serious obedience. Yet the postexilic prophets do proclaim that the time of restoration has "begun" to a limited extent. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi tell the ragtag nation of Israelites who have returned to the land that they live in between the beginning of the restoration and the ultimate consummation, which is still future. These prophets announce that the postexilic community is living in an interim time, and they should worship and serve the Lord faithfully as they await the coming of the Messiah who will actually bring about the glorious restoration prophesied by the preexilic prophets.



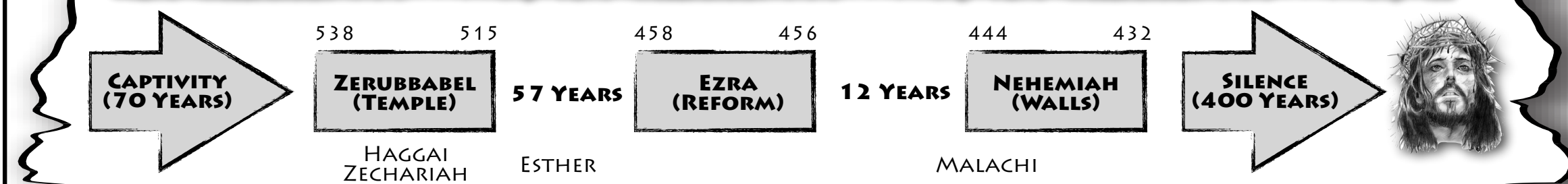
THE POST-EXILIC PERIOD

THE UNSTOPPABLE STORY OF GOD'S PLAN WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE POST-EXILIC PERIOD DURING WHICH HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, AND MALACHI PROPHESED.

EVENT	DATE	REFERENCE
CYRUS' DECREE TO RETURN	538 B.C.	EZRA 1:1-4
FIRST RETURN UNDER ZERUBBABEL (49,897 RETURNEES LEAVE BABYLON FOR ISRAEL)	538 B.C.	EZRA 2
TEMPLE RECONSTRUCTION STARTED	536 B.C.	EZRA 3-4
HAGGAI & ZECHARIAH PREACH	520-518 B.C.	EZRA 5:1-2
TEMPLE COMPLETED	515 B.C.	EZRA 5-6
ESTHER IS QUEEN	479 B.C.	ESTHER 1-10
SECOND RETURN UNDER EZRA (5,000 RETURNEES)	458 B.C.	EZRA 7-10
THIRD RETURN UNDER NEHEMIAH (49,942 ARRIVE TO RESIDE IN JERUSALEM)	444 B.C.	NEHEMIAH 1-2
REBUILDING THE WALLS IN 52 DAYS	444 B.C.	NEHEMIAH 3-7
MALACHI PREACHES	430 B.C.	MALACHI

CHRONOLOGY



HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS

KEN WILSON 2023

THE POST-EXILIC PERIOD

THE UNSTOPPABLE STORY OF GOD'S PLAN WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

THE EVENTS IN THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH OCCURRED OVER A 94 YEAR SPAN FROM 538-444 BC WITH THREE SUCCESSIVE RETURNS FROM EXILE. ZERUBBABEL RETURNED FIRST TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE (EZRA 1-6).

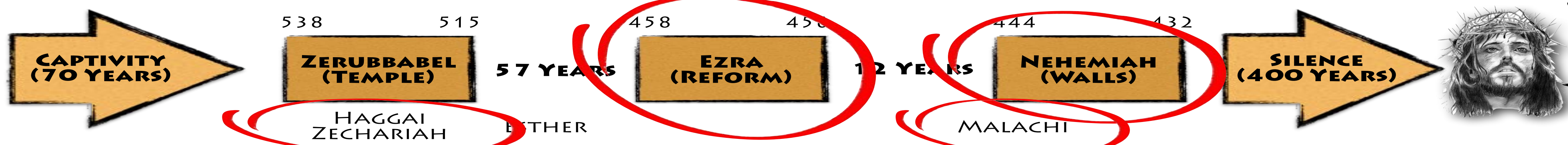
EZRA RETURNED WITH A LARGE REMNANT AND LED A REVIVAL (EZRA 7-10). FINALLY, NEHEMIAH RETURNED TO REBUILD THE WALLS (NEHEMIAH 1-7) FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER REVIVAL UNDER EZRA (NEHEMIAH 7-13).

THE STORY OF ESTHER OCCURRED OVER A TEN YEAR PERIOD FROM THE 3RD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF XERXES IN 483 B.C. (ESTHER 1:3) UNTIL THE 12TH YEAR OF HIS REIGN IN 473 B.C. (ESTHER 3:7). CHRONOLOGICALLY THE EVENTS IN ESTHER FIT IN BETWEEN EZRA 6 AND 7 AFTER MANY OF THE JEWISH EXILES HAD RETURNED TO JERUSALEM.

DURING THIS TIME PERIOD HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH PREACH MESSAGES THAT SUPPORT ZERUBABBAL IN HIS MISSION TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE AND REESTABLISH WORSHIP. AFTER NEHEMIAH FINISHED THE MISSION TO REBUILD THE WALLS PROVIDING SECURITY FOR THE PEOPLE IN 444 BC MALACHI PROPHESED REBUKING THE NATION FOR ITS RITUALISM AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE.

EVENT	DATE	REFERENCE	MAP
CYRUS' DECREE TO RETURN	538 B.C.	EZRA 1:1-4	
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MALACHI PREACHES	450 B.C.	MALACHI	

CHRONOLOGY



MALACHI RESOURCES

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MALACHI

Allen Ross

The book of Malachi begins with a "burden, the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi!" And that is all the information we have. Other prophetic books often tell when the prophet wrote, that is, during the reigns of certain kings. As we shall see, though, there were no kings in Israel when Malachi delivered his messages—they were a thing of the past, and of the future. There was only a governor. So how can we date this book? What clues do we have?

To answer some of these questions we can only look at the contents of the book and make an estimation of the date of its composition. A quick read through the book will tell us that the messages are intensely practical about sacrificial worship, priestly ministry, marriage, divorce, tithing, and the preparation of the coming of the Lord to judge the world and fulfill the promises of the covenants. We can conclude from the contents that there was no Babylonian idolatry in the nation—it too was a thing of the past. In fact, there is no mention of God's judgment on Israel for idolatry, namely, the Babylonian captivity. That was a thing of the past as well, long since forgotten by these folk. But they did have a temple and a functioning priesthood, even though it was not functioning correctly. On the basis of these observations we would date the book in the early post-exilic period.

After the exile in Babylon ended in 536 BC, most of the people returned to the land under the leadership of Zerubbabel, and he appointed him to the throne if there ever was one to inherit; Joshua the High Priest and the prophets Zechariah and Haggai. By March 515 BC they had rebuilt the temple. Jerusalem was a major triumph for the people of God, but also a disappointment for those who did not remember the splendor of the old temple that was destroyed. As the people returned to the land and tried to make a life for themselves; they became discouraged and disillusioned because the glorious prophecies about their regathering to the land and the building of the city and the temple seemed not to be fulfilled. And so in time as their confidence in the promises weakened, their commitment to the covenant began to lag as well.

About 455 BC Ezra returned to the land and promptly began a revival to bring the people back to the faith. The results of that spiritual work did not last very long, for in 444 BC Nehemiah was sent as governor and he found the same sins being committed that Ezra had tried to correct. Nehemiah's task was to continue the reforms and rebuild the walls of the city of Jerusalem, while enemies attacked them and their project. Nehemiah was called back to the palace in the East about 433 or 432 BC and remained there a few years. It seems most plausible to put the ministry of Malachi close to the time of Nehemiah's reforms and then his absence, because the messages address the same problems that Nehemiah had been working to correct. In Nehemiah we find that many had taken alien wives (13:23), and so too do we find this in Malachi (2:11); in Nehemiah the people were withholding their tithes (13:10), and so too did they violate the tithing laws in Malachi's day (3:8); Nehemiah had to deal with the divorce of legitimate wives (13:23, 27) and so did Malachi (2:15-16); and Nehemiah spoke of the neglect of temple service



THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI

Allen Ross

The book of Malachi is one biblical book that receives very little attention, apart from the occasional use of a line or two exhorting tithing. This is a pity because if the original audience needed to hear these messages from God as they waited for the coming of the Messiah, the modern professing churches need to hear them all the more because the warnings have been ignored and the failures and violations have continued in spite of the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy of the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus the Messiah. It is a book that should be studied regularly by Christians, or, better yet, preached in the churches with all the passionate intensity of the prophet.

Malachi must not be passed over as just another historical collection of messages from ancient Israel's prophets. It is the word of God to us and to us today in all it says, and timelessly relevant to its audience and ours. The messages are addressed to all who profess to be the people of God, to those who truly believe and others who actually do not believe in the Lord. But the messages are applicable to everyone because they come with the warning of the final judgment that will separate the righteous believers from the unbelievers.

A brief review of the messages in Malachi will show clearly how important they are to the way Christians think and live now:

1. *The prophet has to remind that people who were living in troubling times that God's everlasting love chose them and would see them through the difficulties of their lives.*
2. *The prophet admonishes the people to replace cheap, contemptible, and meaningless ritual worship with worship that honors God.*
3. *The prophet rebukes the ministers for ruining the ministry by causing people to stumble in the faith because of their failure to teach the word of the Lord correctly and faithfully.*
4. *The prophet condemns those who profane the holy covenant of marriage by divorcing their legitimate spouses and marrying pagan unbelievers.*
5. *The prophet answers the foolish charge that God was not just in dealing with sinners by declaring that no one can withstand the imminent coming of the LORD to purge sin and judge the wicked.*
6. *The prophet rebukes the people for robbing God and challenges them to trust his faithfulness by faithfully bringing their tithes and offerings.*
7. *The prophet instructs the people to heed the warnings of the coming messengers to repent before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes when he will separate the righteous from the wicked.*

The seven messages uncover the failures of the people: they forgot the love of God and were troubled by events in the world, they ruined worship with their quick and easy participation, the



The Message of Malachi

Joyce Baldwin

It has become usual to disparage Malachi and belittle his message by saying that the creative period of prophecy had passed, and that he was more like a scribe or a casuist than a prophet, interested merely in the details of the ritual and in applying the letter of the law. Men like Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah, by contrast, belonged to the first rank of prophets. The yardstick by which such judgments are made is not specified, and it is questionable whether comparisons between another are meaningful. True, Malachi belonged at the end of the prophetic era, but each prophet had his specific role to play in his own historical setting. It is more important to see how he fulfilled his task and to appreciate, honor and apply his message than to allot him a grade in the prophetic past list. As W. Furness says, "The word of God, like a great work of art, is not a trial."

Fundamental to Malachi's teaching is the concept of covenant. It is implicit in the opening theme, the Lord's love for Israel (1:2-3) and the book ends with a call to fulfill the obligations of the covenant as expressed in the law (1:4). The Lord, who initiated the covenant, and who is dependent on it was, in fact, the central figure and chief spokesman. Out of a total of forty-five verses, forty-seven record in the first person the address of the Lord to Israel, the exhortation (1:1; 2:11-15,17; 3:16). This use of the first person presents a vivid encounter between God and the people, unsurpassed in the prophetic books.

By virtue of the covenant relationship, the Lord refers to himself as father and implies that Israel is His son (1:6; 3:17; cf. 2:10). His desire is to love His sons and bring blessings (3:10-12). He wants them to find the satisfaction and blessing of the covenant best portrayed in 2:5-7, accepting daily His gifts of peace and favor, responding with awe to the privilege of belonging to Him, and in His turn, blessing to others the good things he enjoys. A living relationship with the Lord is utterly essential if Israel's covenant destiny is to be fulfilled.

Jacob's basic sin in jeopardizing this relationship. Twice, Malachi specified sin as covenant breaking: the priest corrupted the covenant of Levi (2:8) and the people as a whole profaned the covenant of their fathers (2:10). Far from responding with warmth and spontaneity to the personal love shown them, both priest and people were apathetic and bored with worship (1:13) and main in their giving (3:8). In short, they despise the Lord (1:6), cheated him of vows and robbed him of dues (1:14; 3:8). Having failed to love God, they failed also to love their neighbor. A broken relationship with God led on to broken relationships in human society, inter-marriage and divorce being the examples of unfaithfulness quoted by Malachi. The objection to intermarriage was not on racial but religious grounds. Surrounding nations worshipped a "foreign god" (2:11), and therefore to enter into marriage alliances with them was *ipso facto* to be unfaithful to one's own covenant God (2:10). Similarly, divorce was hateful to God because it involved breach of covenant. Malachi's description of marriage to the wife of one's youth as companionship (2:14)



THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL EMPHASES OF MALACHI

Allen Ross

The Seven Messages

These seven messages by the prophet Malachi are filled with doctrinal and practical themes, and although they were delivered to an Israelite congregation several centuries before Christ, they are meaningful and applicable today as they were then in the following ways:

1. God's Faithful Covenant Love (1:1-5)

The love of God is the basis for his covenant with his people - Israel then, and the church today. And that love will sustain the faithful through all persecution and trouble. With the new covenant in Christ Jesus we have a better understanding of the love of God.

2. Worship That Dishonors God (1:6-17)

The principles that inform this message are timeless—bears us hear and honor the Lord in the way that they worship. The outer form of worship with sacrifices and tithes has been fulfilled in Christ's sacrifice, and this makes the standard for worship in the church. Treating the sacrifice as worthless and the ritual as a mere betrays a heart that is not in service.

3. Teaching God's Word Faithfully (2:1-11)

Those who are entrusted to teach the word of the Lord have a sacred duty—they must believe it, live it, teach it faithfully, and apply it to turn people to righteousness. This has not changed, neither have the failures and violations of teachers from the days of the apostles now. What has changed is that we have more Scripture to proclaim, and therefore the material in the prophetic literature has been brought through the revelation of the new covenant.

4. Profaning the Holy Covenant of Marriage (2:10-15)

Here too the message is timeless. In fact, it is more relevant today than ever because of the modern corruption of the idea of marriage as it was instituted by God. Malachi reminds of the relationship between the man and the woman in marriage, the grace of marriage, counseling for marriage. And violation of marriage still is a sin, still causes great pain to people, and still ruins worship. All of this calls for diligence not to act treacherously and break the marriage vows.

5. God's Justice and Faithfulness (2:17-3:5)

People still want God to come and judge the wickedness in the world. But the cry for the God of justice can reflect a spirit of self-righteousness as much as a cry of pain. He is coming and no one can stand. But by his grace he has preserved his people from the destruction to come. In this passage we move from a purely Old Testament setting to the prophecy of the coming of Christ. We therefore have the advantage of looking back to see John the Baptist and Jesus Christ as the prophecy becomes clearer. That should not simply clear up some questions; it should inspire to greater faith as we realize the truth of God's word.

6. Gods Faithfulness to the Faithful (3:6-12)

Here we focus on stewardship. It is one passage in Malachi that is used most frequently in the churches today. The principle is clear: devout worshippers are called to honor God with their stewardship. The details of Israelite sacrifices, offerings, and tithing may not all be carried forward



The Message of Malachi Summary

MALACHI

HEARTS OF STONE



CONTEXT: WHO, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY?



WHO COMPOSED MALACHI?

WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT MALACHI'S PARENTS, ANCESTORS, OR TRIBAL ORIGIN. HE IS SIMPLY IDENTIFIED AS A "MALACHI" (1:1) HIS NAME MEANS "MY MESSENGER". THIS IS NOT VERY SPECIFIC AND SOME HAVE CONCLUDED THAT HIS NAME IS NOT ACTUALLY GIVEN. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS BEST TO SEE THIS AS HIS NAME IN KEEPING WITH THE PRACTICE OF ALL THE OTHER PROPHETIC BOOKS.



WHEN WAS MALACHI WRITTEN?

UNLIKE HAGGAI, MALACHI DOES NOT CONTAIN ANY HISTORICAL SUPERSCRPTIONS THAT TIE HIS MINISTRY TO THE REIGN OF A CERTAIN KING. THUS IT IS DIFFICULT TO DATE MALACHI WITH PRECISION. HOWEVER, THE SITUATION THAT MALACHI APPEARS TO ADDRESS IN HIS BOOK SEEMS VERY SIMILAR TO THE SITUATION THAT NEHEMIAH ENCOUNTERED. IF MALACHI WAS INDEED A CONTEMPORARY WITH NEHEMIAH, THEN THE SETTING FOR HIS BOOK IS ABOUT 430 BC, OR NINETY YEARS AFTER HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.



DANNY HAYS

MALACHI APPEARED ON THE SCENE AT A TIME WHEN THE EUPHORIA OF THE POSTEXILIC JEWISH COMMUNITY FOLLOWING THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE AND THE RESTORATION OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE WAS BEGINNING TO GIVE WAY TO CYNICISM IN BOTH THE SACRED AND SECULAR ARENAS.



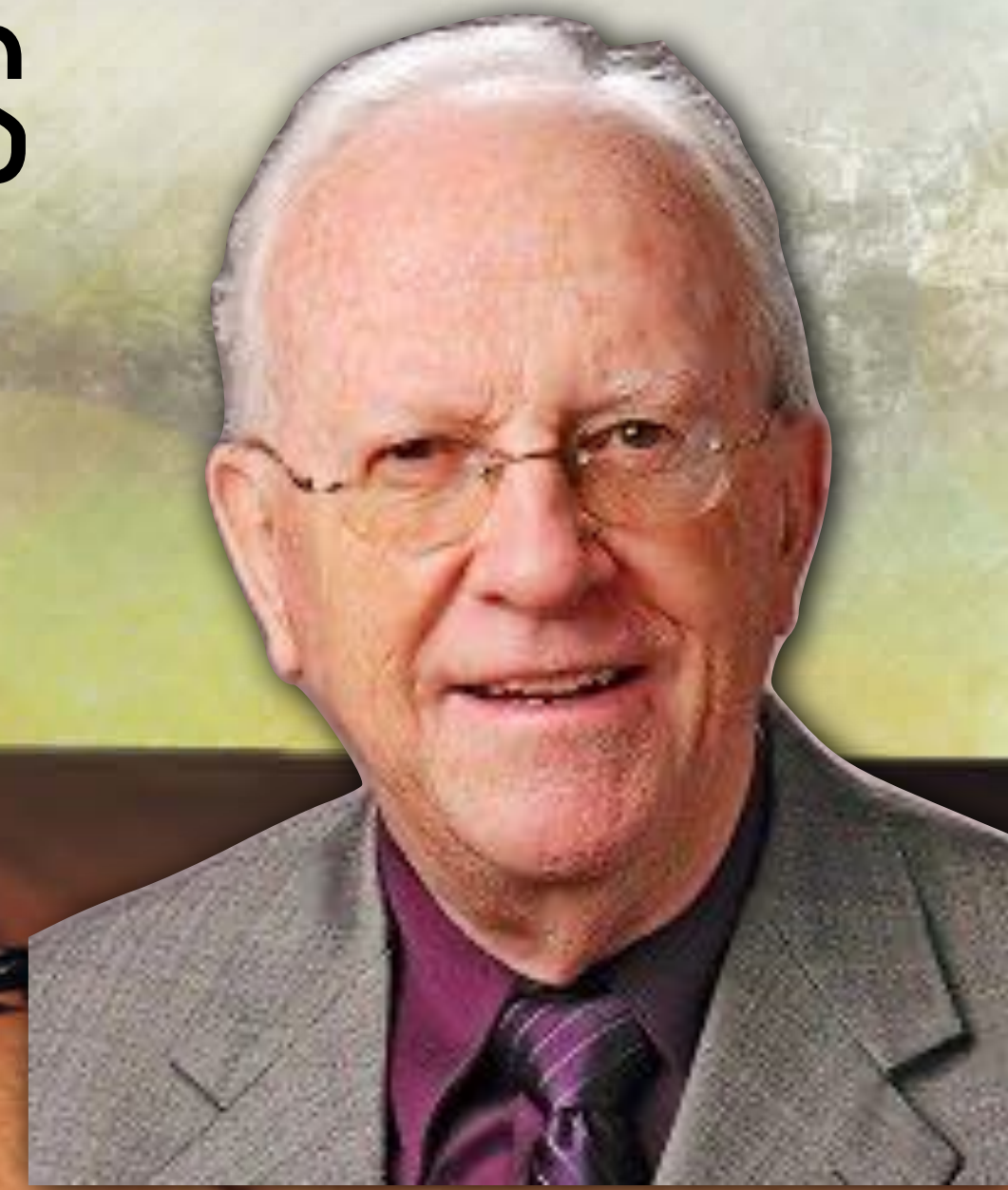
EUGENE MERRILL



THE PRIESTS HAD BEGUN TO BECOME CORRUPT IN THEIR OFFICIAL CAPACITIES AS WELL AS THEIR PRIVATE LIVES; THE PEOPLE HAD MINGLED THEMSELVES WITH THE PAGANS AROUND THEM BY UNDERTAKING ILLICIT MARRIAGES AND PANDERING TO FALSE RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS; AND THE NATION AS A WHOLE HAD LOST THE ARDOR OF MESSIANIC, ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE, FOCUSING ITS ATTENTION ON THE MUNDANE NECESSITIES AND PLEASURES OF THE HERE AND NOW.



EUGENE MERRILL



WHO IS THE AUDIENCE OF MALACHI?

THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE FOR MALACHI'S MESSAGE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE RESIDENTS OF JERUSALEM ABOUT 100 YEARS AFTER THE RETURN FROM EXILE AND 90 YEARS AFTER THE PREACHING OF HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH. THE TEMPLE HAS BEEN COMPLETED, WORSHIP REESTABLISHED AND THE PEOPLE HAVE REJECTED ALL FORMS OF IDOLATRY. NOW THE MASSIVE ISSUE OF RITUALISTIC, UNENGAGED, AND HYPOCRITICAL WORSHIP HAS BECOME WIDESPREAD AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD.



WHY WAS MALACHI WRITTEN?

SOME MAY HAVE THOUGHT THAT [THE POSTEXILIC] RETURN WAS THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS RESTORATION THAT THE EARLIER PROPHETS HAD PREDICTED, BUT THE POSTEXILIC PROPHETS (MALACHI, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH) DISAGREE AND REMIND EVERYONE THAT THE GREAT DAY OF THE LORD STILL LAY PRIMARILY IN THE FUTURE, EVEN THOUGH THE RETURN OF THE EXILES COULD BE VIEWED AS THE EARLY BEGINNINGS OF GOD'S UNFOLDING PLAN OF RESTORATION.



DANNY HAYS

WHY WAS MALACHI WRITTEN?

MALACHI IS WRITING TO ADDRESS THE HYPOCRITICAL WORSHIP AND LIFESTYLES OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN HIS HOLINESS AND HIS LOVING GRACE.



CONTENT: HOW AND WHAT



HOW IS MALACHI ORGANIZED?

- Prologue: The Oracle that Malachi delivered to Israel (1:1)
 - *The Lord's Love for Israel (1:2-5)*
 - *Contemptible Sacrifices and Corrupted Priests (1:6-2:9)*
 - *Profaning the Covenant by Divorce (2:10-16)*
 - *Wearying the Lord with Charges of Injustice (2:17-3:5)*
 - *Turning Away and Robbing God (3:6-12)*
 - *Blasphemy Against the Lord (3:13-4:3)*
- Epilogue: Obey the Law of Moses and Wait for Elijah the Prophet (4:4-6)



HOW IS MALACHI ORGANIZED?

A Superscription (1:1): Yahweh has a message for Israel.

B First Disputation (1:2-5): The proof of His love is His sparing the righteous and condemning the wicked.

C Second Disputation (1:6—2:9): Condemnation of improper, begrudging offerings.

D Third Disputation (2:10-16): The LORD is witness to marital fidelity, and Judah is unfaithful.

D' Fourth Disputation (2:17—3:6): The LORD is witness to marital fidelity, and Judah is unfaithful.

C' Fifth Disputation (3:7-12): Condemnation of improper, begrudging offerings.

B' Sixth Disputation (3:13—4:3): The proof of His love is His sparing the righteous and condemning the wicked.

A' Summary challenge (4:4-6): Yahweh has a message for Israel.





Malachi Hearts of Stone



The Oracle that Malachi Delivered to Israel (1:1)

• Content: An Oracle (1:1a) • Communicator: Malachi (1:1b)

The LORD's Love for Israel (1:2-5)

Claim: The LORD loves Israel. (1:2a)

Question: How did He love? (1:2b)

Response: The Election of Jacob and Judgment of Edom. (1:3-5)

Contemptible Sacrifices and Corrupted Priests (1:6-2:9)



Claim: Israel shows contempt for the LORD's Name. (1:6a, 7a)

Question: How did we show contempt? (1:6b, 7b)

Response: Crippled Sacrifices and Corrupt Priests. (1:7c-2:9)

- The sacrificial animals are crippled and diseased (1:7c-14)
- The priests are corrupt and leading people astray (2:1-9)

Profaning the Covenant by Divorce (2:10-16)

Claim: Israel has broken the covenant. (2:10-13)

Question: Why does the LORD reject our sacrifices? (2:14a)

Response: You divorced your wives to marry foreign women. (2:14b-16)

- The LORD is attentive to your covenant relationships (2:14b)
- The LORD warns the people to guard their marriages (2:15-16)

Wearying the LORD with Charges of Injustice (2:17-3:5)

Claim: You have wearied the LORD with your words. (2:17a)

Question: How did we weary the LORD? (2:17b)

Response: You have no hope for God's justice. (2:17c-3:5)

- The hypocritical charge of injustice with God (2:17c)
 - The coming of the messenger to prepare the way for the Judge (3:1a)
- The sudden coming of the LORD to His temple (3:1b)
- The coming of the LORD as Judge (3:2-5)



Turning Away and Robbing God (3:6-12)

Claim: Israel has turned from the LORD and robbed Him. (3:6-7b, 8a)

Question: How can we return and how have we robbed Him? (3:7c, 8b)

Response: You rob the Lord by withholding tithes and offerings. (3:8c-12)

- The Nation is being punished for the sin of ingratitude (3:8c-9)
- The LORD will abundantly bless faithful stewards (3:10-12)

Blasphemy Against the LORD (3:13-4:3)

Claim: Israel has said harsh against the LORD. (3:13a)

Question: What did we say against the LORD? (3:13b)

Response: You say God is unjust but he will be fully just. (3:14-4:3)

- The charge of futility for serving God (3:14-15)
- The coming blessing of the righteous and judgment of the wicked (3:16-4:3)

Epilogue:

Obey the Law of Moses and Wait for Elijah the Prophet (4:4-6)

ca. 430 BC

1:1	1:2	1:5	1:6	2:9	2:10	2:16	2:17	3:5	3:6	3:12	3:13	4:3	4:4-6
Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle	Oracle		
God's Love	Honor God	Be Faithful	Hope in God	Obey God	Fear God								
"Burden"	"I have loved you."	"You show contempt."	"You have broken faith."	"You have wearied the LORD."	"You turned away."	"You said harsh things."	"Obey"						

The LORD, through his messenger Malachi, presented six disputes the Lord had with the nation declaring that they were merely outwardly religious demonstrating only ceremonial obedience rather than genuine love and worship; therefore, the nation would be punished if they did not repent and the LORD, announced by His messenger, would come to purify the nation in order to call them to repent and return to worship the LORD with a pure heart.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF MALACHI?

The Lord, through his messenger Malachi, presented six disputes the Lord had with the nation declaring that they were merely outwardly religious demonstrating only ceremonial obedience rather than genuine love and worship; therefore, the nation would be punished if they did not repent and the Lord, announced by His messenger, would come to purify the nation in order to call them to repent and return to worship the Lord with a pure heart.



THE PATTERN OF THE BOOK

“I HAVE LOVED YOU,” SAYS THE LORD.

Assertion

BUT YOU SAY, “HOW HAVE YOU LOVED US?”

Protest

“WAS NOT ESAU JACOB’S BROTHER?” DECLARES THE LORD. “YET I HAVE LOVED JACOB; BUT I HAVE HATED ESAU, AND I HAVE MADE HIS MOUNTAINS A DESOLATION AND APPOINTED HIS INHERITANCE FOR THE JACKALS OF THE WILDERNESS.”

Evidence



Malachi 1:2-3

ELECTION AS THE PROOF OF LOVE

“I HAVE LOVED YOU,” SAYS THE LORD.

BUT YOU SAY, “HOW HAVE YOU LOVED US?”

“WAS NOT ESAU JACOB’S BROTHER?” DECLARES THE LORD. “YET I HAVE LOVED JACOB; BUT I HAVE HATED ESAU, AND I HAVE MADE HIS MOUNTAINS A DESOLATION AND APPOINTED HIS INHERITANCE FOR THE JACKALS OF THE WILDERNESS.”



Malachi 1:2-3

SINS OF THE PRIESTS

Assertion
“AND IF I AM A MASTER, WHERE IS MY RESPECT?” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS TO YOU, O PRIESTS WHO DESPISE MY NAME.

BUT YOU SAY, “HOW HAVE WE DESPISED YOUR NAME?”

Protest



Malachi 1:6

SINS OF THE PRIESTS

Assertion

YOU ARE PRESENTING DEFILED FOOD UPON MY ALTAR.

BUT YOU SAY, "HOW HAVE WE DEFILED YOU?"

Protest



Malachi 1:7

SICK AND LAME SACRIFICES

“BUT WHEN YOU PRESENT THE BLIND FOR SACRIFICE, IS IT NOT EVIL? AND WHEN YOU PRESENT THE LAME AND SICK, IS IT NOT EVIL? WHY NOT OFFER IT TO YOUR GOVERNOR? WOULD HE BE PLEASED WITH YOU? OR WOULD HE RECEIVE YOU KINDLY?”
SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 1:8

SICK AND LAME SACRIFICES

“OH THAT THERE WERE ONE AMONG YOU WHO WOULD SHUT THE GATES, THAT YOU MIGHT NOT USELESSLY KINDLE FIRE ON MY ALTAR! I AM NOT PLEASED WITH YOU,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, “NOR WILL I ACCEPT AN OFFERING FROM YOU.”



Malachi 1:10

HIS GREAT NAME AMONG THE NATIONS

“FOR FROM THE RISING OF THE SUN EVEN TO ITS SETTING, MY NAME WILL BE GREAT AMONG THE NATIONS, AND IN EVERY PLACE INCENSE IS GOING TO BE OFFERED TO MY NAME, AND A GRAIN OFFERING THAT IS PURE; FOR MY NAME WILL BE GREAT AMONG THE NATIONS,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 1:11

CORRUPT PRIESTS

“AND NOW THIS COMMANDMENT IS FOR YOU, O PRIESTS. IF YOU DO NOT LISTEN, AND IF YOU DO NOT TAKE IT TO HEART TO GIVE HONOR TO MY NAME,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, “THEN I WILL SEND THE CURSE UPON YOU AND I WILL CURSE YOUR BLESSINGS; AND INDEED, I HAVE CURSED THEM ALREADY, BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT TAKING IT TO HEART.”



Malachi 2:1-2

HARSH REBUKE

“BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO REBUKE YOUR OFFSPRING, AND I WILL SPREAD REFUSE ON YOUR FACES, THE REFUSE OF YOUR FEASTS; AND YOU WILL BE TAKEN AWAY WITH IT. THEN YOU WILL KNOW THAT I HAVE SENT THIS COMMANDMENT TO YOU, THAT MY COVENANT MAY CONTINUE WITH LEVI,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 2:3-4

CORRUPT PRIESTS

“FOR THE LIPS OF A PRIEST SHOULD PRESERVE KNOWLEDGE, AND MEN SHOULD SEEK INSTRUCTION FROM HIS MOUTH; FOR HE IS THE MESSENGER OF THE LORD OF HOSTS. BUT AS FOR YOU, YOU HAVE TURNED ASIDE FROM THE WAY; YOU HAVE CAUSED MANY TO STUMBLE BY THE INSTRUCTION; YOU HAVE CORRUPTED THE COVENANT OF LEVI,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 2:7-8

CORRUPT MARRIAGES

JUDAH HAS DEALT TREACHEROUSLY, AND AN ABOMINATION HAS BEEN COMMITTED IN ISRAEL AND IN JERUSALEM; FOR JUDAH HAS PROFANED THE SANCTUARY OF THE LORD WHICH HE LOVES AND HAS MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF A FOREIGN GOD. AS FOR THE MAN WHO DOES THIS, MAY THE LORD CUT OFF FROM THE TENTS OF JACOB EVERYONE WHO AWAKES AND ANSWERS, OR WHO PRESENTS AN OFFERING TO THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 2:11-12

CORRUPT MARRIAGES

“THIS IS ANOTHER THING YOU DO: YOU COVER THE ALTAR OF THE LORD WITH TEARS, WITH WEEPING AND WITH GROANING, BECAUSE HE NO LONGER REGARDS THE OFFERING OR ACCEPTS IT WITH FAVOR FROM YOUR HAND. YET YOU SAY, ‘FOR WHAT REASON?’”



Malachi 2:13-14

CORRUPT MARRIAGES

BECAUSE THE LORD HAS BEEN A WITNESS BETWEEN YOU AND THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH, AGAINST WHOM YOU HAVE DEALT TREACHEROUSLY, THOUGH SHE IS YOUR COMPANION AND YOUR WIFE BY COVENANT.



Malachi 2:14

THE PRIORITY OF MARRIAGE

“TAKE HEED THEN TO YOUR SPIRIT, AND LET NO ONE DEAL TREACHEROUSLY AGAINST THE WIFE OF YOUR YOUTH. FOR I HATE DIVORCE,” SAYS THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, “AND HIM WHO COVERS HIS GARMENT WITH WRONG,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.

“SO TAKE HEED TO YOUR SPIRIT, THAT YOU DO NOT DEAL TREACHEROUSLY.”



Malachi 2:15-16

ONE MORE TIME

YOU HAVE WEARIED THE LORD WITH YOUR WORDS. *Assertion*

YET YOU SAY, "HOW HAVE WE WEARIED HIM?" *Protest*

IN THAT YOU SAY, "EVERYONE WHO DOES EVIL IS GOOD IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AND HE DELIGHTS IN THEM," OR, "WHERE IS THE GOD OF JUSTICE?"



Malachi 2:17

PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD

BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO SEND MY MESSENGER,
AND HE WILL PREPARE THE WAY BEFORE ME.



Malachi 3:1a

THE SUDDEN COMING OF THE LORD

“AND THE LORD, WHOM YOU SEEK, WILL SUDDENLY COME TO HIS TEMPLE; AND THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT, IN WHOM YOU DELIGHT, BEHOLD, HE IS COMING,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS.



Malachi 3:1b

HE WILL PURIFY THE SONS OF LEVI

BUT WHO CAN ENDURE THE DAY OF HIS COMING? AND WHO CAN STAND WHEN HE APPEARS? FOR HE IS LIKE A REFINER'S FIRE AND LIKE FULLERS' SOAP. HE WILL SIT AS A SMELTER AND PURIFIER OF SILVER, AND HE WILL PURIFY THE SONS OF LEVI AND REFINE THEM LIKE GOLD AND SILVER, SO THAT THEY MAY PRESENT TO THE LORD OFFERINGS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. THEN THE OFFERING OF JUDAH AND JERUSALEM WILL BE PLEASING TO THE LORD AS IN THE DAYS OF OLD AND AS IN FORMER YEARS.



Malachi 3:2-4

ROBBING GOD

“WILL A MAN ROB GOD? YET YOU ARE ROBBING ME!
BUT YOU SAY, ‘HOW HAVE WE ROBBED YOU?’
IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS.”

22-27%



Malachi 3:8

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT STEWARDSHIP THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND THE OUTLOOK ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT; SO WE DO NOT ASK HOW MUCH WE SHOULD GIVE, BUT RATHER HOW MUCH CAN WE KEEP AND WHAT WE ARE TO DO WITH IT, BECAUSE EVERYTHING WE HAVE AND EVERYTHING WE ARE BELONG TO GOD AND ARE GIVEN TO US IN TRUST.



Allen Ross



PROVING GOD

“BRING THE WHOLE TITHE INTO THE STOREHOUSE, SO THAT THERE MAY BE FOOD IN MY HOUSE, AND TEST ME NOW IN THIS,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, “IF I WILL NOT OPEN FOR YOU THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN AND POUR OUT FOR YOU A BLESSING UNTIL IT OVERFLOWS.”

Malachi 3:10

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

THEN THOSE WHO FEARED THE LORD SPOKE TO ONE ANOTHER, AND THE LORD GAVE ATTENTION AND HEARD IT, AND A BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE WAS WRITTEN BEFORE HIM FOR THOSE WHO FEAR THE LORD AND WHO ESTEEM HIS NAME. "THEY WILL BE MINE," SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, "ON THE DAY THAT I PREPARE MY OWN POSSESSION, AND I WILL SPARE THEM AS A MAN SPARES HIS OWN SON WHO SERVES HIM."

SO YOU WILL AGAIN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED, BETWEEN ONE WHO SERVES GOD AND ONE WHO DOES NOT SERVE HIM.



Malachi 3:16-18

FIRST JUDGEMENT

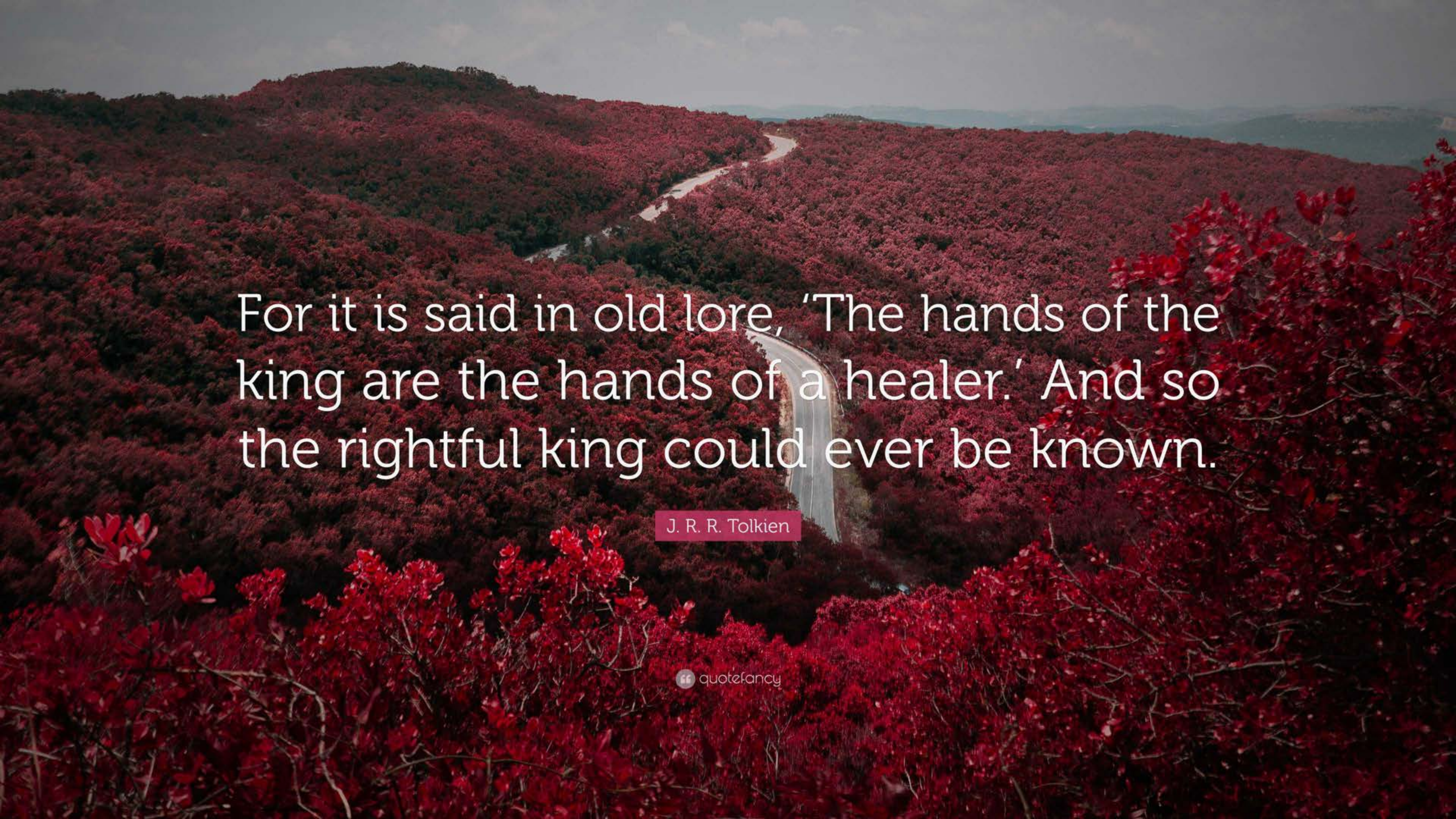
“FOR BEHOLD, THE DAY IS COMING, BURNING LIKE A FURNACE; AND ALL THE ARROGANT AND EVERY EVILDOER WILL BE CHAFF; AND THE DAY THAT IS COMING WILL SET THEM ABLAZE,” SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, “SO THAT IT WILL LEAVE THEM NEITHER ROOT NOR BRANCH.”

Malachi 4:1

HEALING IN IT'S WINGS

“BUT FOR YOU WHO FEAR MY NAME, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL RISE WITH HEALING IN ITS WINGS; AND YOU WILL GO FORTH AND SKIP ABOUT LIKE CALVES FROM THE STALL.”

Malachi 4:2



For it is said in old lore, 'The hands of the king are the hands of a healer.' And so the rightful king could ever be known.

J. R. R. Tolkien

ELIJAH IS COMING

“BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO SEND YOU ELIJAH THE PROPHET BEFORE THE COMING OF THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD. HE WILL RESTORE THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN TO THEIR FATHERS, SO THAT I WILL NOT COME AND SMITE THE LAND WITH A CURSE.”

Malachi 4:5-6

CONVICTION: So WHAT?



WHEREAS MOST OF THE PROPHETS LIVED AND PROPHESED IN DAYS OF CHANGE AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL, MALACHI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES WERE LIVING IN AN UNEVENTFUL, WAITING PERIOD, WHEN GOD SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN HIS PEOPLE ENDURING POVERTY AND FOREIGN DOMINATION IN THE LITTLE PROVINCE OF JUDAH. ZERUBBABEL AND JOSHUA, WHOM HAGGAI AND ZACHARIAH HAD INDICATED AS GOD'S CHOSEN MEN FOR THE NEW AGE HAD DIED. TRUE, THE TEMPLE HAD BEEN COMPLETED BUT NOTHING MOMENTOUS HAD OCCURRED TO INDICATE THAT GOD'S PRESENCE HAS RETURNED TO FILL IT WITH GLORY AS EZEKIEL HAD INDICATED WHAT HAPPEN. (Ez. 43:4).



Joyce Baldwin



THE DAY OF MIRACLES HAD PASSED WITH ELIJAH AND ELIJAH. THE ROUND OF RELIGIOUS DUTIES CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED ON, BUT WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM. WHERE WAS THE GOD OF THEIR FATHERS? DID IT REALLY MATTER WHETHER ONE SERVED HIM OR NOT? GENERATIONS WERE DYING WITHOUT RECEIVING THE PROMISES (CF. HEB. 11:13) AND MANY WERE LOSING THEIR FAITH.



Joyce Baldwin



MALACHI'S PROPHECY IS PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO THE MANY WAITING PERIODS IN HUMAN HISTORY, AND IN THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS. HE ENABLES US TO SEE THE STRAINS AND TEMPTATIONS OF SUCH TIMES, THE IMPERISHABLE ABRASIONS OF FAITH THAT END IN CYNICISM, BECAUSE IT HAS LOST TOUCH WITH THE LIVING GOD. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, HE SHOWS THE WAY BACK TO A GENUINE, ENDURING FAITH IN THE GOD, WHO DOES NOT CHANGE (MAL. 3:6), WHO INVITES MEN TO RETURN TO HIM (MAL. 3:7), AND NEVER FORGETS THOSE WHO RESPOND (MAL. 3:16).



Joyce Baldwin



WHERE DOES THIS FIT?

- MALACHI PRESENTS A VERY DIRECT AND HARSH MESSAGE CALLING GOD'S PEOPLE TO EXAMINE THEIR HEARTS AS WELL AS THEIR ACTIONS.
- MALACHI LOOKS BELOW THE SURFACE EXPOSING A LACK OF THANKFULNESS AND GENUINE WORSHIP.
- MALACHI MAKES A CORRELATION BETWEEN THE FIDELITY OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND OUR WORSHIP.
- AS THE LAST BOOK IN THE OLD TESTAMENT MALACHI ALSO LOOKS FORWARD WITH A CLEAR PROMISE OF THE COMING MESSIAH — JESUS CHRIST (3:1-5; 4:1-3)



WHAT SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

- GOD IS UTTERLY OFFENDED BY US GIVING HIM LESS THAN OUR BEST. HE DESERVES OUR BEST.
- WHEN OUR LIFESTYLE DOES NOT MATCH OUR PROFESSION OUR SERVICE IS UNACCEPTABLE.
- RITUALISM IS HYPOCRISY! GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF WORSHIP WITHOUT AN ENGAGED HEART IS WORTHLESS.



HOW SHOULD WE BEHAVE?

- EXAMINING OUR HEARTS AND OUR MOTIVES AS WE EXAMINE OUR SERVICE (WORSHIP, GIVING, AND RELATIONSHIPS).
- FULLY TRUSTING GOD TO DO ALL HE AS PROMISED. BUT TRUSTING HIS TIMELINE AS WELL.
- GUARDING OUR SPIRIT AND NOT BREAKING FAITH WITH GOD OR OTHERS (2:16).



WHY WAS MALACHI WRITTEN?

MALACHI GIVES US ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTINUE TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE EXPECTANTLY. WE SHOULD NOT BE DISCOURAGED OR BECOME CYNICAL JUST BECAUSE THE WICKED ARE FLOURISHING FOR A SHORT WHILE. WE SHOULD TRUST IN GOD'S WORD THROUGH THE PROPHETS — HE IS WORKING TO BRING ABOUT HIS KINGDOM AND TO ESTABLISH JUSTICE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THE LORD WILL RETURN AND ALL THINGS WILL BE BROUGHT UNDER HIS RULE. JUSTICE WILL BE ESTABLISHED, AND GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE BLESSED BEYOND IMAGINATION.



DANNY HAYS



NEXT STEPS:

- ASK YOURSELF, AND SOME OTHERS, IF YOUR LIFESTYLE MATCHES YOUR PROFESSION. ASK YOUR KIDS.
- ALIGN YOUR HEART WITH YOUR ACTIONS. MAKE REAL ADJUSTMENTS IN BOTH WHERE NEEDED.
- KEEP YOUR HOPE ALIVE AS YOU WAIT FOR THE “SECOND COMING” OF YOUR DESIRE (3:1) WHO WILL BRING HEALING (4:2).



A SURVEY OF THE

BIBLE

Context · Content · Conviction

