

(Post-Exilic)

Old Testament Survey : **M A L A C H I**

Author: Malachi - His name means “Messenger of Jehovah”

Tradition holds that he was a member of the Great Synagogue (forerunner of the Sanhedrin), but nothing else is known of him.

Date: 433-424

The message appears to have been given during the years that Nehemiah had returned to Persia (432-425 B.C.) since its concerns are the same problems the Nehemiah addressed.

Biblical Context: Nehemiah 13:1-31

Setting: In the 100 years following the return of a remnant to Jerusalem, the people and the priests had already become hard-hearted toward God resulting in violation of the Sabbath rest, marriages to foreign wives, withholding of tithes, and social injustice. Nehemiah had returned to rebuild the wall, then went back to Persia for about 7 years, then returned again to address these failures. Malachi prophesied in preparation for his return.

Theme: True worship of the LORD. (Entreaties to turn from sin in order that God may bless)

Outline:

- I. God's Love for Israel (1:1-5)
- II. God's Complaints Against Israel (1:6-2:9)
 - A. Oracle Against the Priests (1:6-2:9)
 - B. Oracle Against the People (2:10-4:3)
- III. God's Promises To Israel 3:16 - 4:6
 - A. The Rewards of the Book of Remembrance (3:16-18)
 - B. The Rewards of the Coming of the Messiah (4:1-3)
 - C. The Prophecy of the Coming of Elijah (4:4-6)

Key Chapters & Verses

- 1:6-14 The imperfect sacrifice (cheating)
- 2:15-16 “I hate divorce”
- 3:8-10 Will a man rob God? (Tithe)
- 4 The millennial Kingdom

Malachi writes his prophecy in the form of a dispute, using a question-and-answer format. He indicts the priests and the people on at least 6 counts of willful sin: 1) repudiating God's love (1:2-5); 2) refusing God His due honor (1:6-2:9); 3) rejecting God's faithfulness (2:10-16); 4) redefining God's righteousness (2:17-3:5); 5) robbing God's riches (3:6-12); and 6) reviling God's grace (3:13-15). There are 3 interludes in which Malachi rendered God's judgment: 1) to the priests (2:1-9); 2) to the nation (3:1-6); and 3) to the remnant (3:16-4:6).

Detailed Outline for Malachi

I. God's Love for Israel (1:1-5)

A. The Fact of His Love (1-2)

B. The Contrast with Esau (3-5)

II. God's Complaints Against Israel (1:6-2:9)

A. The Message Against the Priests (1:6-2:9)

1. The Sins of the Priests (1:6-14)

2. The Curse on the Priests (2:1-9)

B. The Message Against the People (2:10-4:3)

1. Their Idolatry (2:10-13)

2. Their Divorces & Mixed Marriages (2:14-16)

3. Warning of Judgment by the Coming Lord (2:17-3:5)

4. Their Robbing of God (3:6-12)

5. Their Doubt of the Lord (3:13-15)

III. God's Promises To Israel 3:16 - 4:6

A. The Rewards of the Book of Remembrance (3:16-18)

B. The Rewards of the Coming of the Messiah (4:1-3)

C. The Prophecy of the Coming of Elijah (4:4-6)