

A Renewed Remnant

Lesson 18

The Prophecy Of Malachi

Introduction

It is hard to know exactly when Malachi was sent to the remnant. What he addresses coincides with the conditions recorded by Nehemiah.

- He made no reference to the rebuilding of the wall (**Neh. 6:15**)
- He rebuked the people for intermarrying the pagans (**Neh. 13:23-29**)

Some suggest Malachi prophesied during Nehemiah's 2nd term as governor. If so, this would have been around *432 B.C.* or later.

Some facts to keep in mind re: this prophecy...

- It had been close to 90 years since the prophecies of Haggai & Zechariah
- It had been at least 25 years since Ezra led the 2nd group of remnant Jews...their task was to rebuild the "spiritual infrastructure" of Jerusalem
- The glorious prophecies of Zechariah re: the Messiah & His temple had not yet materialized
- As a result, the remnant had grown apathetic and once again turned to carnal interests
 - The temple & its sacrifices were treated with contempt (**1:13**)
 - The priests had become corrupt (**2:1-9**)
 - The remnant was not diligent re: its tithing (**3:8**)
 - The remnant was exacting usury on one another (**Neh. 5:1-5**)

As a result, God sent this prophet to rebuke the post-exilic Jews. He employed a unique style to convict them of their sins. Technically, it is called the "didactic-dialectic" style of public speaking.

- An assertion (*charge*) is made
- An objection is voiced (*anticipated*) to the charge
- Evidence (*proof*) is presented to answer the objection

Malachi utilized this "method" ten times in his prophecy (**1:2, 6, 7, 12, 13; 2:14, 14; 3:7, 8, 17**).

- 1) What was Malachi's initial message? (**1:2a**) *Thought question*: why would the remnant have questioned God's love for them? How did God prove His love for Israel? (**1:2b-3; cp. Gen. 25:23, 27-34; 27:1-41; Obad. 3-12; Heb. 12:14-17**)

- 2) What kind of "future" did Edom have? (**1:4**) What would the remnant eventually come to say? (**1:5**)

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- 3) To what does God liken Himself? **(1:6a)** Yet, how did He feel? **(1:6b)** How did God prove His feelings were justified? **(1:7-8a)**

- 4) What was Malachi's sarcastic "exhortation" in **1:8b**? What was the point to be made? **(1:9)**

- 5) How did God really feel about such worship? **(1:10)**

- 6) What was God's desire? **(1:11, 14b)** How did the remnant's actions match this desire? **(1:12-14a)**

- 7) Thought question: how can we make application of these statements re: worship?

- 8) Who does God specifically address in **2:1**? Apparently, what was their failure? **(2:2a)** What was going to happen to them? **(2:2b-3)**

- 9) What were God's intentions for Levi in serving Him? **(2:4-7; cp. Deut. 33:8-11)**

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- 10) What were the actions among the Levites in the remnant? (2:8-9) Is there any application for God's "priests" today? (1 Pet. 2:9)

- 11) What situation did Malachi address next? (2:10-11) What was the Law re: such actions? (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:1-5) Had it been previously addressed among the remnant? (Ezra 9-10)

- 12) What were God's feelings? (2:12) What had this marital behavior also done? (2:13a)

- 13) Whose tears do you think are being referenced? What did the presence of these tears prohibit? (2:13b; cp. 1 Pet. 3:7)

- 14) How did the prophet prove the remnant's denial wrong? (2:14) How did Malachi express God's expectation among the remnant? (2:15) How did God really feel? (2:16)

- 15) What other failure among the remnant did the prophet expose? (2:17)

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- 16) In 3:8-12, how does Malachi once again prove the remnant wrong?
- 17) In 3:13-18, what other charge does Malachi make and prove?
- 18) What will be God's eventual answer to the problems addressed by Malachi? (3:1; 4:1-6) Who is referenced in these verses? (cp. Mt. 11:7-11; 17:11-13) Who else is mentioned in 3:1?