

Malachi 2:17–3:5

¹⁷ You have wearied the LORD with your words; “Yet you say, “In what way have we wearied Him?” 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?”

¹ “Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

² “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 launderers’ soap.

³ He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

⁴ “Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the LORD, as in the days of old, as in former years.

⁵ And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, and against those who turn away an alien— because they do not fear Me,” says the LORD of hosts.

You Haven’t Seen Anything Yet

Malachi 2:17–3:5

INTRO:

The Book of Malachi is a dialogue. The Prophet records a conversation between Yahweh of hosts, the covenant keeping God of Israel, and the people who returned to the Promised Land after the exile. In this part of the dialogue, the LORD dealt with the things these folks said about Him. The people thought God had not kept His Word. However, history is not over. His plan is not complete. They must not cast away their faith yet.

I. The People Accuse (2:17)

II. The LORD Answered (3:1-5)

I. The People Accuse (2:17)

Malachi 2:17 *“You have wearied the LORD with your words; Yet you say, ‘In what way have we wearied Him?’ 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?’”*

A. The covenant people who returned to the land, were impatient. Earlier in **Haggai** they heard the prophecy concerning the newly rebuilt Temple. In **Haggai 2:9**, Yahweh said, *“The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts. ‘And in this place I will give peace,’ says the LORD of hosts.”* But some time has passed, but nothing has happened. The people of Israel did not realize the LORD’s calendar was not their calendar. They were like Habakkuk the prophet who looked at the evil in Judah and said

vs.2-4 *“O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, ‘Violence!’ And You will not save. Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises. Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.”*

These are horrible charges to hurl at God. The covenant people of Malachi’s day thought these kind of thoughts and said these things to the eternal God of the Universe.

B. They wearied God because they charged Him with seeing evil as good and delighting in the workers of iniquity. They say, *“Where is the God of justice?”* In their minds, because God did not do what they expected Him to do, the LORD had dropped the ball. Yahweh had forgotten to be righteous. The fact was, the Lord was still on the throne and in charge of all things. God’s plan for the ages had not hit a snag. It was still unfolding right on schedule. It was not completed yet. It was too soon to judge all that God was doing.

II. The LORD Answered (3:1-5)

Malachi 3:1–5 *“Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple,*

Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' Says the LORD of hosts. '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 launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness. 'Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien— Because they do not fear Me,' Says the LORD of hosts.'"

A. The people's first problem was they did not recognize God's timing was perfect. They expected the LORD to act in one way, and God did something else. They thought the promise would be fulfilled in the days at hand. However, the LORD's plan was to unfold centuries later and be far greater.

"Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple."

B. This reiterates the promise in **Isaiah 40:3–5**.

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

C. We are told in the New Testament, this language found its fulfillment in John the Baptist.

Matthew 11:10–11 **"For this is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."**

This messenger was John the forerunner.

D. And the glory of the Lord will fill the temple in a far greater way than God's glory had ever filled it.

“And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight.”

The Messiah, God incarnate in human flesh. The very Son of God would come to the Temple.

E. Beware what you desire. For when He comes it will not be fun and games.

“And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.”

God will someday make all things right.

F. How will we escape His judgment of the world when He comes again? We have to have our sins forgiven. If we put our trust in Christ our sins and iniquities He will remember no more. Our only hope is to have our sins forgiven and when He comes a second time, we will be ready for His coming.

What can we take from this?

First, don't seek to judge the Lord's plan before its time. We need to remember God is an eternal God. His timing is always perfect, even if it is not our timing. When God accomplishes His will in a different way than we think He should, He has not forgotten to be merciful to us. He has not forgotten to be good. Even when we cannot understand He still is working ***“all things together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)***

In the midst of the injustice of this world, when in doubt, trust Him. We trust because someday He will make all things right.