

# **The Book of Malachi**

**God's Final  
Message to His  
People**

**(Malachi 3:6)**

# Background

- Malachi means “my messenger.”
- Date is **445—432 B.C.**
- God spoke His final word to His ancient people.
- Malachi introduced a new teaching method—**question-and-answer.**
- Malachi puts out a question in the mouths of the people and then supplies God’s answer.

# Background

- It had been **100 years** since the people returned from captivity.
- They had completed the temple, and Nehemiah came from Persia to serve as governor.
- Nehemiah and Malachi were contemporary in seeking the rebuilding of the “**walls.**”
- Malachi sought to restore the **spiritual walls** of their character.
- Persian Empire was reaching the height of its glory.

# Background

- Rulers were more cruel and ironhanded than Cyrus and Darius had been.
- Trying times for the Jews.
- Jews were not following God as faithfully as they should have been.
- The worship ritual was in a state of decay.
- People who were indifferent to the law were offering blind and lame animals!

# Background

- They weren't bringing tithes as God had commanded.
- The men were putting away their Jewish wives and marrying heathen women.
- Malachi rebuked the people for these sins and pointed them back to God.
- They had set up idols and gone into idolatry.
- The people were indifferent to God and the righteousness He demanded!

# Keys to Malachi

- **Key words**
  - Love and rebuke
- **Key phrase**
  - “Ye say...” (12)
- **Key chapter**
  - Chapter 3
- **Key verses**
  - 1:2

*“I have loved you,” says the LORD. Yet you say, ‘In what way have You loved us?’ Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? Says the LORD. Yet Jacob I have loved.”*

# Three Divine Messages

- A message about God's love.  
– 1:1-5
- A message of rebuke for their sins.  
– 1:6 — 2:17
- A message of hope in the renewed promise of Christ's second coming.  
– 3:1 — 4:6

# Seven Debates in Israel's Controversy with God

- *“In what way have you loved us?” (1:2,3)*
- *“In what way have we despised your name?” (1:6)*
- *“In what way have we defiled you?” (1:7; 2:10-16)*
- *“In what way have we wearied Him?” (2:17)*



# Seven Debates in Israel's Controversy with God

- *“In what way shall we return?” (3:7)*
- *“In what way have we robbed You?” (3:8)*
- *“What have we spoken against You?”  
(3:13)*
- *“...Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts...”  
(4:6,7)*

# **The Book's Message**

- **Condemnation of the priests' faithfulness (1:2-2:9).**
  - **Each person responsible for himself.**
  - **Allowed them to offer unworthy sacrifices.**
  - **God demands the best (1:6-8).**
  - **Curse on those who would seek to deceive God with such sacrifices.**
  - **Curse on the priests (2:1-5).**
  - **Showing respect for people in their work (2:6-9).**

# The Book's Message

- Against divorce and remarriage **(2:10-16)**.
  - God seeking to keep the Hebrew lineage pure.
  - Men were putting away their Jewish wives and marrying heathen women.
  - God hates divorce **(2:16)**.
  - God designed marriage to be a lifetime covenant.
  - Man and woman must take their marriage vows seriously!

# The Book's Message

- The principle of tithing **(3:7-12)**
  - They had been robbing God.
  - Lack of tithes and offerings **(3:8)**.
  - By law, one-tenth of everything belonged to the Lord.
  - He could open heaven's windows and pour out more blessings than they would have room to receive **(3:10)**.
  - They could, due to God's blessings, be the envy of other nations **(3:11,12)**.

# **The Book's Message**

- **The final promise (4:5,6)**
  - **God's book closes with the promise of the coming of Elijah—John the Baptist.**
  - **He would introduce and prepare the way for the Lord!**

# Lessons for Us Today

- Worship must be deeply spiritual and from the heart.
- Cheap religion avails nothing, and sacrifices grudgingly given are displeasing to God.
- Carelessness and indifference in worship may be the first step of spiritual decline.
- We must observe all of God's laws—those pertaining to marriage and the home, as well as those that relate to worship.