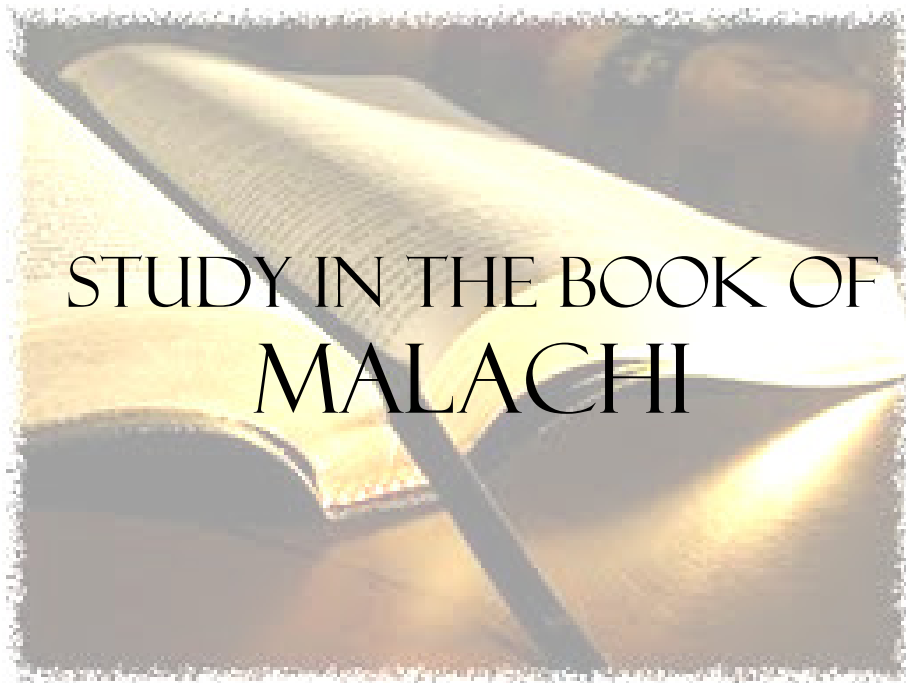


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CHRISTIAN RESOURCES



By: Bishop Warwick Cole-Edwards

## MALACHI STUDY 1

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Malachi : S.F . Logsdon  
Haggai and Malachi (Rededication and renewal) : Herbert Wolf  
Haggai and Malachi : T.V. Moore

### INTRODUCTION

The message of Malachi is authoritative, it is also urgent and it is condemnatory. Condemning all lukewarmness (mediocrity), it is brief and incisive and it is corrective.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the temple and the walls of Jerusalem, they went away into exile for 70 years, and they then returned, they were brought back by Zerubbabel and Joshua. They immediately began to rebuild the temple and they finished it 516 B.C. Later Ezra arrived in 458 B.C. and a revival occurred, 13 years later in 445 B.C. Nehemiah returned, he rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem, urged the people to keep the Sabbath day and to tithe their money. In 433 B.C. he returned home, but during his absence everything fell apart tithing stopped, The Sabbath was disregarded and the priests had become corrupt, it was into that backslidden state that Malachi began to preach.

**Logsdon. “It was a day of alarming spiritual decline, Malachi faced a hardened people, self justifying, argumentative, and very indifferent to God’s direction.”**

#### 1. THE HEADING (1:1)

##### A. An oracle

This means a burden, it expresses concern, grief. This oracle comes through Malachi whose name means my messenger. The reminder is, God speaks to people through us.

#### 2. GOD’S LOVE QUESTIONED (v.2)

##### A. Declaration from God.

**“I have loved you.”**

These words are very moving. **T.V. Moore : “ They are like the words of a weeping parent trying to bring back their prodigal child.”**

##### B. Listen to their answer

**“How have you loved us.?”**

These words reflect the reality of their sin, they were insensitive to the amazing love of God.

**3. GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL AND EDM CONTRASTED**

Notice how God condescends to answer them.

**A. I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated.**

We are told God loved Jacob but Esau was hated. (**Lk 14:26**) hated here means to love less.

**B. Esau's inheritance.**

Edom came from Esau, the history of Edom is evidence of God's grace to Israel. The Edomites were wiped out by the Nabatean Arabs between 400 - 500 B.C. they tried to resurrect themselves but again they were defeated.

**4. GOD'S GREATNESS IN VIEW (v.5)**

As Israel observed and saw the plight of Esau and Edom they would realize that God's hand was on them, doubting Israel would acknowledge that the Lord is sovereign, that he is the great ruler over all the nations.

**CONCLUSION.**

Malachi is dealing with a hard arrogant and backsliding people, they questioned and doubted God's love and God in His grace takes them back to their election and reminds them of His great love for them, in the passages that are now before us God becomes specific.

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 2**

**POLLUTED SACRIFICES**

(Chapter 1:6-14)

**INTRODUCTION**

Malachi's day was one of alarming spiritual decline, the people had become hard, self-justifying, argumentative, and indifferent to God's directives, they were backslidden. In Chapter 1:1-5 they questioned God's love and in response to that Malachi shows them what they were offering to the Lord.

**1. THE MISSING ESSENTIAL (v.7)**

A son honours his father, a servant honours his master but Israel did neither to God, they showed no respect for God.

**A. The practice was pursued.**

**"you place"** all the religious activities continued, their festival, feasts, their religious programmes were in full swing, they were even impressive, the practice continued

**B. The place was proper**

**"On my altar"** Not only did their festivals continue, but they did it at the proper place, but very tragically God wasn't present (**Ezk.10:18, 11:23**)

**Logsdon:** "Despite the beautiful anthems and all the pleasing talks, the meeting place is empty if God is not there".

**THE GREATER THE RITUAL**

**THE DEADER THE RELIGION. - Martin Lloyd Jones.**

**C. Procedure was wrong.**

**"You place defiled food on my altar"**  
(Is 59:3, 63:3, Lam.4:14)

**SUMMARY**

To engage in any form of worship without the two essentials in Spirit and Truth is not only profitless to those who do it but from God's point of view it is pollution.

**2. THE EXPLANATION (v.8)**

**A. The resentment.**

**"But you ask"** A backslider is always self-justifying.

- B. **“The Lords table is contemptible”** and so they brought to God blind, sick and lame sacrifices. In other words they presented to God defected sacrifices. The lesson is very important. They want to come to God on the easiest terms, because of that they made a compromise with duty and they chose the lowest possible percentage of self denial and effort.
  - C. Self-examination demanded  
God urges them to examine themselves, they would not offer their sacrifices to their governor, but they said it is good enough for God.
3. **THE EXHORTATION (v.9)**  
**“Now implore God to be gracious to us” v.9** can be interpreted in two ways
- A. Call to repent  
Humble yourselves because of your sin, repent because of your half-heartedness.
  - B. You can see V.9 as full of irony.  
**Matthew Henry:** **“This was a bitter flash of irony.”**
4. **DIVINE DISAPPROVAL EMPHASIZED.**
- A. The calamity of feigned worship (v.10 – 12)  
**v.10 “Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you”,** says the Lord Almighty, **”and I will accept no offering from your hands”.**  
**Logsdon:** **“Closed doors are preferred to pretense”**  
They are useless says the Lord and I won’t accept it.
  - B. The plunge of intellectual pride (v.13)
    - i) What a burden
    - ii) The Lords table is contemptible (intellectual snobbery)

**CONCLUSION.**  
**ROMANS 12:1-2**  
**REVELATION 3:16**

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 3**

**THE FAILURES OF THE PRIESTS**

(Chapter 2:1-9)

**INTRODUCTION**

It was a day of alarming spiritual decline, the people were hard and argumentative and self justifying. Malachi comes to them with a message from God, which if obeyed will bring renewal and rededication. They were coming to God on the easiest terms and offering him second best.

**1. THE FAILURE OF THE PRIEST (2:1-9)**

**A. Priestly neglect brings God's curse (v.1-3)**

In **v.1-3** we hear a resolution from God, because the priests would not listen and set their hearts to honour the Lord.

- i) I will send a curse on you  
**Matthew Henry: "Those who violate the commandments of the Law, lay themselves under the curses of the Lord."**
- ii) I will curse your blessings.  
Even their enjoyments, their blessings would be cursed.
- iii) I will blight your grain.  
What they sow underground will never grow up again.
- iv) I will spread dung in your face.  
This reminds us that any half-hearted sacrifice will be rejected by God.
- v) You will be carried off with it.

**B. Priests contrasted with Levi (v.4-9)**

- i) Reverence of Levi (**v.4-5**)
- ii) There was a faithful preaching and teaching of the law by Levi  
Notice because of the faithful teaching and godliness of their lives many turned to the Lord, many turned from sin.
- iii) He compares that to the corrupt partiality of the priests (**v.8-9**)  
The priests had violated the covenant and showed partiality in matters of the law, and only preached on the nice parts so they did not offend anybody.

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 4**

**FAILURE OF THE PEOPLE**  
(Chapter 2:10-16)

**INTRODUCTION.**

Malachi now turns from the priests to the people.

**1. BROKEN THEIR COVENANT WITH GOD (v.10-12)**

- A. The worship of foreign gods. (v.10-11)  
This resulted from their mixed marriages.
  - i) They dealt falsely with one another.
  - ii) God responds (v.12)  
“I am going to cut you off”

**2. BROKEN THEIR MARRIAGES. (v.13-16)**

- A. God refuses to accept their offerings, even though they came with tears.
- B. Divorce the reason for God’s displeasure (v.14)
  - i) The Lord is acting as a witness
  - ii) Your wife
  - iii) Wife of your youth.
  - iv) She is your partner
  - v) The wife of your marriage covenant.
- C. God’s sharp rebuke (2:15-16)
  - i) Because God joined them together.
  - ii) God hates divorce.
  - iii) A word of caution.

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 5**

**THE APPROACHING JUDGEMENT**

(Chapter 2:17- 3:6)

**1. THE QUESTION ABOUT GOD'S JUSTICE (2:17)**

In the first two chapters Malachi gives us a clear insight into the disgraceful attitudes and actions of the priests and the people, but now Malachi explains the motivation behind their behaviour, the people did not think that God would punish the wicked or reward the righteous and so God replies with (v.17) you weary the Lord with your words, in their self-justifying way they ask God how did they weary him and God replies because they called evil good and they ask where is the God of justice.

**2. THE SUDDEN COMING OF THE LORD TO HIS TEMPLE (3:1)**

A. The prophecy regarding John the Baptist (Matt. 11:10, Mk. 1:2, Lk.1:76)

- i) He is called my messenger
- ii) His work was to prepare the way for the Messiah (Is.40:3, 57:14,62:10)
  - a) He had to remove the stones from the road.  
He had to remove all obstacles.
  - b) He had to clear the ground (Ps. 80:9, Matt.3:10)
  - c) He had to clean up the house (Gen.24:31)

**Wolf:** "The preaching of John the Baptist was aimed at a massive house cleaning within the nation of Israel, spiritually they were in no condition to welcome the heavenly visitor".

B. Prophecy of Christ's coming

- i) Jesus is called the Lord  
He is the ruler and governor of all.
- ii) He is the messenger of the Covenant.  
To reconcile man and God again.
- iii) Whom you seek and ye delight in.
- iv) He will come suddenly
- v) He will come to his temple  
When Jesus was 40 days old he came to the temple with Simeon, when he was 12 he reasoned with the leaders, later when he came to Jerusalem and went straight to the temple and threw out the money changers.

**3. THE PURIFYING WORK OF THE LORD (v.2-4)**

A. The power of his coming (v.2) "Who can endure it."

Jesus will be like a refiner's fire or a laundry soap

B. The purifying of the priests and their offerings (v.3-4)

This is going to be radical with fire and soap but the purpose will be achieved.

**4. THE PUNISHING WORK OF THE LORD (v.5)**

I will come near you for judgement

- A. God is going to punish the sorcerers (witchcraft, mediums – fortune telling).
- B. Judgement against all adulterers.
- C. Judgement against all perjurers
- D. Judgement against those who do not pay proper wages.
- E. Judgement against those who treat widows and the fatherless badly.

**5. THE REASON FOR HIS WORK (3:6).**

- A. Immutability of God.
- B. So you are not destroyed



**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 6**

**TITHING**  
(Chapter 3:7-12)

**BACKGROUND.**

God invited these backslidden people “to return to me” if they did then God would return to them with their self-justifying attitude, God showed them that they were robbing him.

**1. THE FAILURE TO BRING TITHES AND OFFERINGS (v.7-8)**

God accuses them of robbing Him because they were not bringing in tithes and offerings.

**TITHING**

Instituted in the time of Moses and was a barometer of their spiritual condition (**Deut.12:6,14:22,Lev.27:30**) the tithe was one tenth of their income and where ever there was failure to tithe others suffered

**OFFERINGS**

These were voluntary gifts given in addition to tithes (**Ex.25:2-5,35:5, Ezra 8:6**) They were to bring tithes and offerings.

**2. THE CURSE OF ROBBING GOD**

Where ever this is disobeyed it brings God’s judgement (**Hag.1:6-7**)

**3. GOD CHALLENGES THEM FOR FAITHFUL GIVING**

God challenges them to test me.

- A. When you tithe there will be the promise of abundant divine blessing (v.10)**
- B. When you tithe there will be the promise of an abundant harvest (v.11)**
- C. When you tithe there will be the promise of a national prosperity (v.12).**

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 7**

**THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE/ MOTIVATION TO SERVE THE**  
**LORD**

(Chapter 3:13-18)

**INTRODUCTION**

Malachi's message is one of deep challenge, calling us to renewal and rededication in the early verses, he challenges their financial giving, in response to that challenge there were two responses. The one group disobeyed (v.13-15) and then the other group obeyed God in reverence (v.16-18)

**1. THE CHARGE THAT SERVING GOD IS USELESS (v.13-15)**

**A. Notice the unbelief of the accusers (v.13)**

Even the Lord says that they had said harsh things against Him and they said there is no pleasure in serving God, often God is unjust they said He even allows the evil to prosper sometimes, in other words they were hard and arrogant.

**B. The nature of their accusation (v.14-15)**

"It is futile to serve God".

Not only that, they went further and asked what would they get by obeying and even further they said the arrogant are blessed and those who challenge God escape

**2. GOD EXPLAINS THE RESULTS OF TRULY WORSHIPPING GOD  
(v.16-18)**

**A. They feared the Lord**

In general terms this means to reverence God, the majesty of God, to submit to his authority, a dread of his wrath, that is the secret.

**B. They talked with each other**

They encouraged and built up each other. This fellowship was deep and was not superficial

**C. They honoured His name**

The three together results in.

**3. RESULTS.**

**A. God remembers His own (v.16)**

The terminology here is of God writing a book which speaks to us taking notice of every good deed.

**B. God spares His own. (v.17-18)**

On the final day of judgement when there is a distinction between the righteous and wicked between those who serve God and those who don't God will spare His own people, they will be mine says the Lord

**CONCLUSION**

Malachi exhorts these people to always reverence God, always encourage each other in fellowship and God will remember his own.

**MALACHI**  
**STUDY 8**

**THE COMING OF THE LORD**  
(Chapter 4:1-6)

**INTRODUCTION**

It truly was a day of alarming spiritual decline, the people were hard , argumentative, and self-justifying. Both the priests and the people, and so Malachi draws his message to a close by speaking of the coming day of the Lord and what will happen to the righteous and unrighteous. (In these verses we also have what is called successive fulfillment on a double prophecy. Malachi is referring to two things. Elijah and John the Baptist and the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

**1. THE JUDGEMENT OF THE UNSAVED (v.1)**

Malachi begins by stressing the certainty of the day of judgement and for the unsaved it will be like a furnace (**Joel 2:3+30, Is. 13:9**). The day of the Lord is often connected with fire and anger. The day of judgement will be to the unsaved like a burning fire (**2 Thes 1:7**). In particular God's wrath will be directed to the arrogant and they will be compared to stubble, extremely severe judgement. "Not a root of branch will be left, that speaks of total destruction.

**2. THE TRIUMPH OF THE RIGHTEOUS (v.2-3)**

- A. God gives righteousness to those who revere him.  
Furthermore he speaks of the Son of righteousness shining on them.
- B. There is a reward for a righteous life.  
God will give to every true child of God a reward for his work.
- C. There will be healing in his wings.  
This refers to our new bodies and our home in heaven.
- D. The results.  
"You will go out and leap like calves in a storm", incredible joy and victory over sin and trample down the wicked.

**3. THE PROPHECY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (v.4-6)**

I will send the prophet Elijah (**Lk.1:17, Matt.11:13-14, Matt;17:12-13, Mk 9:11-13**). He will not only prepare the way for the coming of Christ, but he will also bring fathers to their children.

**CONCLUSION**

It was a call to renewal and rededication.