

MALACHI, "my messenger," the last of the prophets to the restored remnant after the 70 years' captivity, probably prophesied in the time of confusion during Nehemiah's absence (Neh. 13. 6). The burden of his message is, the love of Jehovah, the sins of the priests and of the people, and the day of the LORD. Malachi, like Zechariah, sees both advents, and predicts two forerunners (Mal. 3. 1 and 4. 5, 6). As a whole, Malachi gives the moral judgment of God on the remnant restored by His grace under Ezra and Nehemiah. He had established His house among them, but their worship was formal and insincere.

The book is in four natural divisions: I. The love of God for Israel, 1. 1-5. II. The sins of the priests rebuked, 1. 6-2. 9. III. The sins of the people rebuked, 2. 10-3. 18. IV. The day of the LORD, 4. 1-6.

## CHAPTER 1.

## Part I. The love of God for Israel (vs. 1-5).

**THE** burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

2 I have <sup>a</sup>loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved <sup>b</sup>Jacob,

3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

4 Whereas <sup>c</sup>Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.

5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, <sup>d</sup>The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel.

## Part II. The sins of the restoration priests (Mal. 1. 6-2. 9).

6 A son <sup>e</sup>honoureth his father, and a servant his master: <sup>1</sup>if then I be a <sup>f</sup>father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye

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a Deut.4.37; 7.7,8.

b Rom.9.13.

c i.e. Esau's descendants. See Gen.25.30.

d Mic.5.4.

e Ex.20.12; Mt.15.4-8; Eph.6.2.

f Isa.63.16; 64.8; Jer.31.9.

g Or, I would that one among you would shut the doors [of the temple] that no more vain fire should kindle on mine altar. Cf. Isa.1.11-15.

h i.e. So it should have been had Israel been true. Isa.45.5,6. So it shall be despite Israel's failure.

i i.e. nations.

say; The table of the LORD is contemptible.

8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

10 <sup>h</sup>Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

11 <sup>i</sup>For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.

13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Isa. 63. 16, note. The relationship here is national, not personal (Jer. 3. 18, 19); here, apparently, the Jews were calling Jehovah "Father," but yielding Him no filial obedience. See John 8. 37-39; Rom. 9. 1-8.

14 But cursed *be* the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a <sup>a</sup>corrupt thing: for I *am* a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.

## CHAPTER 2.

(The message to the priests, continued.)

AND now, O ye priests, this commandment *is* for you.

2 If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will <sup>b</sup>curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart.

3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it.

4 And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

5 My <sup>c</sup>covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

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9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

Part III. (Mal. 2. 10-3. 18.) *The sins of the people: (1) sins against brotherhood.*

10 <sup>d</sup>Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

(2) *Sins against God in the family.*

11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

12 The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts.

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, inasmuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth *it* with good will at your hand.

14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the <sup>e</sup>residue of the <sup>f</sup>spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16 For the LORD, the God of Is-

a Lev.22.18-20.

b Cf. Deut. 28. 3-14 with vs. 15-35. Israel's *distinctive* blessings should turn to curses.

c Num. 25. 10-13.

d Cf. Acts 17. 24-29. In both instances the reference is to creation, not the new birth.

e *Deity* (names of). Mal. 3. 18. (Gen. 1. 1; Mal. 3. 18.)

f *Holy Spirit.* (Gen. 1. 2.)

<sup>1</sup> Summary of the O.T. doctrine of the Holy Spirit: (1) The personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit appear from the *attributes* ascribed to Him, and from His *works*. (2) He is revealed as sharing the work of creation and therefore *omnipotent* (Gen. 1. 2; Job 26. 13; 33. 4; Psa. 104. 30); as *omnipresent* (Psa. 139. 7); as *striving with men* (Gen. 6. 3); as *enlightening* (Job 32. 8); ending with *constructive skill* (Ex. 28. 3; 31. 3); giving *physical strength* (Jud. 14. 6, 19); *executive ability and wisdom* (Jud. 3. 10; 6. 34; 11. 29; 13. 25); enabling men to receive and utter *divine revelations* (Num. 11. 25; 2 Sam. 23. 2); and, generally, as *empowering* the servants of God (Psa. 51. 12; Joel 2. 28; Mic. 3. 8; Zech. 4. 6). (3) He is called *holy* (Psa. 51. 11); *good* (Psa. 143. 10); the Spirit of *judgment and burning* (Isa. 4. 4); of *Jehovah, of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, good, knowledge, the fear of the LORD* (Isa. 11. 2), and of *grace and supplications* (Zech. 12. 10). (4) In the O.T. the Spirit acts in free sovereignty, coming upon men and even upon a dumb beast as He will, nor are conditions set forth (as in the

rael, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

(3) *The sin of insincere religious profession.*

17 Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?

CHAPTER 3.

*Parenthesis: The mission of John the Baptist and coming of the Lord foretold* (vs. 1-6).

**B**EHOLD, I will send <sup>a</sup>my messenger, and <sup>b</sup>he shall prepare the way before me: and the <sup>1</sup>Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

2 But who may abide <sup>c</sup>the day of his coming? and <sup>d</sup>who shall stand when he appeareth? for <sup>e</sup>he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And <sup>f</sup>he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may <sup>g</sup>offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and

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<sup>a</sup> Mt. 11.10; Mk. 1.2; Lk. 7.27.

<sup>b</sup> Christ (First Advent). Mt. 1.1, 23. (Gen. 3.15; Acts 1.9.)

<sup>c</sup> Mal. 4.1.

<sup>d</sup> Rev. 6.17.

<sup>e</sup> Isa. 4.4; Mt. 3.10-12.

<sup>f</sup> Isa. 1.25; Zech. 13.9.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Pet. 2.5.

<sup>h</sup> Zech. 5.4; Jas. 5.4, 12.

<sup>i</sup> Num. 23.19; Rom. 11.29; Jas. 1.17.

<sup>j</sup> Zech. 1.3.

<sup>k</sup> Neh. 13.10, 12.

<sup>l</sup> Prov. 3.9, 10; 1 Chr. 26.20; 2 Chr. 31.11; Neh. 10.38; 13.12.

against the adulterers, <sup>h</sup>and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

6 For I *am* the LORD, <sup>i</sup>I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Part III. resumed: *The people have robbed God.*

7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them*. <sup>j</sup>Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? <sup>k</sup>In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

10 <sup>l</sup>Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it*.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.

13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet

N.T.) by complying with which any one may receive the Spirit. The indwelling of every believer by the abiding Spirit is a N.T. blessing consequent upon the death and resurrection of Christ (John 7. 39; 16. 7; Acts 2. 33; Gal. 4. 1-6). (5) The O.T. contains predictions of a future pouring out of the Spirit upon Israel (Ezk. 37. 14; 39. 29), and upon "all flesh" (Joel 2. 28, 29). The expectation of Israel, therefore, was twofold—of the coming of Messiah-Immanuel, and of such an effusion of the Spirit as the prophets described. See Mt. 1. 18, *refs.*

<sup>1</sup> The f.c. of verse 1 is quoted of John the Baptist (Mt. 11. 10; Mk. 1. 2; Lk. 7. 27), but the second clause, "the Lord whom ye seek," etc., is *nowhere quoted* in the N.T. The reason is obvious: in everything save the fact of Christ's first advent, the latter clause awaits fulfilment (Hab. 2. 20). Verses 2-5 speak of judgment, not of grace. Malachi, in common with other O.T. prophets, saw both advents of Messiah blended in one horizon, but did not see the separating interval described in Mt. 13. consequent upon the rejection of the King (Mt. 13. 16, 17). Still less was the Church-age in his vision (Eph. 3. 3-6; Col. 1. 25-27). "My messenger" (v. 1) is John the Baptist; the "messenger of the covenant" is Christ in both of His advents, but with especial reference to the events which are to follow His return.

ye say, What have we spoken so *much* against thee?

14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, *they that* tempt God are even delivered.

### The faithful remnant.

16 Then <sup>b</sup>they that <sup>c</sup>feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will

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*a* Temptation.

Mt.4.1,3,7.  
(Gen.3.1;  
Jas.1.2.)

*b* Remnant.

vs.16-18.  
Rom.9.25-29.  
(Isa.1.9;  
Rom.11.5.)

*c* Psa.19.9,  
note.

*d* Righteous-

ness. Lk.1.6.  
(Gen.6.9;  
Lk.2.25.)

*e* Deity

(names of).  
(Gen.1.1.)

*f* Day of Jeho-

vah. vs.1-6;  
Mt.24.29-31.  
(Isa.2.10-22;  
Rev.19.11-21.)

*g* See Gen.1.

16, note.

spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the <sup>d</sup>righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth <sup>1e</sup>God and him that serveth him not.

## CHAPTER 4.

### Part IV. The day of the LORD.

**F**OR, behold, the day <sup>f</sup>cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

### The second coming of Christ.

2 But unto you that fear my name shall the <sup>g</sup>Sun of righteous-

<sup>1</sup> Summary of the O.T. revelation of Deity: God is revealed in the O.T. (1) through His *names*, as follows:

CLASS.	ENGLISH FORM.	HEBREW EQUIVALENT.
Primary	God	El, Elah, or Elohim (Gen. 1. 1, note)
	LORD	Jehovah (Gen. 2. 4, note)
	Lord	Adon or Adonai (Gen. 15. 2, note)
Compound (with El = God)	Almighty God	El Shaddai (Gen. 17. 1, note)
	Most High, or { most high God }	El Elyon (Gen. 14. 18, note)
	everlasting God	El Olam (Gen. 21. 33, note)
Compound (with Jehovah = LORD)	LORD God	Jehovah Elohim (Gen. 2. 7, note)
	Lord GOD	Adonai Jehovah (Gen. 15. 2, note)
	LORD of hosts	Jehovah Sabaoth (1 Sam. 1. 3, note)

The Trinity is *suggested* by the three times repeated groups of threes. This is not an arbitrary arrangement, but inheres in the O.T. itself.

This revelation of God by His names is invariably made in connection with some particular need of His people, and there can be no need of man to which these names do not answer as showing that man's true resource is in God. Even human failure and sin but evoke new and fuller revelations of the divine fulness.

(2) The O.T. Scriptures reveal the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of the universe and of man, the Source of all life and of all intelligence, who is to be worshipped and served by men and angels. This Supreme Being is One but, in some sense not fully revealed in the O.T., is a unity in plurality. This is shown by the plural name, *Elohim*, by the use of the plural pronoun in the interrelation of Deity as evidenced in Gen. 1. 26; 3. 22; Psa. 110. 1; and Isa. 6. 8. That this plurality is really a Trinity is intimated in the three primary names of Deity, and in the threefold ascription of the Seraphim in Isa. 6. 3. That the interrelation of Deity is that of Father and Son is directly asserted in Psa. 2. 7 (with Heb. 1. 5); and the Spirit is distinctly recognized in His personality, and to Him are ascribed all the divine attributes (e.g. Gen. 1. 2; Num. 11. 25; 24. 2; Jud. 3. 10; 6. 34; 11. 29; 13. 25; 14. 6, 19; 15. 14; 2 Sam. 23. 2; Job 26. 13; 33. 4; Psa. 106. 33; 139. 7; Isa. 40. 7; 59. 19; 63. 10. See Mal. 2. 15, note). (3) The future incarnation is *intimated* in the theophanies, or appearances of God in human form (e.g. Gen. 18. 1, 13, 17-22; 32. 24-30), and distinctly *predicted* in the promises connected with redemption (e.g. Gen. 3. 15) and with the Davidic Covenant (e.g. Isa. 7. 13, 14; 9. 6, 7; Jer. 23. 5, 6).

ness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments.

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<sup>a</sup> Lk. 1. 17.

*Elijah to come again before the day of the LORD.* (Cf. Rev. 11. 3-6.)

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

6 And he <sup>a</sup>shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

The revelation of Deity in the N.T. so illuminates that of the O.T. that the latter is seen to be, from Genesis to Malachi, the foreshadowing of the coming incarnation of God in Jesus the Christ. In promise, covenant, type, and prophecy, the O.T. points forward to Him. (4) The revelation of God to man is one of authority and of redemption. He requires righteousness from man, but saves the unrighteous through sacrifice; and in His redemptive dealings with man all the divine persons and attributes are brought into manifestation. The O.T. reveals the justice of God equally with His mercy, but never in opposition to His mercy. The flood, e.g., was an unspeakable mercy to unborn generations. From Genesis to Malachi He is revealed as the seeking God who has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and who heaps up before the sinner every possible motive to persuade to faith and obedience. (5) In the experience of the O.T. men of faith their God inspires reverence but never slavish fear; and they exhaust the resources of language to express their love and adoration in view of His loving-kindness and tender mercy. This adoring love of His saints is the triumphant answer to those who pretend to find the O.T. revelation of God cruel and repellent. It is in harmony, not contrast, with the N.T. revelation of God in Christ. (6) Those passages which attribute to God bodily parts and human emotions (e.g. Ex. 33. 11, 20; Deut. 29. 20; 2 Chr. 16. 9; Gen. 6. 6, 7; Jer. 15. 6) are metaphorical and mean that in the infinite being of God exists that which answers to these things—eyes, a hand, feet, etc.; and the jealousy and anger attributed to Him are the emotions of perfect Love in view of the havoc of sin. (7) In the O.T. revelation there is a true sense in which, wholly apart from sin or infirmity, God is like His creature man (Gen. 1. 27), and the supreme and perfect revelation of God, toward which the O.T. points, is a revelation in and through a perfect Man.