

*Analysis of*  
**MALACHI**

**"ISRAEL AGAINST YAHWEH"**

" 'A son honors *his* father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Your name?' Malachi 1:6

"From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?' Malachi 3:7

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July, 2000, updated October, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)  
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# MALACHI<sup>1</sup>

## "ISRAEL AGAINST YAHWEH"

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### A1 ISRAEL AGAINST YAHWEH 1 - 2

**B1 Introduction:** The word of Yahweh "to Israel through Malachi" 1:1

**B2 Israel Questions Yahweh's Love 1:2-5**

C1 Yahweh's declaration of His love 1:2

C2 Israel's protest

C3 Yahweh's response 1:2b-4

D1 His love of Jacob 1:2b

D2 His hatred of Esau 1:3-4

C4 Israel's future glorification of Yahweh 1:5

D1 Their realization of Yahweh's hatred of Edom contrasted with His love of Jacob

D2 Their desire for the international praise of Yahweh

**B3 The Transgression of the Priests 1:6 - 2:9**

C1 The priests despise Yahweh's name<sup>2</sup> 1:6-14

D1 The normal honor that people in authority ought to expect 1:6a

D2 Yahweh's accusation of the priests' disrespect for Him 1:6b

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<sup>1</sup> Title: Author: Malachi; little known of him. His name means, "My Messenger." Date: About 450 to 430 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Malachi 1:6-14 title: Yahweh's name: The phrase "LORD of hosts" (Yahweh of *tsaba'* (06635), host of organized army - probably referring to God's angelic army), occurs 24 times in Malachi. It has an ominous sound, as of God's impending judgment upon disobedient, dishonoring Judah.

- D3 The priests' objection to God's accusation of disrespect 1:6c
- D4 Yahweh's depiction of their disrespect: presenting defiled food upon Yahweh's altar 1:7-8
- D5 Yahweh's warning: He will not accept such offerings 1:9-10
- D6 Yahweh's guarantee of the future honor and respect for His name! 1:11
- D7 Yahweh's further depiction of their disrespect in sacrifices 1:12-13
- D8 Yahweh's cursing of their disrespect 1:14

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- D1 The punishment for continued dishonor: Blessings changed to curses; disbarment from priestly office 2:1-3
- D2 The anticipated results of the punishment -- an appreciation of and reaffirmation of Yahweh's covenant with Levi 2:4
- D3 Levi's past appreciation of the covenant 2:5-6
- D4 The intended function of a priest: Messenger of Yahweh 2:7
- D5 The present priests' corruption of the covenant of Levi 2:8
- D6 Yahweh's punishment of the priests -- He has abased them before the people 2:9

**B4 The Sins of the People 2:10-17**

**C1 Spiritually mixed marriages 2:10-12**

- D1 The significance of spiritually mixed marriages: a treacherous profaning of the community covenant 2:10
- D2 The description of spiritually mixed marriages: abominable treachery against Yahweh's sanctuary, punishable by destruction from Yahweh 2:11-12

**C2 Divorce 2:13-16**

- D1 The problem: Yahweh's non-acceptance of the Hebrews' offerings 2:13
- D2 The cause: their divorce of their wives 2:14
- D3 The proper behavior of Godly men 2:15a

D4 The warning against marital treachery,<sup>3</sup> hated by God 2:15b-16

C3 Accusing Elohim of injustice 2:17

## A2 PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE MESSIAH AND HIS FORERUNNER 3:1-6

### B1 John the Baptist 3:1a

C1 Yahweh's promise to send His messenger<sup>4</sup>

C2 Yahweh's purpose in sending His messenger

### B2 Christ the Judge 3:1b-6

C1 The arrival of the Messiah 3:1b-3a

D1 His sudden arrival at the Jewish temple<sup>5</sup> 3:1b

D2 The fearsome nature of His arrival 3:2a

D3 The purifying character of His arrival 3:2b-3a

C2 The judgment by the Messiah 3:3b-6

D1 Directed at the priests and Levites so they can, in purity, present offerings pleasing to Yahweh 3:3b-4

D2 Directed at the people of Judah and Israel who are sinners 3:5-6

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<sup>3</sup> Malachi 2:16 subtitle - marital treachery (text - "covers his garment with wrong"): The word "wrong" (*chamac*, 2555) elsewhere almost universally in NNAS translated "violence." (Craig A. Blaising, "Malachi," *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* I, p. 1582): This verse is the most explicit statement in the Old Testament on God's feelings about divorce. Divorce was allowed but actually the instructions in that passage (Deut. 24:1-4) were given to protect the wife if a divorce should occur. Jesus taught that those concessions by Moses were given because of the hardness of people's hearts, but He emphasized that God does not approve of divorce (Matt. 19:7-9), though some Bible scholars see some bases for exceptions to this ideal.

<sup>4</sup> Malachi 3:1 - My messenger: Clearly a reference, from the mouth of Jesus Himself, to John the Baptist (Matt. 11:7-10; see also Isa. 40:3 and John 1:23).

<sup>5</sup> Malachi 3:1 - temple (*heykal*, 1964): This word occurs 81 times in 77 verses. Eleven of those instances refer clearly to a palace such as a king would live in. In three additional instances a palace *or* a temple might be the meaning. The remaining instances refer to the temple of the Lord. Here in Malachi 3:1, it is clearly the Lord's Temple on Mt. Zion that is in view.

In His First Advent, Jesus twice cleansed the temple abruptly: John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12-13. Those events may indeed have been a preliminary fulfillment of this passage in Malachi, although they are never so designated in the N. T. (and the N. T. writers were obviously aware of O. T. fulfillment!). It is more likely, from the context in Malachi, that it is primarily Jesus' Second Coming that is indicated. Zech. 8:3 says that Yahweh will return to live in Jerusalem. Ezek. 43:1-5 speaks of the return of the glory of Yahweh to the Millennial temple. Isa. 2:1-4 views the earth's nations summoning one another to the House of the God of Jacob, there to let Him teach them of His ways! There He will judge between the nations.

In the context of Malachi 3, Yahweh's sudden coming to His temple is in a setting of judgment and refining of His people. The Messiah will come to His temple suddenly and judge the people of Israel and ultimately, the world (Isa 11:1-5). I assume that, when He has finished the initial bulk of His judicial work, He will emphasize instruction more, teaching people how to live in His Kingdom (Isa. 2:1-4).

**A3 ISRAEL AGAINST YAHWEH (Continued) 3:7-16**

**B1 Financially 3:7-12**

- C1 Yahweh's charge of disobedience and plea to return 3:7a
- C2 The peoples' protest of innocence 3:7b
- C3 Yahweh's charge that they have robbed Elohim of tithes and offerings! 3:8-9
- C4 Yahweh's plea to them to rectify their robbery of Him 3:10-12
  - D1 Their needed repentant action: to bring in their whole tithe into the storehouse and experience Yahweh's blessing 3:10
  - D2 Yahweh's promise of agricultural blessing acknowledged by all nations 3:11-12

**B2 Verbally 3:13-15**

- C1 Yahweh's charge of verbal arrogance 3:13
- C2 Israel's plea of innocence
- C3 Yahweh's brief against Israel 3:14-15
  - D1 Their claim of the uselessness of serving Elohim 3:14a
  - D2 Their question of the profitability of walking before Him in obedient humility 3:14b
  - D3 Their belief in the benefits of pursuing evil 3:15

**B3 The Obedient Ones 3:16**

- C1 Their designation as fearers of Yahweh
- C2 Their communication with one another
- C3 Their audience – attentive Yahweh
- C4 Their memorial – the book of remembrance of them

**A4 THE END DAYS (The Day of the LORD) 3:17 - 4:6**

**B1 The Judgment and the Remnant in the Day of the LORD 3:17-18**

- C1 The security of the Remnant (the obedient ones) in the coming day of judgment 3:17
- C2 The effect upon all Israel – their ability to distinguish clearly Yahweh's differing treatment of the righteous and the wicked 3:18

**B2 The Doom for the Wicked in the Day of the Lord 4:1**

- C1 Its time – the coming day
- C2 Its character – like a burning furnace
- C3 Its disastrous effect upon the evil people – their fiery end

**B3 The Triumph of the Righteous in the Millennial Kingdom 4:2-3**

- C1 The designation of the righteous – those who fear His name 4:2
- C2 The beneficent effect of righteousness – healing
- C3 The joyful energy of the righteous
- C4 The triumph of the righteous over the wicked in the Day of the Lord 4:3

**B4 The Injunction to Obey -- Remember the Law of Moses! 4:4**

**B5 The Sign of the Prophet Elijah 4:5-6**

- C1 Yahweh's resolve to send Elijah the prophet <sup>6</sup> 4:5
- C2 The time of the sending – before the Millennium <sup>7</sup>
- C3 The purpose of the sending – spiritual and family restoration 4:6
- C4 The ultimate effect of the sending – avoidance of a complete curse upon Israel

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<sup>6</sup> Malachi 4:5 - Elijah the prophet: The question arises as to whether this individual is the same as the one described in 3:1a: "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me." We have already identified this messenger in 3:1 as John the Baptist [clearly a reference, from the mouth of Jesus Himself, to John the Baptist (Matt. 11:7-10)].

There is a sense in which John the Baptist partially fulfills this prediction in Mal. 4:5 that Elijah would be sent, for Jesus Himself said about John the Baptist: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept *it*, John himself is Elijah who was to come." (Matt. 11:13-14).

That John only *partially* fulfilled the prediction in Mal. 4:5 is evident in that (1) he himself denied he was Elijah (John 1:21); and (2) Jesus was fully aware that Elijah was yet coming, "... Elijah is coming and will restore all things" (Matt. 17:11b), John the Baptist being now dead: "but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they wished" (Matt. 17:12a).

The sense in which John *did* fulfill the prophecy of Mal. 4:5 is revealed in the prophecy given to Zacharias by the angel who appeared to him in Luke 1:17, predicting the role of his future son: "It is he who will go *as a forerunner* before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

It is the present writer's opinion that Elijah himself will return during the tribulation as a fulfillment of both Mal. 4:5-6 and Rev. 11:3-6, where, in the latter passage, he will serve as one of the two witnesses. (See comments by Blaising, p. 1588.)

<sup>7</sup> Malachi 4:5 subtitle - before the Millennium (text - "before ... the day of the Lord:" Though technically, the Tribulation period and the 1000-year reign of Christ are all part of the Day of the Lord, from God's viewpoint, the Tribulation is a time of purification prior to His Son's Kingdom. In that sense, Elijah is to come *before* the Day of the Lord.

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