

GOSPEL of *Grace*
FELLOWSHIP

Malachi
Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness
by Dana Burkinshaw
April 15, 2020

Meaning of the Name

The name *Malachi* simply means “my messenger.”

That is, Malachi was the messenger of the Lord.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 1

F-L-I-G-H-T

F – Malachi is the author of this book (1:1). The Bible is silent regarding his family and background. Scholars generally believe he (along with Zechariah) was part of the Great Synagogue – a group of priests and leaders who collected and preserved the canon of revealed Scripture.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 2

F-L-I-G-H-T

F – Malachi prophesied during the time of Nehemiah. We know this because he mentioned that the temple in Jerusalem had been completed, that the sacrifices were being made (1:7-10; 3:1-8), and that a Persian governor was ruling the Jews. Malachi may have authored this book sometime between 433 and 430 BC.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 3

F-L-I-G-H-T

L – The book of Nehemiah closes out the OT historically, but Malachi closes it prophetically. He wrote about 100 years after the temple had been completed and the system of sacrifices had been reinstated, and his book serves as a prelude to the 400 years of prophetic silence between the Old and New Testaments.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 4

F-L-I-G-H-T

L – Malachi picked up where Ezra and Nehemiah left off, rebuking the priests for neglecting their duties to the Lord, being careless in their worship, and returning to former ungodly practices. The book ends by predicting the coming of the Lord and John the Baptist: “I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me” (3:1).

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 5

F - L - I - G - H - T

I

- Religious Decline (1:1-2:9)
- Social Debasement (2:10-16)
- Moral Defection (2:17-3:6)
- Material Dissipation (3:7-18)
- Messianic Declaration (4:1-5)

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 6

F - L - I - G - H - T

G – Malachi’s mysterious identity illustrates an important point: The messenger is not necessarily as important as the message. This is highlighted in Malachi’s unique prophecy about a messenger who would clear the path for the coming Messiah:

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 7

F - L - I - G - H - T

G – *“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”* (3:1).

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 8

F - L - I - G - H - T

G – We know that John the Baptist was “my messenger,” but imagine reading this 400 years before John arrived on the scene. All you would know was that someone named Malachi—a messenger—was predicting that someone called “my messenger” would come and proclaim another Messenger –

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 9

F - L - I - G - H - T

G – “the Messenger of the covenant” – and that Messenger would turn out to be the long-awaited Messiah. The lesser, unnamed messengers in this passage simply serve to point to the ultimate Messenger, Jesus Christ.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 10

F - L - I - G - H - T

H – Malachi wrote his book at a time when the Jews had been free from Babylonian captivity for some time. Many of the problems Ezra and Nehemiah faced with the Jewish people were also problems Malachi tackled: marriage messes, tithing troubles, and social sins.

Gospel of Grace Fellowship ggf.church 11

F-L-I-G-H-T

H – Xerxes of Persia was the reigning king, but other than collecting taxes, he left the Jews to themselves.

Malachi’s heart cry was for the people to repent of their sins and return to true worship and faithfulness to God.

F-L-I-G-H-T

H – The book of Malachi was the last prophetic word before the period of 400 years of so-called silence from God, which was broken by the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and the writings of the NT. In biblical history, those 400 years of silence between the Old and New Testaments are known as the Intertestamental Period.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **God wants his people to give generously.** The only time in Scripture God told his people to test him was when it had to do with tithes and offerings: he challenged them to see whether he would bless them abundantly if they honored him with their tithes (3:10). Give because of all that he has given you—and give from a cheerful heart (2 Cor. 9:7). You can’t outgive God, but you can dishonor him by not giving.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **God wants his people to act like his people.** It’s through his grace alone that you’re saved, but once you are saved, you need to *respond* to his grace. What you do reflects who you are—and *whose* you are. We’re called to grow in certain characteristics and in faithfulness to God. The Lord is looking for people who worship him in spirit and truth (John 4:23).