

Malachi: Intro and Overview

Introductory notes adapted from BLS 502 Interpreting the Prophets and Gospels with Carl Laney from Western Seminary

Author: The book was authored by the prophet Malachi, whose name means _____. Malachi lived in Jerusalem late in the restoration period. Malachi delivered an “_____” (1:1) from the Lord. Oracle means an announcement or burden. God delivered the burden of His heart to His people through His Messenger.

Date of writing: the book is not dated, yet internal evidence indicates a postexilic date. Close agreement between the sins which Malachi denounced and those which Nehemiah sought to correct (priestly laxity, neglect of tithes, and intermarriage with idolatrous women) suggests that Malachi ministered in Jerusalem between the first and second governorships of Nehemiah. A probable date for the book is _____ B.C.

Historical setting: Malachi prophesied about 75 years after the temple had been completed (515 BC). The Jews had been home from Babylon for about 100 years. Although cured of idolatry, they had lost their enthusiasm over God and worship. They had succumbed to religious _____ and moral _____. The priesthood was corrupt and the people were wearying God with their hypocrisy.

Audience: The original audience was the restored remnant of _____ who returned to Judea after the 70 years of exile in Babylon. Roughly 150,000 Jews resided in Judah after being freed from captivity. The Persians permitted worship of the Lord but the Jews faced relentless opposition from their unbelieving neighbors. After Israel returned to the land, they largely resisted idolatry, but allowed their worship to devolve into empty ritualism. (

Purpose: Malachi was intended to restore the Jewish people to a right relationship with God by exposing the causes of their spiritual _____ and setting forth the steps for _____.

Theme: The necessity of genuine _____ to assure God’s blessing and avert His judgment.

Theology: Malachi makes a unique contribution to OT theology by promising the coming of _____ as Messiah’s forerunner (4:5-6)

Outline 1:

1. God’s _____ for Israel (1:1-5)
2. The corruption of the _____ and _____ (1:6-2:16)
3. The coming of divine _____ (2:17-4:3)
4. The concluding exhortation and _____ (4:4-6)

Outline 2:

- Introduction – God’s Burden _____ (1:1)
- Oracle #1 – God’s Love _____ (1:2-5)
- Oracle #2 – God’s Honor _____ (1:6-2:9)
- Oracle #3 – God’s Covenant _____ (2:10-16)
- Oracle #4 – God’s Justice _____ (2:17-3:6)
- Oracle #5 – God’s Commands _____ (3:7-12)
- Oracle #6 – God Promises _____ (3:13-4:3)
- Oracle #7 – God’s Remnant _____ (4:4-6)

