

Minor Prophets

Malachi

Lesson 7

Text: **Malachi 3:1-12**

Intro: in the past couple of chapters God has laid out some of the problems the nation of Israel was facing, from corrupt priest, to a people who despised their covenant with God. He has spoken directly to some of the sins the nation was engaged in, and was very clear to point out “I HATE THAT”. Often times in the world we are in, we get similar things from earthly sources, our boss, our parents, our kids, even our spouses, we are told where we are wrong, but we often do not get the info to help us get better. Or have the answer revealed to us. This is where we are in the third chapter of Malachi, he is going to address what and who is able to help them get back to a right relationship with God.

I. The coming Messenger'S, Vs. 1-7

A. Introduction to Two Messenger's,

i. The First Messenger,

- a) John the Baptist, is the messenger that was sent to prepare the way,
 - **Matthew 11:7-11** “And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, **What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**”
 - See **Also Mark 1:2&3; Luke 7:27**
- b) at the end of Chapter 2, the nation complained that God seemed to reward the wicked, and not exercise His justice.
 - After all, the nation was still under the rule of other nations, The Persian empire.
 - Falling back to the covenants of God, there was a Davidic Covenant, that stated that Israel would have a king,
 - but they failed to keep the conditions of the covenant, and God executed His conditional portion of the covenant.
 - But, it is easy to see how the people would be concerned with it,
- c) But now in the 3rd chapter, God is going to tell them how things are going to be set right.
- d) Along Comes John,
 - “Preparing the Way”
 - this is a throwback to a kingly procession. As the king approached one would be sent ahead to tell others to prepare, and to get ready. You wouldn't want the king to come, and people be about their regular business, and preoccupied. You would want them dressed, cleaned, and waiting to honor the king.
 - Which of course is not what happened at all with Jesus.
 - To prepare the way, had the meaning of build a road,
 - the process of building a road has several elements to it.
 - **Isaiah 40:3-5** “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places

plain:⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.”

- First a course must be set out: Jesus said I AM THE WAY, **John 14:6**
 - See Also **Matthew 7:13&14**
- Second, the path must be excavated, the removal of objects in the path.
 - The moving of mountains.
- Third, the Building up of areas that are lacking.
 - There is a message here to each of us, there is a path that is directed by God of How He wants us to live, there are areas in our lives that need to be removed, pride, sin, disobedience. And there are areas that we need to add to, obedience, putting on the things of God, and putting the garments of righteousness on.
- John came to preach? _____ **Matthew 3:1&2** “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,²And saying, **Repent ye:** for the **kingdom of heaven is at hand.**³For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

ii. The Second Messenger,

a) vs.¹ “He shall prepare a way before “ME”

- this is a proclamation that the Lord Himself shall come,
- the Lord said, ME, I shall come...
- We see this fulfilled in Jesus.

b) Not only is He coming, but He is the messenger of the “Covenant”

- Question, was it necessary for the Lord to send a messenger with the “Old Covenant”?
 - After all, the nation had the writings of Moses, we read how they re-instituted the worship when the temple was rebuilt. So, the Nation had, was taught, and familiar with the “Old Covenant”
 - in fact, the people complained about the conditions of the Old Covenant.
 - So, this messenger that was coming was bearing a New Covenant,

B. Ministry of the Second Messenger, Vs.2-7

i. Replacing the Covenant,

a) There is a difference between the Old and the New,

- the Old pointed out that we needed salvation, the New Provided it.
- **Jeremiah 31:31-34** “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:³²Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the *day that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:³³But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.³⁴And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.**”
- **Matthew 5:17&18** “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.¹⁸For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”
- So Jesus came to both fulfill the Old, and to bring a New,

- His New Covenant is in the form of Grace, and not law,
 - **Matthew 26:26-28** “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, **Take, eat; this is my body.**²⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, **Drink ye all of it;**²⁸ **For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**”
 - Now, I want to point out here, that the law has been done away with, so does that give us permission to sin? After all, sin was revealed in the Old Testament? In Fact, if we read the criteria of the New Covenant, it was more than following a set of rules and laws, but about becoming Christ like, not only in the outward appearance, but also internally. Many of the things that were sinful in the Old, under the New are even more intense. Such murder, in the old was the taking of ones life, in the New, being Christ like, it includes hating, in the Old adultery was taking a woman, in the New it included lust.
 - The real difference is in the New, we have the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit to Guide and lead us into all righteousness.
 - See: **Matthew 5:21-30 & John 16:13**
- b) So the 2nd Messenger will fulfill the Old, and give a New Covenant.

ii. He Will Purify,

- a) A Refiners Fire,
- **Vs.3** He shall “Sit” as a refiner of silver,
 - to purify literally means taking out all the impurities, Heating it to the melting point, and removing the “dross” off it. This is the impure material that would then rise to the top, and the refiner would take a tool, and drag the impurities off.
 - One commentator wrote that the way a refiner knew the silver or gold was pure, was as they scrapped the dross of the top, their reflection would become less and less distorted. And when they were able to see a clear reflection of themselves, the metal was pure.
 - What is our goal as “Christians”? To become Christ like.
 - Spurgeon also pointed out, he was sitting as a patient worker. While He placed His angels in charge of our protection, our purification is a job that He takes on himself.
- b) A Fullers Soap,
- The fullers soap was another way of saying the same thing,
 - the fullers field was west of Jerusalem, it was an area where the wool gathers would take their wool to be cleaned. The process was a bleaching and cleaning. They would use a pure soft soap, and massage the wool, often with their feet, walking and beating the wool until it was clean.
 - The fullers were also the main one who the priest would take their robes to to have then cleaned for service.
 - They would make their “garments white”

iii. The Result of the Cleansing,

- a) the offering will be pleasant to the Lord, **vs.4**
- remember, when the law was first given, Moses, Aaron and the priest were strict about the way they preformed it.
 - They took their duty serious, but as time passed, and sin increased, the priest started to take and accept impure offerings and sacrifices.
 - So the days of Old were talking about the purity and intent of the picture that was suppose to be painted.
 - What was the offering of Moses, and Aaron? Was it merely the sacrificial

offering, or was it themselves?

- Under the New Covenant, there will be no need for the temple sacrifices, but for the People to sacrifice themselves to the Lord, and present our bodies a living sacrificial to the Lord.
- See Romans **12:1&2**

iv. Judgment to come, Vs.5

- a) against the sorcerers,
 - the Jewish people had become familiar with witchcraft and sorcery in the Babylonian rule.
 - God is going to cleans them of this.
 - Sorcery and witchcraft are simply another was of excluding God from our lives,
 - replacing Him with other means to get and do what “WE WANT”
- b) against the adulterers,
 - this is speaking of the men that have put away their wives in **Chapter 2**.
 - God clearly stated that He hated that, and He will judge them.
 - God desires a people who will keep their covenant's
- c) against false swearers,
 - This is bearing false witness, and it can be both as a lie, or as an unfulfilled oath.
 - When we swear our lives over to God, and then still retain control of them, we are bearing false oaths.
- d) against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless,
 - Remember in many of the other minor prophets, this was a huge problem,
 - they would oppress simply because it was in their power to do so.
 - I am going to get a little ahead of myself here, but, God reminds us in **Vs.6** “I change not”
 - That, God still desires the same treatment of others under the New covenant.
 - This is a message than many Christian employers need to hear and read.
 - I am not saying that a boss needs to pay their workers for work that is not done, but to hold back their pay simply because it is in their power to do so is against the will of God.
- e) and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*,
 - God has directed Israel how they were to treat people from other nations,
 - **Deuteronomy 24:17** “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger...”
 - **Deuteronomy 27:19** “Cursed *be* he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger...”
 - God desires justice, not only for Israel, but also for those who are without.
 - For us, do we treat our fellow Christians with more respect than others?
- f) and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.
 - People who do not reverence, or fear the Lord.
 - **Hebrews 10:30&31** “For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.³¹*It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”
 - People find it east to speak evil against the Lord,
 - or to withhold Him form the Reverence He deserves.
 - For the Nation of Israel, they were not giving Him the reverence He deserved, and we will look into that further next week as we continue in the 3rd chapter vs.8.