THE BOOK OF MALACHI

I. INTRODUCTION - 1:1

A. Name מָלָאךְ

1. "My Messenger" or "My Angel"

2. The Four Messengers of this Book
   a. Malachi - 1:1
   b. The Priest - 2:7
   c. The Forerunner - 3:1a
   d. The Messiah - 3:1b

A. Family

1. Nothing Known

2. Some rabbis believed he was Ezra the Scribe
   a. Targum of Jonathan
   b. Rashi

B. Locale

1. Judea after the Exile

2. Jerusalem

C. Date

1. During Persian Period
   a. רֶהֶמָו - (Peichah): Persian word for governor - 1:8
   b. The Persian Period - 539-333
2. Temple Completed - After 515 B.C.

3. Similarity with Problems of Nehemiah
   b. Neglect of tithes - 3:8-12 and Nehemiah 13:10-13
   d. Disregard of the Sabbath - 2:8-9; 4:4 and Nehemiah 13:15-22
   e. Saw social wrongs - 3:5 and Nehemiah 5:1-13

4. Conclusion
   a. During Nehemiah's second stay in Jerusalem
   b. After 433 B.C. (433-424)
      (1) Others: 500-460 [480-470]
      (2) Others: 477-457 - A decade or two before Ezra's arrival in 457 B.C.
   c. Malachi is to Nehemiah what Haggai and Zechariah were to Zerubbabel

D. Historical Setting

1. Nehemiah's Reform

2. Ritual Without Reality

3. Religious Situation
   a. Priesthood corrupted
   b. Tithes not paid

1. Morality - 3:5
a. Sorcery
b. Adultery
c. Perjury
d. Fraud
e. Oppression

2. Social Problems
   
a. Intermarriage
b. Divorcement of Jewish wives

3. Beginnings of the Movement Toward the Talmud

4. Early Seeds of Pharisaism and Sadduceeism
   
a. Formalism
b. Scholasticism

E. Main Points
   
1. God’s love for Israel
2. True Ritualism
3. The Crime of Divorce
4. The Coming of Two Forerunners
5. Importance of the Law of Moses
6. Faithful Remnant

F. New Testament Quotations
   
1. 1:2-3 - Romans 9:13
2. 3:1
   a. Matthew 11:10
   b. Mark 1:2
   c. Luke 1:76

1. 4:5-6
   a. Mark 9:12
   b. Luke 1:17

G. Theme - The Final Call to Israel

1. The People's Complaint: How can God love us and let us suffer this way

2. Answer
   a. Their present suffering is due to their own sin and disobedience
   b. Compare the difference between Israel and Edom, and you will see that God loved Jacob but hated Esau
   c. The Day of Jehovah is coming when judgment will settle all injustices

H. The Verse

1. The Burden of the Word of Jehovah
   a. בָּאֵר - Oracle, Burden
   b. Found 27 times and only in prophetic passages containing a threatening judgment except for Proverbs 30:1, 31:1
      
      (1) Heavy message
      
      (2) Prophetic oracle
c. Never followed by a genitive of speaking such as "Saith the Lord"

d. Always connected with a genitive of object such as

   (1) Babylon
   
   (2) Moab

e. Exception: When an additional item such as "The Word of the Lord," as in Malachi 1:1 and 3:1

f. Begins with a threat - Implies that God is to come soon to judge the world

   (1) Zechariah 9:1
   
   (2) Zechariah 12:1

2. The Means: By the Hand of Malachi - בֵּי מָלָכִי

3. The Object: To Israel - Usual Term After the Return From the Exile

4. Last Revelation for 400 Years

5. Socratic Dialectic Method

   a. The method

      (1) Statement
      
      (2) Objection - "Wherein?"
      
      (3) Answer

   b. Seven such times

      (1) 1:2-3
      
      (2) 1:6-7
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I. GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL - 1:2-5

A. The Statement - 1:2a

1. *I have loved you, says Jehovah*

2. 

a. Used 32 times of God's love

b. Used 23 of those times of Israel

3. God has affirmed His love for Israel many times

   a. Deuteronomy 7:7

   b. Deuteronomy 10:18

   c. Hosea 11:1

B. The Objection - 1:2b

1. *Yet ye say: Wherein have you loved us?*

2. Temple had been finished, but the Golden Age of Haggai and Zechariah has not come

3. Shows their insensitivity to God's love and their own departure from God

C. The Answer - 1:2c-5

1. The Example of Esau/Edom - 1:2c-4

   a. *Was not Esau a brother to Jacob?* - 1:2c-3a

   (1) *Yet Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated*

      (a) In the sense of chosen or not chosen

      (b) Genesis 29:30-33 - Rachel and Leah
i) Leah was not preferred and unchosen

ii) Rachel was preferred and chosen

(c) Deuteronomy 21:15-17

i) A case of two wives not equally loved

ii) One was less loved than the other

(2) Not psychological or emotional but a ranking, a preference, a setting of priorities

(3) Term is also used in a covenantal sense as in a suzerain-vassal treaty

(4) New Testament Examples

(a) Matthew 6:24

(b) Luke 16:13

(c) Matthew 10:37 with Luke 14:26

b. The Evidence: Edom a desolation - 1:3b

(1) *I made his mountains a desolation*

(a) חַ֥יִל - Without inhabitant

(b) Result of habitual invasions

(2) *I gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness*

(3) The Historical Reference

(a) Babylon - 587-586 BC

(b) Nabatean Arabs - 550-460 B.C.

c. Edom's futility - 1:4
(1) Whereas Edom says: We are beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places

(a) Edom thinks she will succeed in recovery

(b) Her confidence in her ability to restore everything as it had been prior to the devastations will fail

(2) Thus saith Jehovah of hosts - In response

(a) They shall build, but I will throw down

(b) But Israel has recovered

(3) Men shall call them: Edom will be called

(a) The Border of Wickedness - In the Millennium
   i) Isaiah 34:8-17
   ii) Ezekiel 35:1-15

(b) The people against whom Jehovah hath indignation forever - A perpetual desolation throughout the Kingdom

2. Israel's Future Response - 1:5

a. Your eyes shall see, and ye shall say

b. Jehovah to be magnified beyond the border of Israel - Among the Gentiles

D. Observation: Chiastic Structure

A: Jehovah speaks of Jacob in blessing - 2

B: Jehovah's judgment on Esau - 3

C: Edom's lack of repentance - 4a
B: Jehovah's judgment on Esau - 4b

A: Jehovah speaks of Jacob in blessing - 5
III. UNFAITHFULNESS OF THE PRIESTS - 1:6-2:9

A. The Statement - 1:6a

1. Basic Truth: *A son honors his father, and a servant his master*

2. The Application

   a. *If then I am a Father, where is Mine honor?*
   
   b. *If I am a Master, where is My fear?*

3. The Priests Profane God's Name: *Saith Jehovah of Hosts unto you, O priests, that despise My Name*
   
   a. The priests do not honor God as Father
      
      (1) Israel is the Son of God
          
          (a) Exodus 4:22
          
          (b) Isaiah 1:2
          
          (c) Jeremiah 31:9
          
          (d) Hosea 11:1

      (2) But they do not honor Him

   b. The priests do not fear God as Master

      (1) Israel is the servant of Jehovah

      (a) Isaiah 1:3

      (b) Isaiah 41:8

      (2) Yet Israel does not fear God: If I am a Master, where is My fear?

B. The Objection: *Wherein have we despised Your Name?* - 1:6b
C. The Answer - 1:7a

1. Ye offer polluted bread on My altar
   a. Sacrifice not inspected - Was blemished
   b. Sacrifices not coupled with faith

2. Presents yet another charge

D. Objection: Ye say: Wherein have we polluted You? - 1:7b

E. Answer: In that ye say: The Table of Jehovah is contemptible - 1:7c

F. Elaboration - 1:8-2:9

1. Bad Offerings - 1:8-10
   a. The evil sacrifices - 1:8
      (1) When ye offer the blind for sacrifice - The claim: It is no evil!
      (2) When ye sacrifice the lame and sick - They claim: It is no evil!
      (3) Says Jehovah of Hosts: Present it unto your governor
         (a) Will he be pleased with you?
         (b) Or will he accept your person?
      (4) They give to God what they would not dare offer to the governor - Violation of
         (a) Exodus 12:5; 29:1
         (b) Leviticus 1:3, 10; 22:18-15
         (c) Numbers 6:14; 19:2
         (d) Deuteronomy 15:21; 17:1
b. Appeal to the priests that they would do their work: Appeal to God so favor would come - 1:9

(1) *Now, I pray you* - *Says Jehovah of Hosts*

(a) *Entreat the favor of God* - Seek His grace

(b) Reason: *That He may be gracious unto us*

(2) *This had been by your hands* - This was all perpetrated by the priesthood itself

(3) *Will He accept any of your persons?* - God will if they seek Him

c. Rejection of the sacrifices - 1:10

(1) *Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors* - Appeal to shut the Temple doors closing all access to the Altar of Sacrifice

(2) Reason: *That ye might not kindle fire on Mine altar in vain!*

(a) Vain - Used 32 times

(b) Basic meaning

i) For no reason

ii) Without a cause

(3) These sacrifices are not acceptable: *Says Jehovah of Hosts*

(a) God is not pleased with them - *I have no pleasure in you*

(b) God will not accept them - *Neither will I accept an offering at your hand*
2. Profaning God's Name - 1:11-14

a. The future - 1:11

(1) Gentiles will honor God's Name - *For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles*

(a) Psalm 50:1

(b) Psalm 113:3

(c) Isaiah 45:6

(d) Isaiah 59:19

(2) Gentiles will bring offerings to God - *Says Jehovah of Hosts*

(a) *In every place shall incense be offered unto My Name*

(b) *And a pure offering*

(c) *For My Name shall be great among the Gentiles*

(3) Fulfillment of 1:5

(4) To be performed in the Millennial Temple already described by Ezekiel

b. The present: Jewish priests profane God's Name - 1:12-14

(1) By calling the altar polluted and contemptible - 1:12

(a) *But ye profane it*

i) "But ye" - Contrast with the Gentiles

ii) Gentiles will give pure offerings while you are giving polluted sacrifices
(b) *In that ye say*

i) *The Table of Jehovah is polluted*

ii) *The fruit thereof, even its food, is contemptible*

(2) Weariness with sacrifice - 1:13

(a) *Ye also say: Behold, what a weariness it is!* - It had become drudgery

(b) *Ye have snuffed at it - Says Jehovah of Hosts*

(c) The priests also offer - *Ye have brought*

i) *That which was taken by violence - Stolen*

ii) *The lame - Maimed*

iii) *The sick*

(d) The fact: *Thus ye bring the offering*

(e) God's response: *Should I accept this at your hand? says Jehovah - NO!*

(3) The curse - 1:14

(a) *But cursed be the deceiver - Against those who offer blemished sacrifices*

i) *Who hath in his flock a male*

ii) *And vows*

iii) *And sacrifices unto the Lord a blemished thing*

(b) Reason
i) For I am a Great King says Jehovah of Hosts - Therefore, He has a reputation to sustain

   a) I Samuel 12:12
   b) Psalm 10:16
   c) Psalm 24:8
   d) Psalm 84:3
   e) Psalm 95:3
   f) Isaiah 33:22
   g) Isaiah 43:15
   h) Isaiah 44:6
   i) Jeremiah 8:19
   j) Jeremiah 10:10
   k) Zephaniah 3:14

ii) My Name is Terrible among the Gentiles - So Jews should honor Him now

3. Disobedience to the Law and to the Covenant - 2:1-9

   a. The warning - 2:1-3

      (1) The message to the priests - 2:1

         (a) The call: And now, O ye priests

         (b) The object: This commandment is for you

      (2) The curse: I will send the curse on you - 2:2
(a) The reason

i) If ye will not hear

ii) If ye will not lay it to heart

iii) If they fail to glorify God's Name - To give glory unto My Name

(b) Then will I send the curse upon you

i) The future: I will curse your blessings - All blessings will cease to come

ii) The present: Yea, I have cursed them already

iii) The reason: Because you do not lay it to heart

(c) Almost an exact quotation of Deuteronomy 28:20

(3) The result - 2:3

(a) Behold, I will rebuke your seed

i) Verb

ii) Deuteronomy 28:20 - Noun

iii) To rebuke the seed is to stop its growth

(b) I will spread dung upon your faces

i) Even the dung of your feasts - Animal dung which was to be removed from the Temple Compound

a) Dung of bad offerings smeared on faces of priests
b) The Result: *Ye shall be taken away with it* - Because it will render them ceremonially unclean

ii) So they too will be removed from the Temple Compound

a) Rejection

b) Separated and removed from the living God

c) Deuteronomy 28:20

b. Contrast of Levi and the priesthood - 2:4-9

(1) The Covenant of Levi - 2:4-7

(a) Levi stands as the representative head of the Levitical Priesthood for the priesthood proper is descendant from Aaron: The covenant made - 2:4

i) *Ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you* - The priesthood

ii) *That My covenant may be with Levi, saith Jehovah of Hosts*

(b) The Levitical Covenant

i) Exodus 32:25-29

ii) Numbers 8:5-19

iii) Numbers 18:16-20

iv) Numbers 25:10-13 - The Covenant with Phinehas

v) Deuteronomy 33:8-11
vi) Jeremiah 13:29

vii) Jeremiah 33:20-21

(c) This commandment was sent so that if it is obeyed, the Levitical Priesthood will continue

(d) Levi feared God's name - 2:5

i) My covenant was with him

   a) Of life - Survival

   b) Of peace - Physical, spiritual, economic welfare

ii) I gave them to him that he might fear

iii) And he feared Me

iv) And he stood in awe of My Name

v) Especially true of Phinehas where these terms of life and peace are used and with whom a covenant is made - Numbers 25:12-13

(e) Did works of righteousness - 2:6

i) The law of truth was in his mouth - It was true

ii) Unrighteousness was not found in his lips - It was pure

iii) He walked with Me in peace and uprightness

   a) To walk with God - Used only of two other men in the Old Testament
(I) Enoch - Genesis 5:22-24

(II) Noah - Genesis 6:9

b) Abraham commanded to do so - Genesis 17:1

iv) His ministry: *Turned many away from iniquity*

(f) The standard - 2:7

i) To teach the Law

a) *For the priest's lips should keep knowledge*

b) *They should seek the Law at his mouth* - People to inquire of priest

ii) Reason: *For he is the messenger of Jehovah of Hosts* - He is the messenger of God to the people

a) Leviticus 10:11

b) Jeremiah 2:8

iii) Only time a priest is called a "Messenger of Jehovah of Hosts"

a) Elsewhere used of the Angel of Jehovah

b) Used of a prophet once in Haggai 1:13

(2) The failing of the modern priests - 2:8-9

(a) The charge: *But ye* - 2:8
i) Ye have turned aside out of the way - The Law

ii) Ye have caused many to stumble in the Law

iii) Ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi says Jehovah of Hosts - Failure to fulfill their calling in Deuteronomy 33:8-11

(b) The punishment: Therefore I have made you contemptible and base before all the people - 2:9

i) Priests are contemptible to the people

ii) Reasons

a) According as ye have not kept My ways - Disobedience to the Law

b) But had respect of persons in the Law

iii) When they did apply the Law, they had respect of persons

iv) Under the Law, priests were given judicial function and so had to be impartial

a) Deuteronomy 17:9-17

b) Deuteronomy 19:17
IV. UNFAITHFULNESS OF THE PEOPLE - 2:10-16

A. The People's Inquisition - 2:10

1. The Questions

   a. *Have we not all one father?* - One Father

      (1) Not: The universal Fatherhood of God

      (2) But: The Covenant Father of Israel

         (a) Exodus 4:22-23

         (b) Isaiah 63:16

         (c) Isaiah 64:8

         (d) Jeremiah 31:5

         (e) Hosea 11:1

   b. *Hath not one God created us?*

      (1) One God

      (2) One Creator: אֱלֹהֵינוּ - Emphasizes the uniqueness of Israel's formation

2. Yet: *Why do we [Fellow Jews] deal treacherously every man against his brother?*

   a. God is the Father of the Jewish people

   b. Jews are guilty of neglecting fraternal ties to one another

3. The Result: *Profaning the Covenant of our Fathers?* - The Abrahamic Covenant

4. This is followed by a list showing how the priests cause many to stumble - Two Examples
a. Intermarriage with pagan wives

b. Divorcing of Jewish wives

B. Intermarriage with Heathen Wives - 2:11-12

1. The Sin - 2:11

   a. *Married the daughter of a foreign god* - Married Gentile wives who were worshippers of idols

      (1) Not - Racial issue

      (2) But - Issue of mixing religious and spiritual commitments

      (3) They married unbelievers

   b. The results

      (1) *Judah hath dealt treacherously*

      (2) *An abomination is committed*

      (3) The Places

         (a) *In Israel*

         (b) *In Jerusalem*

      (4) *Judah has profaned the holiness of Jehovah which He loves* - Israel failed to be holy

      (5) The means: *He has married the daughter of a foreign god*

   c. Common problem of that day

      (1) Ezra 9:1-6; 10:10-19

      (2) Nehemiah 10:30; 13:21-27
d. Violation of the Law of Moses

(1) Exodus 34:11-16
(2) Deuteronomy 7:3

2. The Judgment - 2:12

a. Jehovah will cut off - Cut off those who are guilty

(1) To the man that does this
   (a) Him that wakes
   (b) Him that answers

(2) Out of the Tents of Jacob - From the Community of Israel

(3) And him that offers an offering unto Jehovah of Hosts - Their sacrifices will not be accepted

b. Implies totality

C. Divorcement of Jewish Wives - 2:13-16 (And this again ye do – Further Accusation)

1. Offerings are Unacceptable - 2:13

a. You cover the Altar of Jehovah

   (1) With tears
   (2) With weeping
   (3) With sighing

b. Reasons

   (1) Insomuch that he regards not the offering anymore
   (2) Neither receives it with good will at your hand
c. God would not accept their offerings or their prayers

d. This is true though they doubled their sacrifices

(1) The problem is not a lack of sacrifices

(2) The problem was a lack of faith and obedience

2. Reason - Divorcement of Jewish Wives - 2:14

a. Question: *Yet ye say, Wherefore?* - Why does He not accept our offerings?

b. Answer

(1) Treachery against the wife

(a) Making of marriage vows

(b) Made with God as a witness - *Because Jehovah had been witness between you and the wife of your youth*

   i) The sin: *Against whom you have dealt treacherously*

   ii) The betrayal: *Though she is*

      a) *Your companion*

      b) *The wife of your covenant*

(2) Description of the wife

(a) *Wife of your youth* - Proverbs 5:15-21

(b) *She is your companion*

   i) United, joined together

   ii) One flesh concept
(c) Wife of the covenant - Marriage viewed as a covenant

i) Proverbs 2:17

ii) Ezekiel 16:8

3. The Warning - 2:15

a. Did He not make one - One flesh of Genesis 2:21-24

b. Although he had the residue of the Spirit? - One who is in submission to the Spirit of God would not be guilty of divorce

c. Wherefore one?: Reason for one

(1) He sought a godly seed

(2) To produce a godly seed

d. Therefore

(1) Take heed to your spirit

(2) Let none of you deal treacherously against the wife of his youth

4. The Injunction Against Divorce - 2:16

a. I hate putting away says Jehovah, the God of Israel - It is a loathsome practice

(1) God has allowed it

(2) God does not approve of it

b. I hate him that covers his garment with violence, says Jehovah of Hosts

(1) Putting garment over a woman

   (a) To claim her as wife
i) Ruth 3:9

ii) Ezekiel 16:8

(b) Designates conjugal relationship

(2) The sin

(a) Covered garments with violence toward their wives

(b) To act against the conjugal relationship of husband and wife

c. Warning: Therefore

(1) Take heed to your spirit - That ye deal not treacherously

(2) Repetition of admonition of verse 15

A. The Statement: *Yet ye say - Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words* - 2:17a

B. The Objection: *Wherein have we wearied Him?* - 2:17b

C. The Answer: *In that ye say:* Skepticism and Cynicism - 2:17c

1. The Wicked are Good in God's Sight
   a. *Everyone that does evil is good in the sight of Jehovah*
   b. *He delights in them*

2. *Or: Where is the God of justice?*

D. The Elaboration - 3:1-6

1. The Coming of the Forerunner - 3:1a
   a. To answer: Where is the God of justice?
   b. *Behold, I send My messenger* - Fulfilled by John the Baptist
   c. Purpose
      (1) *He shall prepare the way before Me*
      (2) To be Messiah's forerunner
   d. Isaiah 40:3-5

2. The First Coming - 3:1b
   a. *The Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to His Temple*
      (1) הָאָדֹן - Ha-Adon: With article always refers to God
      (2) The Second Temple
      (3) His
Exegetical Outline Notes: The Twelve Minor Prophets

(a) Ownership of the Temple since He is "Lord"

(b) *In My Father's House*

(c) This is the God of justice

(4) **Suddenly** - יִתְנַחֲמוּ - *Pitom*

(a) Used 28 times always connected with judgment except in II Chronicles 29:36

(b) This is the God of justice

b. *The Messenger of the Covenant*

(1) The New Covenant

(2) Malachi 3:6

c. *Whom ye desire* - The Messianic Hope

d. The promise: *Behold He comes - Says Jehovah of Hosts*

e. This answers the question: Where is the God of Justice?

f. Distinction of persons - Shift between first and third person

(1) God is the Speaker

(2) The way is to be prepared before *Me*

(3) The *Lord, Me and the Messenger of the Covenant* is the same Person: God

(4) God is One and yet One proceeds from Him who is called *Lord* and *Messenger of the Covenant*

(5) The One Who is sent from the other is the One Almighty God Who owns the Temple (3:1) and the Lord whom they are seeking (2:1) and is also the *Me* of the speaker
Exegetical Outline Notes: The Twelve Minor Prophets

(a) Three persons
   i) Speaker: Father
   ii) Prophet: My Messenger
   iii) Lord: The Messenger of the Covenant

3. The Second Coming - 3:2-5

a. He will refine the people - 3:2
   (1) But who can abide the day of His coming?
      (a) Who shall stand when He appears?
      (b) This is the Second Coming
   (2) Judgment of the Day of Jehovah
   (3) Two figures: For
      (a) He is like a refiner's fire - To purify
      (b) He is like fullers' soap - To cleanse

b. He will purify the priesthood - 3:3-4
   (1) The purification 3:3a
      (a) He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver
      (b) He will purify the Sons of Levi
      (c) Refine them as gold and silver
   (2) The Result: Priesthood will then offer righteous offerings - 3:3b
      (a) They shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness
(b) This time it will be coupled with faith

(3) The millennial sacrifices will be acceptable - 3:4

(a) *Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto Jehovah*

(b) Comparison with early times

i) *As in the days of old*

ii) *As in ancient years*

c. Destruction of the sinners - 3:5

(1) *I will come near to you to judgment*

(2) *I will be a swift witness against - Seven sins*

(a) *Against the Sorcerers*

i) Exodus 22:8

ii) Leviticus 20:27

iii) Deuteronomy 18:14

(b) Adulterers - Exodus 20:14

(c) *Against the false swearers*

i) Exodus 20:7

ii) Leviticus 19:12

(d) *Against those that oppress the hireling in his wages*

i) Leviticus 19:13

ii) Deuteronomy 24:14-15
(e) Oppress the widow

i) Exodus 22:22-24

ii) Leviticus 15:10

iii) Deuteronomy 24:19-32

(f) Oppress the fatherless

(g) Turn aside the sojourner

(3) And fear not Me, says Jehovah of Hosts - Shows they did not fear God

4. The Eternal Covenantal Promises - 3:6

a. For I, Jehovah, change not: I am Jehovah - I do not change

b. Result: Therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed

(1) God is long-suffering

(2) God is unchangeable in His purpose for Israel

(3) For that reason, the Jews are indestructible

(4) Psalm 102:26-27

E. Observation: Chiasm of 2:17 - 3:5

A: Warning: Judgment is coming - 2:17 - 3:2a

B: Means: Purification of the people - 3:2b-3a

B: Results: Pleasing offerings - 3b-4

A: Warning: Judgment is coming - 5
VI. FAILURE OF PAYING TITHES - 3:7-12

A. The Statement - 3:7a

1. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my ordinances, and have not kept them

2. The Call: Return unto me, and I will return unto you, says Jehovah of Hosts

B. Objection: But ye say - Wherein shall we return? - 3:7b

C. The Statement: Will a man rob God? Yet ye rob Me - 3:8a

1. רָפָה - Kava: To Rob, Defraud

2. Used Only Here and Proverbs 22:23

3. Talmud - To Take Forcibly

D. Objection: But ye say - Wherein have we robbed You? - 3:8b

E. Answer - 3:8c

1. In tithes and offerings

   a. Tithes - One-tenth of income

   b. Offerings - Those portions of the animal sacrifices designated for the priests

      (1) Exodus 29:27-28

      (2) Leviticus 9:22

      (3) Numbers 5:9

   c. Common problem of that period - Nehemiah 13:10-12

2. The Tithe

   a. Leviticus 27:30
b. Numbers 18:26-28; 26:12-16

c. Deuteronomy 12:18

d. Deuteronomy 14:22-29

e. Deuteronomy 26:12-16

3. Inclusions

a. One-tenth of the Firstfruits - Leviticus 27:30-32

b. One-tenth of Levites to Priests - Numbers 18:25-28

c. Tithes of the Tabernacles - Deuteronomy 12:18

d. One-tenth every three years for poor - Deuteronomy 14:28-29

e. Actual total: 23 percent

F. Elaboration - 3:9-12

1. The Curse - 3:9

a. The Fact: You are cursed with the curse

(1) Curse for disobedience to the Law

(2) Results

(a) Crop failure

(b) Low yield

(c) Barrenness

(3) Deuteronomy 28:20

b. Reasons: For ye rob Me

(1) Me in emphatic position - Me, ye have robbed
2. The Remedy - 3:10a

   a. *Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse*

      (1) New challenge to obey

      (2) Bring whole tithes - The whole tithe so that no part of the Law is disobeyed

      (3) *Storehouse* - Chambers of the Temple where tithes kept

         (a) I Kings 7:51

         (b) Nehemiah 10:38; 13:12

         (c) Reason: *That there may be food in My House*

      (4) This is not storehouse tithing for the local church

3. The Results - 3:10b-12

   a. God will provide abundance - 3:10b

      (1) The invitation

         (a) *Prove Me now herewith, says Jehovah of Hosts*

         (b) בָּחַן - Bachan: To examine, try, prove

         (c) Normally forbidden in Deuteronomy 6:16 but permissible when God offers it

      (2) The result: *If I will not open the windows of heaven - Rain*

         (a) *Pour you out a blessing*
(b) That there shall not be room enough to receive it

(3) The rains will come resulting in an abundance of crops

b. Locusts removed from the Land - 3:11

(1) I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes

(2) He shall not destroy the fruits of your ground

(3) Neither shall the vine cast its fruit before the time in the field, says Jehovah of Hosts - No premature falling of fruit

c. Gentiles will recognize God is blessing the Land - 3:12

(1) All nations will call you happy

(2) For ye shall be a delightsome Land, says Jehovah of Hosts

G. Observation: Chiasm of verses 6-12

A: Introduction: A divine promise - 6

B: Appeal to repent - 7

C: Indictment: You have robbed me - 8

. D: Verdict: Curse - 9a

C: Indictment: You are robbing me - 9b

B: Promise of blessing to those who do repent - 10-11

A: Conclusion: A Messianic Promise - 12
VII. THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL - 3:13-4:3

A. The Response of the Non-Remnant - 3:13-15

1. The Statement: *Your words have been stout against Me, says Jehovah* - 3:13a

2. Objection - *Yet ye say: What have we spoken against You?* - 3:13b

3. Answer: *Ye have said* - 3:14-15

   a. *It is vain to serve God* - 3:14

      (1) There is no use in serving God

      (2) *What profit is it that we have kept His charge* - There is no profit in serving God

      (3) *That we have walked mournfully before Jehovah of Hosts* - There is no profit in fasting and repenting

   b. The wicked prosper while the righteous do not - 3:15

      (1) The wicked have already tested God and showed that God is powerless

      (2) *And now we call the proud happy* - The proud are blessed and happy

      (3) The wicked prosper

         (a) *Yea, they that work wickedness are built up*

         (b) *Yea, they tempt God and escape*

B. The Response of the Remnant - 3:16-18

1. The Remnant Obeys - 3:16a

   a. *Then they that feared Jehovah spake one with another* - Concerning what they heard from Malachi
(1) The Remnant

(2) They feared God - The motivation for holy living

b. They thought on His Name

(1) To regard

(2) To meditate

2. Results - 3:16b-18

a. Jehovah harkened and heard: Their prayers - 3:16b

b. Inscribed in the Book of Remembrance - 3:16c

(1) A Book of Remembrance was written before Him

(a) For them that feared Jehovah

(b) That thought upon His Name

(2) Acts to be rewarded in the future

(a) Esther 6:1

(b) Psalm 46:8

c. God's peculiar possession - 3:17a

(1) They shall be Mine, saith Jehovah of Hosts

(2) Even My own possession

(a) תּוֹעֲשֵׂה - A treasured possession

i) Exodus 19:5

ii) Deuteronomy 7:6

iii) Deuteronomy 14:2
iv) Deuteronomy 26:18

v) Psalm 135:4

(b) Word is used only of Israel except for David's treasures stored up for the Temple

i) II Chronicles 29:3

ii) Ecclesiastes 2:8

d. Spared final judgment - 3:17b

(1) *In the day that I make* - The day of final judgment

(2) *I will spare them as a man spares his own son that serves him*

(3) Will survive the Tribulation

e. Will make a distinction between the Remnant and the Non-Remnant - 3:18

(1) *Then shall ye return and discern*

(a) *Between the righteous and the wicked*

(b) *Between him that serves God and him that serves him not*

(2) The Remnant will also be able to discern this

C. The Day of Jehovah - 4:1-3

1. *For, behold, the day comes:* Destruction of the Wicked - 4:1 (3:19 in the Hebrew text)

a. *It burns as a furnace*

b. *All the proud and all that work wickedness shall be stubble*

c. *The day that comes shall burn them up, says Jehovah of Hosts*
d. *It shall leave them neither root nor branch* - Totality

2. Preservation of the Remnant - 4:2-3

a. The Sun of Righteousness - 4:2

(1) The Messenger of the Covenant of 3:1

(2) Will preserve the Remnant - *But unto you that fear My Name*

(3) *Shall the Sun of Righteousness arise*

(4) *With healing in its wings*

   (a) *Wings* - Rays

   (b) *Healing*

      i) Spiritual

      ii) Or: Deliverance from destruction - Psalm 107:20

(5) Luke 1:76-79

(6) *Ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall* - They will go forth skipping like calves released after being penned up for so long

b. Will conquer the wicked - 4:3

(1) *Ye shall tread down the wicked*

(2) *They shall be ashes under the soles of your feet*

(3) Timing: *In the day that I make, says Jehovah of Hosts*

   (a) The Day of Jehovah

   (b) In the Day of Judgment
(c) The Great Tribulation
VIII. CONCLUSION - 4:4-6

A. To Remember the Law of Moses - 4:4

1. *Remember ye the Law of Moses My servant*

   a. *Which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel*

      (1) Where Moses received the Law

      (2) Where Elijah had his experience of the Still Small Voice

   b. *Even statutes and ordinances*

2. Final Call to Israel to Keep the Law

   a. Next Prophet - John the Baptist

   b. Interval - Corruption of the Law by the Pharisees and Sadducees

B. The Coming of Elijah - 4:5-6

1. Time: Before the Tribulation - 4:5

   a. The promise: *Behold - I will send you Elijah the Prophet*

   b. The timing: *Before the great and terrible Day of Jehovah come - Before the Tribulation*

2. The Purpose - 4:6

   a. Family restoration

      (1) *He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children*

      (2) *The heart of the children to their fathers*

      (3) So that the Name of Jesus will no longer be a point of division
b. The curse

   (1) *Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*

   (a) הַנָּבִיא

   (b) Devoted to destruction

   (2) Old Testament ends with a curse

   (3) In the Hebrew Bible, The Prophets ends with a curse

   (4) For this reason, rabbis repeated verse five after verse six

C. Observations

1. The mention of Moses and Elijah in the last prophet is significant in a messianic context

2. These are the two that will appear with the Messiah on the Mount of Transfiguration