

Malachi Lesson 4

2:17-3:12

Icebreaker: When you were growing up, what was a good thing about being with your siblings and what was not always such a good thing? Did it seem you were all treated fairly????

V 2:17 Define the word “weary”. Who has wearied the Lord?

What are the words that weary the Lord? Isa. 43:24, 7:13

Who is the “everyone” doing the evil that God calls good? Ezekiel 8:12, 9:9 (Ezekiel is speaking to the Jews in Babylon) , Isaiah 13:11 (Isaiah is speaking to the Jews before they went to Babylon)

Define the word “ Justice”

So what is mercy?

We cannot begin to understand God’s justice unless we first understand sin. Sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4) and iniquity (Daniel 9:4-5; Micah 2:1; James 3:6). It embodies everything contrary to God’s holy nature and is offensive to Him. Thus, sin is a crime against God, and justice demands a penalty of death and separation from Him for it (Romans 1:18-32; 2:5; 3:23 gotquestions.org/God-of-justice)

***https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6_IvFgFAkc RC Sproul’s story on justice It is really good**

APP How do we see the world today? Can we still have hope as we see the horribleness of the world around us... not just in the world but perhaps around us personally? Can we ever expect to have true justice in this world?

Read Psalm 73 for the hope we have as we lament. Romans 3:23-26 How does Paul describe God?

When we say that God is just, we mean that He is perfectly righteous in His treatment of His creatures. God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34), He commands against the mistreatment of others (Zechariah 7:10), and He perfectly executes vengeance against the oppressors (2 Thessalonians 1:6; Romans 12:19). God is just in giving out rewards: “God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them” (Hebrews 6:10). He is equally just in giving out punishments: “Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism” (Colossians 3:25). Justice and righteousness, which always work hand in hand, are the foundation of God’s throne (Psalm 89:14). gotquestions.org/God-is-just

V3:1-5 So they asked where is this God of Justice.... He is coming
Verses 1-4 is Jesus’s first coming and verse 5 is His second coming.

V1 I= God-Lord of the Hosts **my messenger/he=** John the Baptist *Matthew 11:7–10, Mark 1:2, Luke 1:76*

Me= God/Messiah **Lord=**God who is the Messiah/Christ *Isaiah 52:13-53:1-12*

messenger of the covenant=God who is the Messiah **He=** Messiah

V3:2a Who can endure? On our own, who can stand? Joel 2:11, Psalm 130:3

V3:2b-4 Who will be purified first? Why? *God held the priests to the most stringent standards of behavior and ritual purity (Leviticus 21). They disobeyed God, however, and were instantly struck down (Leviticus 10:1-2)*

What was the only way the priests (people) can bring a pleasing offering to the Lord? Exodus 29:1-9

How are we being cleansed? *And every priest stands daily at [God's] service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God...For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:11-14).*

Malachi's words in this verse echo the never-ending mercy of God. We are not left in our own sin. We are not left to save ourselves. God cares about the condition of your hearts. God comes and meets us where we are and makes us pure, righteous, and spares us the pain of separation from him when we turn our hearts toward him. God loves his children and we can rest assure that he will refine those who embrace him. When we go through afflictions and suffer, we can find hope that God will use those circumstances to draw us closer to him and to refine us. We can be certain that whatever we go through will never be endured in vain because God will strengthen our faith and purify our hearts. When we need his redemptive work, or the refiner's fire, God will come. He will come to each of us and refine us so that we can be set free from bondages and strongholds, and the junk will be removed.

God is faithful and throughout Scripture we see a consistent message that he cares for his children and will allow us to go through trials and hardships – what we can consider the refiner's fire – to ensure that we will be in right standing with him. Bible Study Tools

APP How have you seen God use your situation- including the blessings as well as the trials- to refine you?

1 Peter 1:6-7, 4:12-14 , Psalm 66:10-12

V3:5 When will God draw near or NLT says "_____"

(Commentators say this is referring to the second coming of Christ... when the God's Justice truly will be done- as they were questioning back in 2:17)

Revelation 11:16-18, 15:3-4, 16:7, 2 Peter 3:13

God is a witness to all the injustice on the earth!!!! Jeremiah 29:21, Psalm 50:7,21

- *"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."* – Proverbs 15:3
- *"The LORD looks from heaven; he beholds all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth."* – Psalm 33:13-14
- *"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the LORD."* – Jeremiah 23:24
- *"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."* – 2 Chronicles 16:9
- *"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he sees all his goings."* – Job 34:21

What would God be swift to judge against? List them and see what the Old Testament says about them.

1. Zech 10:2
2. Lev.20:10, Deut 22:23
3. Exod. 20:7, 16
4. Lev. 19:13
5. Ex. 22:22-24
6. Deut 24:17, 29:19

APP How are we as Christians as churches and individually doing in these things that will be judged?

What does it mean to “fear the Lord” ? Psalm 112:1

Isaiah 66:2 says, “This is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.” The sheer majesty of God, as well as the holiness, and justice, and power, and wrath of God, cannot be approached in a careless spirit. We are blind if we think we can do that without trembling.

Philippians 2:12–13: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you.” This is really interesting. You should fear and tremble because God is working to keep you. And I think it means the sheer awesome presence of God in our lives working for us, not against us, should produce trembling. We should fear in the sense that we seek refuge from God away from God’s terrible wrath. God’s grace in Christ is the refuge from God’s wrath outside Christ.
desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-for-the-christian-to-fear-god

V6-7 What is keeping God from “consuming” the Israelites? (Hebrews 13:8)

What has God said: Lam. 3:22, Numbers 23:19. Isaiah 43:2, Deut 31:8

It would seem the Israelites haven’t changed either!! Think of all the times they have left and gone astray... Can you list a few here?

What does God want from them? What does “return” mean?

APP What comfort to you get from these promises? How have you seen this in your life? Where have you seen the steadfast love of God in yours or others lives? When have you had to repent and confess your sins and God is always there to forgive 1 John 1:9,

Isaiah 30:10-16, 18 is a powerful read.

V8-11 What did God accuse them of as a sign of their falling away? Did they really not know? Who could/should have been teaching (giving them examples) Judges 2:10

What would be the difference between a tithe and an offering/contribution? (then and today?) Lev. 27:30,

APP Why do you think they had become half-hearted in their giving? (Nehemiah 10:32-39, 13:10-14)

How do you give to the Lord?

APP What is the purpose of our giving? 1 Chronicles 29:14, Romans 11:36, Hebrews 13:15, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 Can we ever “outgive” the Lord?

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This is a lot that we can discuss in this section of giving and even testing of the Lord in our giving. But here is what Lea Gatiss says to sum up:

“In the context of Malachi, then, this passage particularly provokes us to consider what our tithing says about our attitude towards God’s word, and forces us to examine our hearts to see if we are demonstrating a belief in its continued relevance. Are we honoring God, submitting to him, and returning to him in this matter or robbing him of glory by withholding material things from him because we’re not sure it’s not worth giving them up? We are invited to put our money where we claim our hearts are, and until we do so we will not experience such a “harvest of righteousness” and spiritual enrichment as Christians which we might otherwise. Test me in this, says God. See if it works in practice rather than scoffing or remaining unconvinced.”

V 12 What would the nations around see or notice if the Israelites would not rob God any longer? Isaiah 62:2-4

APP Does the world see Christians giving generously as they did in the early church? Acts 2:44-47

APP How has God strengthened your faith in His generosity and the generosity of others?

Hymn: Great is thy Faithfulness