

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament, the last of the minor prophets, and the last book to be written chronologically.
  - 1. It is hard to date, but was probably written between 450 and 400 B.C.
  - 2. Malachi is a post exile prophet
- B. Halley points out the important history of the return from captivity
  - 1. A remnant had returned in about 536 B.C.
  - 2. Haggai and Zechariah had encouraged the rebuilding of the temple in about 520 B.C.
  - 3. Sixty years later in about 457 B.C., Ezra came from Babylon to Jerusalem to re-establish the nation.
  - 4. Thirteen years later, in about 444 B.C., Nehemiah came and rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem. Nehemiah returned to Babylon and then back to Jerusalem in about 420 B.C. (See Neh 13:6)
  - 5. It had been about 100 years since the return from captivity when Haggai wrote.
  - 6. The people had been cured of their idolatry, but they were neglecting the House of God and sacrifices and tithes.
  - 7. Israel was discouraged, lethargic, disillusioned, and bored, waiting for the Messiah who they were impatient to receive.
- C. Malachi's name means, "messenger."
- D. While he was a contemporary with Nehemiah, he is not mentioned in the Bible anywhere except in Malachi 1:1.
- E. Malachi does not refer to the restoration of the temple, and therefore we speculate that he wrote after the temple was restored.
- F. Malachi is a book of questions which Israel had on their mind, and probably voiced from their mouth. For example . . .
  - 1. Wherein hast thou loved us? (1:2)
    - a. God chose them over Esau
  - 2. Wherein have we despised thy name? (1:6)
  - 3. Wherein have we polluted thee? (1:7)
    - a. By offering lame and sick offerings
  - 4. Wherein have we wearied God? (2:17)
    - a. By saying that evil doers are good in God's sight
  - 5. Wherein shall we return? (3:7)
  - 6. Wherein have we robbed God? (3:8)
    - a. In tithes and offerings
- G. Malachi indites Israel for several offences against God
  - 1. Laxity among the priests (1:6-2:9) (see Neh 13:4-9)
  - 2. Neglecting to tithe (Mal 3:5-10) (see Neh 13:10-13)
  - 3. Marrying pagans
- H. Malachi is written as an argument between the Lord and Israel

## **II. OUTLINE OF MALACHI**

- A. Israel is blind to the love of God (1:2)
- B. Israel is failing to honor their Father (1:6)
  - 1. They serve because of what they get (1:10)
  - 2. The Gentiles will be different (1:11)
  - 3. They are cursed for offering inferior things (1:14)
- C. A command for the priests (2:1)
  - 1. They are first informed of a pending curse (2:2)
  - 2. They have caused the people to stumble (2:8)
- D. Condemnation of “treachery” against their brothers (2:9)
  - 1. They are cursed for putting away their wives (2:14-16)
- E. Promise of John the Baptist (3:1) and the Messiah (or perhaps, further information about John the Baptist) (3:2)
- F. Israel’s continued disobedience (3:7)
- G. Israel’s repentance at Malachi’s preaching (3:16)
- H. The Day of the Lord (4:1)
- I. The coming of the Messiah (4:5)