

I. **NAME AND PERSONALITY OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. The name *Malachi* means “my messenger” (3:1 and 2:7).
- B. He is the last writing prophet to serve under the Law of Moses.
- C. After Malachi finishes his preaching comes the 400 “silent years.”
- D. There will be no further revelation from God until John the Baptist after Malachi.
- E. Malachi uses what is called the didactic-dialectic method:
 - 1. Affirmation.
 - 2. Interrogation.
 - 3. Refutation.See 1:2-3; 1:6,7; 2:10-16; 2:17; 3:7; 3:8; 3:13-14.

II. **DATE OF THE BOOK AND OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. Date of the book is approximately between 445 and 432BC.
- B. Malachi is a contemporary of Nehemiah.
- C. Jerusalem has been rebuilt; the town, the temple, and the outer wall.
- D. For a full description of the times one should read Ezra 7-10 and the book of Nehemiah.
- E. It is approximately 100 years after the exile in Babylon.

III. **OUTLINES OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI.**

- A. Simple outline:
 - I. Jehovah condemns the Priests’ faithlessness (1:1-2:9).
 - II. Jehovah condemns illegal marriages and the peoples’ indifference (2:10-4:3).
 - III. Jehovah says look back to the Law, and look ahead to Elijah (4:4-6).
- B. Supplemental outline:
 - I. God’s Love for His People (1:1-5).
 - A. Declared (1:1-2).
 - B. Demonstrated (1:3-5).
 - II. Condemnation Of The Unfaithful Priests (1:6-2:9).
 - A. Their Unworthiness (1:6-14).
 - B. God’s curse upon them (2:1-9).
 - III. People Rebuked For Profaning Marriage (2:10-16).
 - A. Alien marriages (2:10-12).
 - B. The sin of divorce (2:13-16).
 - IV. The Coming of the Lord and the Purging of Israel (2:17-4:6).
 - A. A question concerning God’s justice (2:17).
 - B. The Messiah’s coming in judgment (3:1-6).
 - C. Neglect of tithes and offerings (3:7-12).
 - D. God’s justice defended (3:13-4:3).
 - E. A call to obedience (4:4).
 - F. Elijah and his work (4:5-6).

IV. **THE THEME AND MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI.**

- A. The theme of the book is: **Judgment is coming.**
- B. The message of the book is: **God is not served by partial service.**

- C. The phrase, “says Jehovah of hosts” occurs 20 times in 55 verses.
- D. John the Baptist is prophesied in 3:1 and 4:5.
- E. Four important lessons in the book are:
 1. The priests should honor God in life and in lip (1:6-10; 2:6-9).
 2. The violence of divorce (2:13-16).
 3. Do not rob the unchanging God (3:6; 3:8-10).
 4. The power of the Law (4:4).
- F. What divorce is in God’s eyes (according to Malachi):
 1. Profanity of the covenant (2:10).
 2. Profanity of God’s holiness (2:11).
 3. Cause of being cut off by God (2:12).
 4. Cause of one’s sacrifice to be rejected (2:13).
 5. Treachery against the companion (2:14).
 6. Against the purpose of the home (2:15).
 7. A thing that God hates (2:16a).
 8. Violence against the innocent (2:16b).

V. PRACTICAL LESSONS OF PERMANENT VALUE.

- A. God loves a pure, clean, happy home.
- B. Divorce is an abomination in God’s sight.
- C. Insincerity in worship insults God.
- D. One who sins willfully and wantonly--cannot please God by elaborate worship.
- E. Our giving is a thermometer that measures our spiritual temperature.
- F. The people suffer when the preacher fails to study and teach all the truth.
- G. God still holds out the challenge to all His chosen ones to put Him to the test to find the rich supply of blessing that is available.

VI. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

- A. Why should we bring God our best? How can we make sure we bring God our best?
- B. What are some qualities of a great servant of God (2:6-7)?
- C. What sins were the men committing when they divorced their Jewish wives and married pagan women?
- D. How can we freely express our honest feelings to God without straying into the wrong of arguing with God? (Think about Habakkuk alongside Malachi).
- E. How might we personally be oppressing the poor and needy through either our actions or inactions?
- F. How is it robbery to fail to give generously to the work of God (3:6-12)?
- G. What are the most important things you have learned from your studies of the prophets over these past few weeks?