

DECEMBER 12-18, 2022

# Malachi

“I HAVE LOVED YOU, SAITH THE LORD”

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**Summary:** *Malachi 1. The Jews despise the Lord by offering polluted bread upon the altar and by sacrificing animals with blemishes—The Lord’s name will be great among the Gentiles.*

*Malachi 2. The priests are reprov’d for not keeping their covenants and not teaching the people—The Jews are condemned for dealing treacherously with one another and with their wives.*

*Malachi 3. The Lord’s messenger will prepare the way for the Second Coming—The Lord will sit in judgment—The people of Israel are commanded to pay tithes and offerings—They keep a book of remembrance.*

*Malachi 4. At the Second Coming, the proud and wicked will be burned as stubble—Elijah will return before that great and dreadful day.*

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## Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

### What themes does the prophet Malachi address?

Ideas vary as to the prophet’s exact date, but nearly all scholars agree that Malachi prophesied during the Persian period, and after the reconstruction and dedication of the Second Temple in 516 BC. More specifically, Malachi probably lived and labored during the times of Ezra and Nehemiah. The prophecy of Malachi was given about 430 B.C. It is the last book in the Old Testament. It seems to follow four major themes: (1) Addressed to the priesthood leadership and recounts the sins of Israel—reproving them for their neglect of service to God. (**Malachi 1:1; 1:6–2:17; 8–9**) (2) The judgments to come upon Israel because of their disobedience—speaking against marriage outside the covenant, divorces from wives within the covenant, neglect of paying tithes, and reproving the general spirit of discontent. A notable passage is in (**Malachi 3:1**), which is quoted in (**Matthew 11:10**) referencing John the Baptist; (**Malachi 3:7–12**), an elucidation of the law of tithing, a cursing: (**Malachi 2:2–3, 12**); and (**Malachi 3:5**) (3) the promises for obedience—The faithful are encouraged

to remain so, with the assurance that the Lord is mindful of them, and the disobedient shall fail in the day of the Lord’s coming. (**Malachi 3:10–12, 16–18; 4:2–3**) (4) prophecies pertaining to Israel—speak of the Second Coming of the Lord; and (**Malachi 4:5–6**), which deals with the return of Elijah (see also **Doctrine and Covenants 2; 128:17; Joseph Smith History 1:37–39**), **Malachi 3:1–5; 4:1, 5–6**) This theme is addressed to the people; (**Malachi 3:7–8**), All of (**Malachi 3; 4**) was quoted by the Savior to the Nephites, as recorded in (**3 Nephi 24; 25**).

### How are temples the core of faithfulness to the Lord?

That temples and temple ordinances are essential to the (true) faith is well established in the Bible. Malachi predicted the coming of the Lord suddenly to his temple, in the day of vengeance, in the latter times, as a refiner and purifier. Ezekiel predicted the building of a temple in Jerusalem which will be used for ordinance work after the gathering of Israel from their long dispersion and when they are cleansed from their transgressions. John the Revelator saw the day when, after the earth is sanctified

and celestialized, the presence of the Father and the Son in the New Jerusalem would take the place of the temple, for the whole city, due to their presence, would become a temple." (**Doctrines of Salvation - Joseph Fielding Smith - Vol.2, Pg.244**) There is a Jewish tradition that the Messiah's return will reflect either the date or event of the destruction of the First and Second Temples. Joseph Smith's mission was to restore temple worship. Eventually, the "Lord will suddenly come to his Temple (**Malachi 3:1**)."

### **How did Malachi foretell the restoration of temples and temple functions?**

"The Sabbath before Passover is known as *Shabbat ha-Gadol* (great Sabbath before Passover). Tradition connects it with the tenth of Nisan, the day on which the Israelites in Egypt set aside the lamb that they were to slaughter on the first Passover (**Exodus 12:3**). On *Shabbat ha-Gadol*, a special *haftarah*, (reading from the Prophets) taken from the Book of Malachi and referring to the day on which Elijah the Prophet will reappear as forerunner of the great day of the Lord, is read." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) "After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said: Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi--testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come -- To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse -- Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors." (**Doctrine & Covenants 110:13-16**)

### **What role do Gentiles have in redeeming the Jews?**

In the first chapter of Malachi, God, through Malachi, reprimands the Children of Israel for their disobedience in the practices and sacrifices at the temple. The Jewish leaders were offering "polluted bread," the sacrament offered unworthily. (**Malachi 1:7**) Because of this backsliding, the Lord will become known to the non-Jews: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense 'shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts." (**Malachi 1:11**) It is from the heathen, the gentiles, that salvation will return to the Jews. Paul understood that principle: "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them," (the backsliding Jews!). (**Romans 11:13-14**)

### **What purpose does the priesthood have?**

The temple cannot exist without the authority to "act in the name of God." That is the priesthood of God. Malachi teaches the importance of a righteous priesthood. It is still a guiding today. "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts." (**Malachi 2:6-7**) The Hebrew origin of the name Malachi is a masculine appellation, meaning "messenger of God." Malachi was the prophet, he held the keys of the priesthood at his time.

### **How can I recognize that the keys of the priesthood are restored again?**

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.” **(Malachi 3:1-4)** Remembering that the Hebrew word for “repent” is the same as “return,” “go back,” and “start over,” Prophet and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Joseph Fielding Smith (1876-1972) explained that “we are living in the dispensation of the fulness of times into which all things are to be gathered, and all things are to be restored since the beginning. Even this earth is to be restored to the condition which prevailed before Adam’s transgression. Now in the nature of things, the law of sacrifice will have to be restored, or all things which were decreed by the Lord would not be restored. It will

be necessary, therefore, for the sons of Levi, who offered the blood sacrifices anciently in Israel, to offer such a sacrifice again to round out and complete this ordinance in this dispensation. Sacrifice by the shedding of blood was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity will have to be restored.” “The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fulness of the restoration in this dispensation. Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character.” **(Doctrines of Salvation, 3:94.)**

### **What is the ultimate purpose of salvation?**

Would that you and I understood enough about how sacrifices were done, so that in love and doctrinal integrity we can bring the older part of the House of Israel through the generations of time and share how the ancient prophets knew the Lord, and that He has come again, and now, all Israel can join as a family, worshipping our Father in Heaven and His son, even Jesus the Messiah, “And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” **(Malachi 4:6)**