

Malachi – Giving God Your Best #5
“Where Is The God of Justice”
Malachi 2:17-3:6

There are times when we get discouraged because we try to understand the events that are taking place in the world, as well as our individual lives, and many things don't make sense. Injustices seem to flourish, bad people seem to get away with their scheming and appear to be prospering, which causes us to question God's sense of justice. In today's teaching Malachi explains that God is just and give us several reasons why we can take comfort in the justice of God.

#1. GOD'S JUSTICE CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DISCERN IN EVERYDAY LIFE, v. 17

- A. God considers evildoers good – wrong! Pro 17:15
- B. God is pleased with evildoers – wrong! Ps 73
- C. God is not just – wrong!

#2. GOD'S JUSTICE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN PREPARING THE PEOPLE FOR THE MESSIAH THROUGH JOHN THE BAPTIST, v. 1a

- A. God will send my messenger – John the Baptist
- B. He will prepare the way before me, (Isa 40:3-5, Lk 1:16-17)
- C. He preached repentance, Lk 3:3, 8

#3. GOD'S JUSTICE WAS DEMONSTRATED BY ATONING FOR SIN AT THE FIRST COMING OF JESUS, v. 1b

- A. Suddenly the Lord (Jesus) will come to his Temple, (Lk 2:21f, Mat 21:12)
- B. Jesus: the messenger of the covenant, (Heb 9:15)
- C. The coming of the Messiah was the desire of the people

#4. GOD'S JUSTICE WILL BE DEMONSTRATED BY PURIFYING HIS PEOPLE AT THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS, vv. 2-4

- A. He (Jesus) will appear a 2nd time, v. 2, Heb 9:27-28
- B. He appears as a refiner's fire, v. 2
- C. He appears as a launderer's soap, v. 2
- D. He will purify the Levites, vv. 2-3
- E. He will accept their offerings given in righteousness, vv. 3-4

#5. GOD'S JUSTICE WILL BE DEMONSTRATED IN HIS JUDGMENT OF EVIL DOERS AT THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS, 3:2, 5

- A. Who can endure the day of his coming?, v. 2
- B. Who can stand when he appears?, v. 2
- C. The Lord will testify against 7 sins of the God mockers, v. 5
- D. The mockers don't fear the Lord, v. 5

#6. GOD'S JUSTICE IS DEMONSTRATED BY HIS FAITHFULNESS, v. 6

- A. God never changes, Heb 13:8
 - B. God was faithful to the covenant, Ps 89:35-37
 - C. God's people constantly were unfaithful
-

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE
Malachi 2:17-3:6

You have wearied the LORD with your words. "How have we wearied him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and he is pleased with them" or "Where is the God of justice?"

3:1 "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. ²But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, ⁴and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years. ⁵"So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty. ⁶"I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

Hebrews 13:8: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 9:27-28: Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

1 Peter 2:4-10: As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." ⁷Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for. ⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Psalms 73:12-22: This is what the wicked are like--always carefree, they increase in wealth. ¹³Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning. ¹⁵If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed your children. ¹⁶When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me ¹⁷till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. ¹⁸Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. ¹⁹How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! ²⁰As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. ²¹When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, ²²I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- #1. Have you ever questioned God's sense of justice as you consider events in your life and around the world? Explain
- #2. Describe the ministry of John the Baptist?
- #3. In what sense was Jesus the messenger of the covenant? (Hebrews 9:15)
- #4. Describe the purifying effect on God's people at the second coming of Christ? Hebrews 9:28
- #5. Describe the metaphor of the refiner's fire in purifying God's people.
- #6. Describe the metaphor of the launder's soap in purifying God's people.
- #7. Malachi says the Lord will purify the Levites. In what sense are all God's people Levites (priests)? 1 Peter 2:5 & 9
- #8. Discuss the seven sins of the God mockers that Malachi mentions.
- #9. At the second coming of Christ what does he do to the God mockers? (Malachi 3:5)
- #10. Describe how Asaph felt when he contemplated the destiny of the God mockers. Psalm 73:12-18
- #11. For what reason(s) should God's people take comfort in the fact that the Lord never changes? (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8)
- #12. What is your takeaway from this teaching?