

Malachi chapter 1

What is the people's response to God's declaration of His love for them [2; see also 2:13-14, 2:17, and 3:13-15]? What attitude(s) toward God is revealed?

Verses 6-14 seem to be addressed to the priests of Israel. Do God's complaints apply only to the priests, or do they extend – through the priests, as the people's representatives before God – to all the people of Israel? These verses list some of the specific actions of the priests that God objects to; is He really concerned about their improper observance of the law, or is He upset about something more than that?

Malachi chapter 2

The first nine verses continue God's complaints to the priests (He is really upset with them, see 2-3); why does He bother when they have so blatantly defied Him [4; and recall 1:2]? What example (who) does God contrast their behavior with [5-7]?

What charge(s) does God lay against His people in 10-12? How does God express his displeasure with the people in verse 13? What additional sins are listed in 13-16? What is God sick and tired of in verse 17?

Malachi chapter 3

What is God's plan for dealing with the problems He pointed out in chapter 2 [1-5]?
Note well that the offenses God judges in 5 are not those against Him, they are against His people!

Compare verse 6 with 1:2; has God given up on His people, as they accuse Him of doing? What does God require the people to do in order to accomplish their redemption [7]? What will be the result of all this complaining and striving between God and His people [16-18]?

Malachi chapter 4

Have the events prophesied in 1-3 already occurred? What makes the difference between destruction and redemption [2 and 4]? God promises to send an agent – a prophet – to mediate this judgment; who is this agent? Does the final clause of this chapter suggest that God's judgment could be entirely avoided, dependent upon the people's response to the efforts of this prophet?

Next week: New Testament overview.