

Mid-Week Recharge Minor Prophets Study

Malachi

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Section #3: **Chapter 2:13-3:12**

Book Theme: **The Son of Righteousness**

Section Theme: ***God's Unique Righteous Love***

Class Agenda

Prayer

Review Malachi background

- Identity and location of the prophet
- Historical review

Review 1:1-2:12

Sub-Section #1: God's Unique Design for Marriage

NIV Text:

2:13 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands.

14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

15 Has not *the LORD* made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

16 "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

Content questions:

- What is the complaint of the people of God in verse 13? How are they reacting emotionally to their complaint?
- What is the reason God gives for no longer paying attention to their worship and supplication in verse 14? How many times and in how many ways does He repeat that reason?
- Take a look at the first part of verse 15. It consists of two questions and two answers. Explain God's role and goal for marriage based on those two questions and answers.
- Explain the two commands in verse 15 and how they are related to the previous questions and answers.
- The Lord is speaking in first person in verse 16. What does God hate according to this verse? What two commands does He repeat?
- How many times does the name the LORD appear in this sub-section?

Discussion questions:

- What is God's plan for marriage? What assumptions are implicit in this section?
- How should the Church deal with marriage and divorce based on this passage?
- For personal reflection: how might your marriage better reflect the truth presented in this passage? If you are single, how does this passage help to prepare you for marriage?

Sub Section #2: God's Unique Agent for Justice

NIV Text:

17 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.

2 But 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.

3 He 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,

4 and 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.

7 Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.

Content questions:

- God makes a clear statement in 2:17 that He is wearied with the words of His people. What words specifically according to that verse?
- According to verse 3:1, how will God respond to His people's pleas for justice?
- Describe the One whom God will send?
- Look at the first two questions in verse 3:2. What are the implied answers? Who will be ready for this One whom God will send?
- Explain the role of the One whom God will send in verses 3 and 4.
- Who is this One whom God will send according to verse 5? What will He do?
- What is the reason that the Israelites are not destroyed according to verse 6?
- What is God's accusation in verse 7? What is His call to His people in verse 7?
- How many times does the name the LORD appear in this sub-section?

Discussion questions:

- Are you ready for the One whom God has sent and will send?
- Whom does God testify against here? What does that tell us about our obligations to Him and each other?
- How are you returning to God?

Sub-Section #3: God's Unique Blessing

7c "But you ask, 'How are we to return?'

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

9 You are under a curse-- the whole nation of you-- because you are robbing me.

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.

12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

Content questions:

- What is the question of the people of God in verse 7c?
- What is God's accusation in the first question of verse 8? How does He clarify it with the second question in the same verse?
- What does God say about the nation in verse 9? What reason does He give?
- What challenge and command does the Lord lay down in verse 10? What result does He promise in the remainder of the verse and verse 11?
- How will the nations respond to this blessing according to verse 12?

Discussion questions:

- What would a return to the Lord look like according to this passage?
- Why is a financial commitment to the Lord so important?

Related passages: Genesis 2:24, Exodus 22:22, Leviticus 19:13, Numbers 23:19, Deuteronomy 24:1, 2 Kings 7:2, 2 Chronicles 7:3, 14, Nehemiah 13:10-12, Psalm 51:19, Proverbs 5:18, Isaiah 1:25, 40:3, 43:24, 61:9, 62:4, Jeremiah 7:9, 7:26, 14:12, Ezekiel 22:14, Daniel 12:10, Zechariah 1:3, 13:9, Malachi 1:11, Matthew 3:10-12, 5:31-32, 11:10, 19:4-9, Mark 1:2, Luke 7:27, Acts 7:51, 1 Corinthians 7:14, James 1:17, 5:4, Revelation 6:17