

THE BOOK OF MALACHI – “MESSENGERS OF THE LORD”

Trinity Lutheran Church – Norman, OK.

Date: 4-7-19 Lesson: 8

Theme: As messengers of the Lord:

- Then and now, proclaim to each generation
The Law and The Gospel
- Properly distinguished - but boldly spoken



A. THE TEXT: (Malachi 3:1-18)

(1) "Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before **me**. And **the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple**; and **the messenger of the covenant** in whom you delight, behold, **he is coming, says the Lord of hosts**. (2) But who can endure **the day of his coming**, and who can stand **when he appears**? **For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap**. (3) **He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord**.

(4) Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to **the Lord** as in the days of old and as in former years.

(5) "Then **I will draw near** to you for judgment. **I will be a swift witness** against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not **fear me**, says **the Lord of hosts**.

(6) "For **I the Lord do not change**; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. (7) From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from **my statutes** and have not kept them. Return to **me**, and **I will return** to you, says **the Lord of hosts**. But you say, 'How shall we return?'

(8) Will man rob **God**? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. (9) You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing **me**, the whole nation of you. (10) Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in **my house**. And thereby put **me** to the test, **says the Lord of hosts, if I will not** open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

(11) **I will rebuke** the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says **the Lord of hosts**. (12) Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says **the Lord of hosts**. (13) "Your words have been hard against me, says **the Lord**. But you say, 'How have we spoken against **you**?' (14) You have said, 'It is vain to serve **God**. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the **Lord of hosts**?' (15) And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put **God** to the test and they escape."

(16) Then those who feared **the Lord** spoke with one another. **The Lord** paid attention and heard them, and **a book of remembrance** was written **before him** of those who feared **the Lord** and esteemed **his name**. (17) "They shall be mine, says **the Lord of hosts**, in the day when **I make up** my treasured possession, and **I will spare** them as **a man** spares his son who serves **him**. (18) Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves **God** and one who does not serve **him**.

B. STUDY GUIDE

1. My messenger = John the Baptist (**Mt 11:10; Mk 1:2,4; Lk 1:76**)
who will prepare the way (**Is 40:3; Mt 3:3; 11:10; Mk 1:2; Lk 1:17,76; 4:5; 7:27**)
2. The Lord you seek = Jesus the Christ, the messenger of the covenant coming into his temple
(**Is 42:6; Mic 5:2; Mt 24:1-13; Lk 2:22-52; 19:45; Jn 2:14-25**)

NOTE: Malachi is prophesying the coming of John and Jesus 400 years later.

3. A description of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ:
 - But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?
(**Is 2:11,17,20; Ezek 7:7; 22:14; Dan 7:13; Joel 2:31; Mt 16:27; Jas 5:8; 2 Pet 3:4; Rev 1:7; 6:17**)

NOTE: Handel's Messiah – "But who can endure...He shall be a refiner's fire."

- For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.
(**Is 1:25,31; 7:3; 30:30; Zech 13:8,9; Mt 3:10-12**)
- He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, (**Dan 12:10; 1 Cor 3:13**)
- and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver,
(**1 Chr 23:28; Job 28:1; Ps 12:6; Is 1:25; 1 Pet 1:7; 2:5,9; Rev 3:18**)
- and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord.
Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem
will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.
(**Ps 51:17-19; 132:9; 2 Chr 7:3,12; Ezek 20:40; Rom 12:1**)

C. LIFE APPLICATION:

What is the answer to this question?

"Who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?"

D. LUTHER'S LECTURES ON MALACHI – Vol. 18

"For He is like a blazing fire. Blazing, or purifying. That is, "He will condemn all your works and enthusiasms. All your attitudes will have to be mortified, just as a fire melts and purifies silver and separates it from all impurities." בִּרְיִית means a sharp cleaning agent or soap that washes great stains out of garments. This is how Christ will condemn all things and demand only spiritual qualities. In spite of his scales, Satan has a very difficult time enduring this. The Jews kept puffing themselves up with their own righteousness. From this it is very difficult to pull them away to follow Christ. The kingdom of Christ is a mystical smelting furnace that purges out the impurity of the old Adam. Here the prophet seems to be speaking about the white linen cloaks which eastern people wore most commonly. These are washed with soap. Christ is not merely the Purifier but also the purifying Agent. He is not only the Blacksmith but also the Fire; not only the Cleaner but also the Soap. He does not sit indolently at the right hand of His Father. Rather He is always working among us vitally, effectively, and uninterruptedly as He is spread abroad over His mystical body, as fire is applied to metal. So He is elsewhere called Salvation, and not just Savior. That is, He is Salvation itself and the Laboratory of salvation. This is what Christians sense. They have less affection for wealth; they are less afraid of death; they disregard everything secular. The power to do this is the "fire" and the "soap."