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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **Today**, we finish our study of **the Minor Prophets.**
 - This has **not been** an exhaustive study.
- We have only touched the **“hem of the garment”**.

- The temple was completed under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Haggai, Zechariah in 516 B.C.
 - Almost 100 years have now passed,
 - And whatever reforms had been instituted
 - Were now being ignored.
- And spiritual apathy had set in.

- The people were disregarding the priests and the temple,
 - They were not bringing their tithes and offerings
 - And there was intermarriage with foreigners
 - And divorce was rampant.

- **Malachi**

is the practical prophet

writing about daily things:

- Like sacrificial **worship**,
- The work of the **priests**,
- **Marriage** and **divorce**,
- **Tithing**,
- And the coming of the **Redeemer**.

- Malachi
is sent to
rebuke the people for their sin.
- He ministered to the Jewish nation
about 400 years before Christ.
 - We will focus
on those questions
which are designed
to convict Israel
of her spiritual indifference
 - And cause the people
to return to God.

- The book begins with the statement by Malachi that God loves Israel (**Malachi 1:1**).
- But rejected Esau.
 - Why?
- When Malachi used the word “hate” he was applying a human emotion to deity.

• Perhaps
the saddest
and most
godless person
in Scripture
outside of Judas
is
Esau.

- Esau not only was immoral, but was godless.
 - He was totally worldly,
 - Secular,
 - Profane.
 - Notice what the Apostle Paul wrote.

- Let there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. (**Hebrews 12:16–17**)

- God favored the nation of Israel in the unfolding of His redemptive plan.
- The comparative character of Jacob and Esau demonstrated Jehovah's wisdom in the choice of Israel over Edom.

- **Malachi**

has a message

from God

for the Jews of his day:

- **Malachi 1:2**

**I have loved you,
saith the LORD.**

- **Yet you say,
Wherein have you
loved us?**

- This response of the people is **reprehensible**.
- They don't know **how much** God loved then?
- Let's look at how **God had loved Israel**.

- Doubting God's love is the beginning of **unbelief** and **disobedience**.
- **Eve** doubted God's love and ate of the **forbidden tree**;
- She thought God was **holding out on her**.

- Satan wants us to feel **neglected by God.**
- So he says to the Jews...
 - **“Look at your difficult circumstances,”**
 - **Why** does your God allow these things to happen to you?”

- God proves His love to His people in three ways:

- (1) He chose Jacob, their father, and rejected Esau.

- (2) He judged the Edomites

(Esau's descendants)

- (3) Gave to Israel the best of the lands.

- God promised Israel a land flowing with milk and honey,
(**Exodus 3:8**)
 - But their sins polluted the land.
 - Sending them into **Babylonian captivity**.

- Even then,
God graciously
restored them

to their promise land

- By delivering them
from

Babylonian captivity.¹⁹

- **Malachi 1:2**

***“I have shown love to you,”
says the LORD,***

- ***But you say,***

***“How have you shown
love to us?”***

- ***“Esau was Jacob’s brother,”
the LORD explains,***

- ***“yet I chose Jacob”***

(Amplified Bible Classic)

- This was a **heavy message** because it was described as:

- ***"The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi."***
(Malachi 1:1)

- Malachi reminded the people that God continued to love His people **in spite of their rebellion**n.
 - God's love for the **Jewish nation** was pictured by the prophet.
 - Choosing them to be the nation through whom **the Messiah** would be born.

- **God gave the Jews:**
 - **Law,**
 - **Temple,**
 - **Priests,**
 - **prophets,**
- His **providential** care
- And finally the **Messiah.**

- **Our greatest error**
in considering
God's election
is to think that God chooses
for arbitrary reasons,
- As if He made choices
in an
“eeny-meeny-miny-moe”
way of choosing.

- **We may not understand God's ways.**
 - And they may be reasons He alone **knows** and **answers** to,
 - But God's choices **are not impulsive.**
 - They make perfect sense **knowing everything God knows**
and
seeing everything God sees.

- **Isaiah 46:9-11**

Truly I am God,

I have no peer;

I am God, and

there is none like me,

- **46:10** who announces the

end from the **beginning**

and reveals beforehand

what has not yet occurred ...

- When did God choose Jacob?
- In the womb,
- So Jacob couldn't have done anything to have deserved it.
 - In fact, as you study the life of Jacob,
 - He epitomizes the independent man trying to control his own destiny.

- **Malachi 1:6**

God accuses

the Jews of

despising

His name.

- How Have We Despised Your Name?
(Malachi 1:6-2:9)
 - They didn't offer God the respect He deserved.
 - They offered blind animal sacrifices.
 - They offered lame and sick animals

- They sacrificed lambs with blemishes which was forbidden in the law.

- God was to get the best of the crop and flock.
- But they were giving second rate sacrifices.
- God was getting the leftovers.

- Would you serve leftovers to your boss if you invited him over for dinner?

- Would you give a broken present to someone as a wedding gift?

- **Malachi 1:9**

They want God to be **gracious to them**,

- But God will not “receive them kindly”
until they change their ways.

- They are **saying**
they have repented,

- But they have **not**
changed their ways.

- This is the same message as **Micah 6:6-8**, **Hosea 14:1f.**

- In **Malachi 2:14** he points out that **God no longer accepts** their offerings
- And the people **want to know why.**
- **So they ask the question:**
 - “**For what reason.**”
 - The reasons begin in **Malachi 2:10.**

- **It was a direct violation of the covenant to marry foreigners,**
but they were doing it.
 - One reason for the command not to marry foreigners would be to avoid introducing the worship of **foreign gods into Israel.**
 - Solomon's **wives** did that.
 - **Jezebel** is another classic example.
 - **Verse 11** even describes the women as **“daughters of a foreign god”**.

- **Malachi 2:13-16**

says they covered the altar with **tears** and **looked sincere**.

- But God would not accept their sacrifices **because they were not sincere**

- As illustrated by their **actions**.

- They were getting **divorced**.

- **Malachi 2:14-16**

shows that marriage

is a covenant

witnessed by God
and one that should
never be broken.

- God says,

“I hate divorce.”

(Malachi 2:16)

- **How Have We Wearied Him?**
(**Malachi 2:17-3:6**)
- **They doubt God's justice**
 - Because they **couldn't see justice** coming to the wicked.
- The **Persians** were wicked and they were still in power,
 - And there were **Jews** who were wicked and not being punished.

- Malachi promises that **God will judge the wicked.**

- **Malachi 3:1-3**

- is a promise fulfilled by **John the Baptizer.**

- ***“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.***

- **"Refiner's fire ..."**
 - Must be applied
to all men.
- Only the **pure** shall be saved.
- **And the rest shall perish.**
 - John the Baptizer came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying:
 - **Repent,**
for the kingdom of God is at hand.

- **Matthew 3:12**

**"His fan is in his hand;
and he will thoroughly purge
his threshing floor;**

- **and he will gather his wheat
into the garner,**

- **But the chaff he will burn up
with unquenchable fire".**

- This is exactly the thought
behind the metaphor of the

"refiner's fire."

(Malachi 3:2)

- Notice the imagery of smelter, purifier, refiner's fire and fullers' soap, etc.

- The emphasis is on the cleansing and purifying.

- Malachi 3:6

God's immutability means
He will keep His promises.

- ***“For I am the Lord,
I change not.”***

- **How Shall We Return?**
(**Malachi 3:7**)

- Israel needs to repent and return to God before He can restore them.

- **But they ask**
how they are to return.

- **His answer:**

- **Stop robbing me!**

- **How Have We Robbed You?**
(**Malachi 3:8-12**)

- They were withholding their **tithes** and **offerings**.
 - They were **robbing God**.
 - They were looking for happiness **in material possessions**.
 - To the **neglect** of the spiritual.

- **THE REMEDY**

(**Malachi 3:10-12**)

**Bring your tithes into the storehouse,
that there may be meat in mine house,
and prove me now herewith,
saith the LORD of hosts,**

- **if I will not open you the
windows of heaven,
and pour you out a blessing,
that *there shall not
be room enough to receive it.***

- Their **priorities** are wrong.
 - They were trying to **find happiness in things.**
- But things **never** truly satisfy.
 - Forever,
searching for happiness.
 - But,
never finding it.

- Malachi condemns the people because their words had been harsh against God.
(**Malachi 3:13-15**)

- Their words and hearts had become hardened.

- Their question,

“What have we spoken against You?”

- Was not a repentant question,
 - It was a protest.

- God's response is that
He keeps a
book of remembrance.
(**Malachi 3:16-18**)

- Which means
He does not forget
those who fear and serve Him.

- **“On that day”**
justice will come on the wicked,
but the righteous would be spared.”
(**Malachi 4:1**)

- This requires that we look to the future for our reward.
- It goes against our basic nature to do that.
- It requires that we believe in something we can't see.
- It takes faith.
- Our tendency is to want to get our reward now.

- **The Day of the Lord**
(**Malachi 4:1-6**)
- This is the same day spoken of in
Zephaniah 1:14
and
Joel 2:31.
 - It finds its
partial fulfillment
in every judgment of God on evil,
 - The primary fulfillment
will occur
at the second coming of Christ.

- Malachi emphasizes that God is concerned with both attitudes and actions.

Malachi 4:1

- Conclusion
(**Malachi 4:4-6**)

The last three verses
summarize

Malachi's message.

- Notice the last word
of the O.T.:
“curse.”

- **What a way to end.**
 - It leaves you **hanging.**
 - Searching for **resolution.**
- And the resolution would be found in the **Messiah.**

- All of God's prophets **had done their work,**
- But the people had **rejected them all.**
 - There was **no further word** that God could send.

- But God gave a promise that He would send Elijah,

- Who had left the earth four hundred years earlier.

- The age of the prophets is now over.

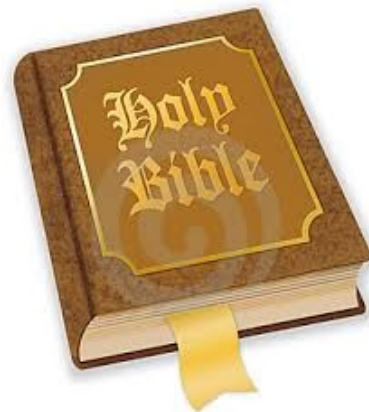
- For 400 years there would be no prophet.
- No message from God.
 - But suddenly:
An angel of God appeared in the temple.
 - And spoke to Zacharias the father of John the Baptizer.

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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