

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

MALACHI

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CHAPTER 1

Malachi tests the genuineness of religious faith by the offering which God's people come before Him. In this chapter he considers numerous offerings and the spirit behind the giving. He also suggests it would be better to come simply with prayer and a true heart.

FIRST MESSAGE DIRECTED TO ISRAEL

JACOB AND INTIMACY WITH GOD 1-2

The **burden** [avm "that which is lifted up" added to the Prefix "m" which signifies water] is usually carried on the back. I like to think of it as a water-porter's burden. Such carriers had a call which ran "Ho every one that thirst come and buy-buy without money and without price". The carrier offers a sample draught to all] of the word of the LORD to Israel by the hand of Malachi. "I loved you as a friend" [bha] says the LORD. But you say "In what way have you been our amiable friend?" "Was not Esau the natural intimate brother [ja] for Jacob yet I was the one who was intimate friend to Jacob" whispers the LORD? The LORD is explaining that His friendship with the Jewish Patriarch goes back a long way and that He was closer than a brother to Jacob.

THE DOOM OF ESAU –A WARNING AGAINST THE GODLESS LIFESTYLE 3-4

So I hated Esau and made his mountains a solitary desolation and his inheritance or possession a resting place for the **serpents** or jackals of the wilderness [mynt]-It is of relevance that the NT book of Hebrews 12.16 that Esau was "a profane person" meaning that he was πορνός "a catamite" and βεβηλος "given to human abuse". Esau chose a deeply immoral and godless lifestyle. For Edom will say "We have been **broken up** like a ship [vvr] but we will return and re-build the ruins". Thus says the LORD of hosts "They will build but I will break down and they will call them "The measured limit or Mount of wickedness guilt or **terror** [vr the mount "liable to punishment" which seems the basic implication of the term [vr] and "The people against whom the LORD has set a curse or is angry" perpetually. The lifestyle of Edom and his unwillingness to walk with God when invited so to do by Jacob spelt his doom and the admonition of this book and that of Hebrews is the most acute warning against pornography, prostitution, homosexuality, catamite behaviour and paedophilia.

GOD WILL BE HONOURED

ARRAIGNMENT OF ISRAEL'S PRIESTS 5-7

- (1) But your eyes will see prophetically and you will say "The LORD will be magnified from or in approaching the border that belongs to Israel" A son honours his father and a servant his master but if I am a Father where is my honour? And if I am "Masters" [the plural maintains the sovereignty of God Father Son and Spirit] where is my fear?" says the LORD of hosts to you the priests who hold my name in contempt

- (2) But YOU ARE SAYING “in what have we been in contempt of Your name?”

**BAD OFFERINGS WOULDN'T WASH WITH THE GOVERNOR
GOD WILL ACCEPT THE HUMBLE AND PRAYERFUL 8-9**

- (3) “And if you approach **to offer** [*vgn*] the blind for an offering is it not evil? And when you make an offering of the lame and sick is it not wrong? Please try on the approach to your **provincial deputy** [*hjp*] –will he be pleased with you? Will he cause your face to be accepted” says the LORD of hosts?

**SECOND MESSAGE PROCLAIMING GRACE AND ARRAIGNING THE
MONEY SERVING CARELESS AND MISERLY**

AND NOW **please seek the face of God for mercy so that he may be gracious to us!**

This is **apart from your hands!** [*mkdym*] He will cause your faces to be lifted up **apart from yourselves** [*mkm*] or your persons” says the LORD of hosts. *This reading though rather akin to a Mishnah interpretation but it accords both with the sense and sees Malachi imploring the people to seek Grace alone and presents the LORD as responding.*

NO-ONE SERVES GOD FOR FREE 10

- (4) And also who is there among you that will shut the doors and not prosper (by it)? And you do not kindle my altar gratis. Through you there is no joy for me says the LORD of hosts.

OFFERING REFUSED THROUGH A BAD TESTIMONY 11

- (5) Also I will not be pleased with the offering from your hands for from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the Gentiles and in every significant place incense shall be presented to my name and a clean offering for my name is great among the Gentile nations says the LORD of hosts

SPOKEN WITNESS AFFECTS THE OFFERING 12

- (6) But you are damaging or hurting and profaning it BY SAYING “the table of the Lord is defiled or **beyond redeeming** [*lagm*] and also its produce-or results. His eating or meat is despised.

TOTAL DISINTEREST IS A NEGATIVE 13A

- (7) And you have been saying “Behold what weariness labour or trouble it is and you have caused yourselves to pooh-pooh it” [*literally “puff at” it*] says the LORD of hosts

**THEFT AND GIVING TO GOD WHAT NO-ONE WANTS IS A NEGATIVE
13B**

- (8) And you brought the stolen the limping and that writhing in pain or **sickness** [*l#j*]-thus you brought them-the tribute offering to God. Should I be pleased to receive it from your hands says the LORD of hosts.

MISERABLE WITHOLDING DISPLEASED GOD 14

- (9) But cursed be the **miser** [/kɪ/] **rich** [vj/] by the male of his flock but vows and sacrifices to the LORD a marred or defiled slaughtered family sacrifice [hbz/] for I am a great king says the LORD of hosts and my name is feared or famous among the Gentiles.

CHAPTER 2

THIRD MESSAGE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE PRIESTS 1-2

And NOW IS YOUR TURN O priests-this commandment concerns you. If you will not hear and obey and if you will not **take it to heart** [literally “set it upon your heart”] **TO GIVE GLORY TO MY NAME** I the LORD of hosts will **send** [to “send a weapon”] of a curse wave and I will curse your blessings. *The LORD was warning that if the religious leaders did not “obey” Him He would turn the blessings –even the Aaronic blessing into a curse upon the people.* And I have even cursed it [the blessing] because or when you set it on your hearts [i.e. think about not glorifying me].

THE EFFECTIVE REBUKE OF LEVI 3-5

Behold Me while I **rebuke** [r[g with an m it can mean “curse”] your seed and winnow or sift or sprinkle dung on your faces –the dung of your holy feasts and it will cheer you up or make you look good. *The idea is that the priesthood would be neutralised in its office by disobedience and by the filth of the sacrifices offered the very look of the priests would be filthy. The prophecy plays mild ridicule at the disobedient priests.*

And you will be aware that I have sent this command that my covenant should be with Levi says the LORD of hosts.

THE EFFECTIVE LIVING OF LEVITES-RESULT-MASS CONVERSION 6

My covenant of life and peace was with him and I gave him reverence or awe and he feared me and it gave him continual reverence for my name. The Torah of truth was in his mouth and dire iniquity was not found on his lips. In peace and straightforward he walked with me and turned great numbers from iniquity.

THE PRIESTS WERE TEACHERS 7-8

For the lips of the priest should guard “knowing” (God) and they should search for the Torah from his mouth for he is the messenger of the LORD your God. But you are apostate or **turned away** [rws/] from the way and you have caused many of them to stagger in or with the Torah. You have perverted or spoiled the covenant of Levi says the LORD of hosts.

PERFIDIOUS JUDAH PUNISHED BY A DEMISE OF RELIGION 9-12

I also have given you shame and low rank to all peoples in proportion to your guarding my ways and accepted the faces [of men] against my Torah. Does not one father belong to all of us? Has not one God created us? Why should we **knowingly** [/wɔdm/] deal corruptly each with his brother to profane the covenant of our fathers? Judah has dealt perfidiously or fraudulently and a horrible thing is done in Israel and in Jerusalem for Judah has consistently violated the holiness of the LORD that he loves and has united with [become husband to] the daughter of a foreign God.

The LORD will cut off the man who does this-the **watcher** [AV “*master*” NIV “*whoever*”] and the **afflicted one who prays** [hñ/] from the tabernacles of Jacob and **he who draws near** present an offering to the LORD of hosts

THE CENTRAL PURPOSE OF GOD AND MARRIAGE ARE FOR EVER TWINNED 13-15

And this you have done a second time-coverings of tears (on) the altar of the LORD-weeping and **groaning** [qn/] separating you from any further attention to the sacrifice and receiving with pleasure from your hands. But you say “For what reason? For the reason that the LORD has witnessed between you and the wife of your youth for you have acted covertly or faithlessly against her but she is bound to you and the wife of your covenant. But did not **He** make (both) one and the residual **Spirit** is His. And why one? From seeking **a seed of God!** So watch against your spirits and do not deal faithlessly with your young wife. *Malachi is speaking of the purpose of marriage. He expounds God’s purpose as being to choose for Himself the Messiah from the holy nation. In this context we have one of those rare and beautiful references to the trinity and to the divine heart as it links to the actions of men-in particular the blood line of the Christ amongst the Jews. The interpretation of the AV is a derivative-that “the LORD is seeking godly seed in our marriages.”*

THE NATION’S PROBLEMS ARE SPIRITUAL AT ROOT 16-17

Because he hates divorce the LORD God of Israel speaks and one continually hides violence by his outer garment says the LORD of hosts so keep watch on **your spirits** so that you will not be faithless. You have wearied the LORD with your words or actions and you still say “by what have we wearied Him? By saying “Every one who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD and He is pleased with them! Else where is the God of judgment?”

CHAPTER 3

THE PROMISE OF THE LORD’S RETURN AS JUDGE 1-7

Behold me sending my messenger and he will continually prepare the way before my face and suddenly

- (1) The Lord whom you are seeking will come to his temple and behold the messenger of the covenant whom you desire He will come says the LORD of hosts. But who can **persist to endure** [l/k] the day He comes and who will stand at His appearing for He is like the fire of a refiner and like the soap of fullers.
- (2) And He will sit or remain –a refiner and one who declares pure as silver and He shall pronounce the sons of Levi clean and refine or fuse them as gold and silver and they will be to the LORD an approach offering through righteousness.
- (3) And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be a sweet security to the LORD as in days of a bygone age and years that are gone by.
- (4) “And I come close to you for judgment and I will be a swift or must be a swift witness against the magicians adulterers and those who swear deceitfully and , against those who defraud the hired man of his reward, the widow, the orphan and those who turn the stranger away so do not fear says the LORD of hosts. For I am the LORD; I do not change and you sons of Jacob are not consumed or **in extremity**. [h/k]
- (5) In the days of your fathers you turned aside or departed from my decrees and

did not keep them. Return to me and I will return to you says the LORD of hosts and you say “With what shall we return?”

TITHING AND BLESSING 8-12

(God speaking) “Will a man rob God? But you have robbed me!” But you say “In what way have we robbed You?” “You have robbed me of the tenth tithe and the heave offering”. You have cursed yourselves with a curse and you have robbed me-the whole nation! Cause all the tenth tithes to come to the house of storage and there will be **fresh provision** [*prf*] in my house and please test me in this says the LORD of hosts if

- (6) I will not open for you the windows of the heavens and cause an **outpouring** [*qwr*] of blessing for you until there will be no place for it to go (or “belong to”)
- (7) And I will reprove the (pest that) eats for you and it shall not destroy the fruit of the fertile ground.
- (8) And the vine that belongs to you shall not abort its fruit on the field says the LORD of hosts.
- (9) And all nations shall bless you for you shall be a favoured or delectable land says the LORD of hosts

THE CHARGE THAT IT IS FUTILITY TO SERVE GOD EXPOSED 13-15

Your words have been stern against me says the LORD but you say “How have our words been against you?” You have said “It is **vanity or calamity** [*awv*] to serve God and what **gain** [*xb*] is it that we have been vigilant concerning His rites [*trmcm*] and have lived in a solemn turbid manner before the LORD of hosts?

And now we are the unhappy insolent or seething ones; also they who work wickedly have built up; also they that test [*nj b*- “tempt” in the sense our LORD rebuked in *Matthew 4.7*] God are spared.

A RECORD OF OUR SERVICE IS HELD IN HEAVEN 16-18 WHEN SIN WAS AS DARK AS COULD BE BELIEVING JEWS ENJOYED THE RICH FELLOWSHIP OF HOPE

At that time they that revered the LORD spoke mutually of their concerns or of the promises [*Niphal of rbd*] each man with his caring or pastoral friend and the LORD sharpened his attention and heard or heard and obeyed and a re-collection book was written before His face belonging to those who revered the LORD and to those who thought about or **meditated on** or esteemed His name [*bvj*] “wove His name into” music speech and conversation etc. as a damask weaver would mix colours] So they will be “mine” says the LORD of hosts for the day when I activate produce or display my wealth. *I believe the word “make” hv[should be read “complete” as the LORD gets together not so much “jewels” but the “vessels” or lives that He has used in the rapture. And I will have compassion on them or show them tender affection* [*lmj*] as a married man is mild and gentle upon (the shoulder of) his son who acts as his servant. *This is reminiscent of the LORD’S appreciation of our Lord Jesus who though a son served the Father.*

And you will return and see [*har*] or understand and discern between guilty or wicked and the righteous-between the one who serves God and the one who does not.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT 4.1-6

For behold the day is coming –consuming like a furnace and all the proud and all that do evil will be chaff and the day that comes will continually burn or enflame them [*Piel continuous of fhl*] says the LORD of hosts. It shall not leave them root and branch. *From here we get our “root and branch” destruction. There will be no residue of wickedness.*

For you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall arise with waves of healing in His **wings** or skirts [*pnk literally the hems of His prayer shawl*] and you will go forth and fatten as calves from being bound or fastened. *Suddenly the world’s check on the freedom of Christians will end for ever and an era of liberty in the LORD the Spirit will be released. Phenomenal spiritual growth will immediately ensue.*

And you will trample the wicked and they shall be ashes [*rpa is according to the AV insightfully taken as “ashes” after the wicked who are no more are represented by the ashes of the destruction of that time as the millennium of His kingdom emerges*] under the soles of your feet in the day I am making or acting says the LORD of hosts. *This day of action is one not alone of judgment of the wicked but of the display of His wealth in the return of saints with Christ. This text is indicative of **a role for Christians in the kingdom on earth or at least an experience of the beginning of the kingdom of the golden age.***

Remember the Torah of Moses my servant –ordinances and judgments that I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. Behold I will send to you Elijah the Prophet before the faces of the great and terrible day of the LORD. And he shall cause the heart of fathers to turn or to be converted on account of sons and the heart of sons to be converted or lead back on account of their fathers lest I come and smite the land [of Israel] with a sword.

THE END

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To the glory of the Lord
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