

1:1-2:16

**“Most of you do not honour me!”**

God explains why he has withdrawn his presence and blessing

2:17-4:6

**“A day is coming when the difference will be clear!”**

God promises a day of final refining and judgement

## Malachi 2:17-4:6 (NIVUK)

Sunday 6 July 2025

### 1. “You want justice...? (2:17)

<sup>17</sup> 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** ‘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.

**...I’ll give you final justice!” (3:1-5)**

<sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

Day of refining...

...will enable relating to God  
‘properly’ cf. Ezekiel

<sup>5</sup> ‘So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me,’ says the LORD Almighty.

<sup>6</sup> ‘I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

<sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them.

### 2. “Your sin... (3:6-8)

Return to me, and I will return to you,’ says the LORD Almighty.

‘But you ask, “How are we to return?”

<sup>8</sup> ‘Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

‘But you ask, “How are we robbing you?”

‘In tithes and offerings.

<sup>9</sup> You are under a curse – your whole nation – because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> 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 there will not be room enough to store it.

<sup>11</sup> I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,’ says the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup> ‘Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,’ says the LORD Almighty.

**... has meant current curses!” (3:9-12)**

(cf. Mosaic covenant, Deuteronomy 28)

<sup>13</sup> ‘You have spoken arrogantly against me,’ says the LORD.

‘Yet you ask, “What have we said against you?”

<sup>14</sup> ‘You have said, “It is futile to serve God. What do we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? <sup>15</sup> But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly evildoers prosper, and even when they put God to the test, they get away with it.”

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<sup>16</sup>Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honoured his name.

<sup>17</sup>“On the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty, “they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him. <sup>18</sup>And you will again see<sup>a</sup> the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

<sup>4</sup><sup>b</sup>“Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. <sup>2</sup>But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. <sup>3</sup>Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty.

<sup>4</sup>“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

<sup>5</sup>“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup>He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.’

But not everyone had contempt for God

### 3. Judgement day will have binary outcomes (3:17-4:6)

- Arrogant & evil will be burned up (4:1, 3)
- Fear & reverent will be joyful (3:17, 4:2-3)

Final comments:

- Remember what Deuteronomy says (4:4)
  - ‘Horeb’
  - ‘All Israel’ predicted to fail
  - God promises a new covenant
- An ‘Elijah’ will preach repentance so not all Israel will be destroyed (4:5-6)

#### For reflection

1. To what extent do you believe YHWH when he declares a judgement day? Why?

2. How does reading Malachi help you grow in fear and reverence for YHWH?

#### John the Baptist as ‘Elijah’

Matthew 11:13–14

“For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.”

Matthew 17:12–13

“But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognise him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

Luke 1:17

“And he will go before him  
in the spirit and power of Elijah,  
to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,  
and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,  
to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

<sup>a</sup> LSB translates more literally *So you will return and see*

<sup>b</sup> In Hebrew texts 4:1-6 is numbered 3:19-24.