

The 12 Minor Prophets

“HOW we worship matters...because it's GOD we worship”

Malachi 1:6-4:3

Sunday, May 19, 2013

INTRODUCTION

Who was Malachi?

- His name means “my messenger”

When did he Prophesy?

- Contemporary of Ezra & Nehemiah, though written later

What is the main theme?

- Through Zechariah and Haggai, the temple had been rebuilt
- Through Ezra, the people had become reacquainted with the Law
- Through Nehemiah, the wall had been rebuilt
- But the people were not worshipping the Lord rightly...
 - Their orthodoxy was dead
 - Their morals compromised
 - Their ministry diminished
 - Their focus internalized

What is the aim?

- Exhort the people to worship rightly and with the right heart, showing reverence for their awesome God.
- To renew their covenant faithfulness.

What is the overarching question?

- Does it matter HOW we worship?

A. Worship begins with a right view of God's Love (1:1-5)

1. Disputation 1: That God is loving
 - a) They were waiting on His rule upon finishing the temple
 - b) Instead, it's been difficulty and infusion of Persian influences
2. God's character in question
 - a) His covenant love
 - b) His sovereignty
3. Evidence of their dispute
 - a) Seeing the “wicked” prosper, they question God's loving commitment to them
 - b) They have a TIMING problem
4. Matters of heart & action
 - a) See His faithful dealings as evidence of sovereign love
 - b) Say that God is great

B. Worship demands pure offerings (1:6-2:9)

1. Disputation 2: That God's people are loving
 - a) Here, the tables turn
 - b) The real question is not God's love for the people, but the people's love for God
2. God's character in question
 - a) Worthy of honor

b) Questioning His name

3. Evidence of their dispute

a) Priests offer lame sacrifices

b) Consequences **(2:1-9)**

4. Matters of heart & action

a) **(v.11,14)** God's name will be declared as great among the nations...ALWAYS **(v.5)**

b) Incense everywhere...

c) This connect mission & worship

C. Worship centers on covenant faithfulness (2:10-16)

1. Disputation 3: That the people have broken covenant with God by breaking covenant in marriage

2. God's character in question

a) God's creation & rule

b) God's faithfulness

3. Evidence of their dispute

a) Intermarrying with other religions

b) Divorce **(v.16)**

4. Matters of heart & action

a) To separate community relationships from our communion with God shows we don't get it

b) Displays that we believe reconciliation is with us, not with God

c) What if we believed worship of God was at stake when thinking divorce is an option?

D. Worship heralds God's covenant faithfulness (2:17-3:5)

1. Disputation 4: That the people are unfaithful, but God remains faithful

2. God's character in question

a) Saying God isn't good by delighting in evil

b) Saying God is unjust (which questions purity)

3. Evidence of their dispute

a) Need for a messenger

b) Need for his message

4. Matters of heart & action

a) God will purify His own...and His own respond in repentance

b) EVERYONE will give an account and must brace for their accounting

c) Are you righteous enough?

E. Worship displays joyful trust in God (3:6-12)

1. Disputation 5: That the people rob God, showing their attempted joy in the world and their lack of trust in God

2. God's character in question

a) His unchangeable nature

- b) He still offers return
- 3. Evidence of their dispute
 - a) They rob God
 - b) They thought because of the conditions (draught/ famine) they couldn't give
 - c) God says it's because they don't give that they are in such conditions
- 4. Matters of heart & action
 - a) Put God to the test
 - b) Be blessed

F. Worship declares God's love (3:13-4:3)

- 1. Disputation 6: That God's love is faithful and true
- 2. God's character in question
 - a) His worth / trustworthiness
 - b) His holiness
 - c) His mercy
- 3. Evidence of their dispute (**3:13-15**)
 - a) They speak harshly to God
 - b) Judgment is coming (**3:16-4:3**)
- 4. Matters of heart & action
 - a) When you can't trace His hand, trust His heart
 - b) Do you believe?
 - c) Do you worship...really?