

I love the mountain top moments of life but I grow the most in the valley. God in his infinite wisdom allows each us to go through trials and tribulations that we might grow. He purges in love.

**Lastly, we see from Malachi 3 that God is faithful to each one of us and He is gracious towards us.** Don't allow anything between you and your Savior.



### GROWTH GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. What did God do in your heart during the message?
2. How would you respond to the question, "Where is the God of judgment?" Have you ever asked that question?
3. Why do some Rabbi's think there were two Messiahs? What is the correct explanation?
4. What has God done in your life to purify and refine you?
5. Why does God command repentance to receive mercy? Explain the phrase, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you."

#### Answers to blanks

Two  
Second  
Mercy



# THE BOOK OF MALACHI

## The Refiner's Fire

**Text:** Malachi 3:1-7

A 100 years had passed since the amazing return from exile in Persia. Little change had taken place and the children of Israel were discouraged in their faith. They waned in their love for God and this led to apathy in their worship, obedience, giving, relationships (spouses), and their overall devotion to God. **They were blind to it.** They asked with a rebellious spirit - How have you loved us? How have we despised your name? How have we shown contempt for your sacrifices? How have we wearied God?

**Malachi 2:17** *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?*

**Israel complained that God seemed to reward the wicked** and did not exercise His justice in the world. God responds to their complaint by saying, "I will set things right with My Messiah, and before Him will come My messenger."

### 1. The Coming of \_\_\_\_\_ Messengers - Malachi 3:1

**Who is this first messenger?**

It is none other than John the Baptist! All 4 Gospels reference Malachi 3 verse 1. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ. He baptized with water but the One to follow would baptize with the Holy Ghost.

### **Who is the second messenger?**

It is the Messiah, the promised one - Jesus. The Lord of Heaven's armies declares that He will come to his temple. Jesus did in fact do that. Malachi was teaching these impatient people that the Lord will come through on His promises and that He must first prepare the way for the Messiah.

## **2. The \_\_\_\_\_ Coming of Christ - Malachi 3:2**

**Malachi points out their incorrect thinking.** You are eager for His coming, the one who you delight in - good! However, who can stand to face Him when He does come? The day of his coming refers to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Malachi and other Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah and Zechariah would write about the Messiah in such a way that some Jewish Rabbi's believed in two different Messiah's - the suffering Messiah and the conquering Messiah. As you and I should know - Jesus has already fulfilled the role of the suffering Messiah and we await His Second Coming or His glorious appearing as Titus puts it.

### **FIRST COMING:**

- JESUS WAS THE SUFFERING SERVANT
- JESUS ARRIVED IN A HUMBLE MANGER

### **SECOND COMING:**

- JESUS WILL BE THE CONQUERING KING
- JESUS WILL ARRIVE WITH THE ARMIES OF HEAVEN (*AS HE DESCRIBED HIMSELF IN MALACHI*)

See Revelation 19:11-16

## **3. The Lord as our Purifier and Refiner - Malachi 3:3-5**

**Definition of Refine:** *verb:* remove impurities or unwanted elements from (a substance)

The coming of this second Messenger will be awesome and terrible at the same time, but with a purpose. **Both the fullers' soap and the refiner work to clean, not to destroy. Remember, God disciplines for our profit not His pleasure!**

**What is Fullers' Soap?** A fuller was the individual who would take the raw, filthy wool from sheep and purify it using a variety of techniques, including an extremely harsh soap that would ultimately help to make it clean.

**Quote:** "What a comfort it is that He surrenders this work to no other hands than his own. He may give his angels charge concerning us when we are in danger; but he keeps our purification beneath his special superintendence" - F.B. Meyer

See James 1:27

See James 5:1-15

## **4. Declaration of \_\_\_\_\_ & Repentance - Malachi 3:6-7**

**The promise is only as good the promiser.** God is reminding the nation of Israel that the Lord is consistent and faithful.

See James 4:8

**God is faithful to each one of us.** His promise is true today. You can leave from this auditorium and draw near to Him and He promises to draw near to you. God is a God of mercy - they are new every morning but this also calls for your repentance. When was the last time you repented of your sins before a holy God.

**We see from Malachi 3 that the Lord is a God of justice.** He takes notice of everything that happens on the earth. He will judge in righteousness. The suffering savior will return as the conquering king. God will judge the world in righteousness.

**We see from Malachi 3 that God desires to purify us and refine us for our profit.** God can use painful circumstances - the flame - to remove the impurities from our life.