

Malachi 2:17-3:6 – The Messiah is Coming

The people of Malachi's time refused to acknowledge God's love for them. The priests offered unauthorized sacrifices and showed that they despised God's name. The people married foreign women and divorced their Jewish wives. After God rebuked the people for these sins, the people had the nerve to say that God wasn't acting with justice.

Read Malachi 2:17-3:6.

God said that the people wearied him with their words. What did the people say in response to God's accusation? What did the people say about God's justice? (2:17)

The people wanted to know "where is the God of justice". Why is it dangerous to ask for God's justice?

In response to the people's cry for justice, what did God say he would do? Who was the messenger who would prepare the way before God? (3:1a) See Matthew 11:7-10 and Luke 1:76.

Who was going to come after the messenger who prepared the way? Where was he going to appear? (3:1b)

Two different titles are given to the Messiah. What are those two titles and what is their significance? The word "Lord" is not in small caps. This is not the name "Yahweh". It is a word commonly translated as "lord" or "master". It is used of someone in authority over others. It is sometimes used to refer to God. It is sometimes used to refer to a king. It can also refer to the master of a household. (3:1b)

In verse 1, does the prophetic announcement refer to Christ's first coming, his second coming or both? Which temple would the Messiah enter? Is this referring to a physical temple or a spiritual temple?

The people cried for justice so, in response, God promised to send the Messiah? What was God's challenge to the people who would see the Messiah? The people generally expected the Messiah to come and deliver them from their political enemies. How does this verse expose the people's incorrect expectations? (3:2)

How is the Messiah like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap? What was the primary purpose of Jesus' first coming? Was there judgment involved in Jesus' first coming? If so, explain. Who were often the objects of Jesus' condemnation? (3:2-3)

What would be the result of the Messiah's refining process? How was this prophecy fulfilled? See 1 Peter 2:5 and Romans 12:1. (3:3-4)

The people wanted judgment and justice. What did God promise them in verse 5? What is the significance of the specific sins mentioned?

Does verse 5 refer to Christ's first coming, his second coming or both?

God declared that he does not change. How did this fact result in Jacob not being consumed?

How did the people imply that God had changed?

How many times have parents heard their children say "that's not fair"? The people of Israel accused God of not being fair. Do we accuse God of not being fair? Why do we question God's justice? "That's not fair" is often the objection people have to God's sovereign election based solely on his good pleasure and not on our works. It has often been pointed out, the question is not "why does God save some and not others" but "why does God save any of us". We are all deserving of God's judgment and wrath because of our sin. Only by God's grace are we saved. The people of Malachi's time wanted justice. God would give them justice but he also promised them grace in the person of Jesus Christ.