

Malachi 3:1

The Forerunner of the Messiah

Text: Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6

Introduction:

1. God had promised that the seed of woman would crush the head of the serpent and the enemy of man would be defeated (Genesis 3:15).
2. He showed that this victory would include blessedness for all through the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).
3. This Victor would be a mediator (Job 19:23-27), a ruler (Genesis 49:10), a star (Numbers 24:17), a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), a priest (1 Samuel 2:35), and a king (1 Samuel 2:10) - ruling from the throne of David (1 Chronicles 17:11-14).
4. During the time of David, the "sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1) recorded many prophecies of Jesus in the Psalms.
5. In the writings of the prophets, much more detail about the coming Messiah was given.
6. Malachi showed that the Messiah would be preceded by a messenger to prepare the way for Him...

I. THE MESSENGER

(MALACHI 3:1)

- A. Even though God loved His people greatly, He had grown weary with them.
- B. God declared that they had wearied Him with their words (2:17).
- C. Again, their response was, "Wherein?" "How have we possibly wearied God?"
- D. God explained that it wearied Him when they claimed that God blessed the evil and not the righteous.
- E. In fact, they asked, "Where is the God of justice?" - implying that God was unjust toward them.
- F. God's reply to their accusation was that He Himself would come and deliver justice.
- G. In fact, He would come suddenly; but, first, He would send His messenger.
 1. This is a prophecy of John the Baptist (cf. 4:5).
 2. This messenger is the same as the "voice" of Isaiah 40:3-5.
 3. This stated clearly by Jesus Himself (Matthew 11:10-14; cf. Mark 1:2-3; Luke 1:76).
- H. God further declared that He was weary with their greed (3:7-12) and their complaints (3:13-15).

II. THE MISSION

(MALACHI 4:5-6)

- A. John the Baptist would be the messenger who would serve as a prophet of God.
- B. His mission would be to turn the hearts "of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers."
- C. The turning of the heart refers to repentance (Matthew 3:1-2, 8; Mark 1:4)
- D. He would do this by preaching in the spirit and power of Elijah (Matthew 11:14; 17:10-13; Luke 1:17; cf. John 1:21).
- E. Thus, John would prepare the way for the Lord.

Prophecy of Jesus

III. THE METHOD

(ISAIAH 40:3-8)

- A. The method employed by John would be to preach as a voice crying in the wilderness.
 - 1. Discipline
 - 2. Humility
 - 3. Passion
 - 4. Discernment
- B. All four accounts of the Gospel record Isaiah's prophecy of John (Isaiah 40:1-5; Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:2-3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23).
- C. By his preaching of the Truth, John would create level ground and a clear path to the Messiah.
- D. The Truth that John preached is the Word of God that will stand forever!