



Memorial Park

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Malachi Introduction

1. Transitional scriptures: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
 - a. Malachi is the last book of the OT, but it anticipates the NT.
 - b. It addresses the decline of godliness in Israel, and it looks forward to the “messenger” (that is John the Baptist) and the Messiah.
 - c. Transitionally, it is the link between Judaism and Christianity.
 - d. It has a contemporary message in opposition to a modern state of mind that challenges God’s statements about our contemporary life style.
 - e. It challenges the contemporary church – “having a form of godliness, but denying its power.” (II Tim 3:5)
2. Historical Context:
 - a. The exile and return of Judah.
 - i. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 BC and took Judah captive into Babylonian exile. (Read the narratives in Daniel.)
 - ii. Cyrus (Persia) conquered Babylon in 539 BC and allowed the first return of some of the Jews.
 - iii. The Temple was reconstructed in 515 BC with the encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the leadership of Zerubbabel, and during the time of Ezra, the high priest.
 - iv. The Jerusalem wall was reconstructed during the time of Ezra in 444 BC in 52 days under the leadership of Nehemiah.
 - v. Nehemiah as governor and Ezra as high priest worked to rebuild and reform Judah as a nation, militarily, spiritually, and culturally. Nehemiah’s accomplishments, in addition to the reconstructed Jerusalem wall, include a renewal of faith and the rebirth of Israel as a nation. (Read Nehemiah.)
 - vi. Malachi probably prophesied at the time of the Ezra and Nehemiah reforms.
3. Haggai’s prophecy, which was addressed to the remnant who were exiles that returned to Judah from their captivity:
4. Haggai 1:1 to 2:9
 - a. After 50 years of neglect in Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem, what did the remnant encounter upon their return? Why?
 - b. What is the implication of “paneled houses” in 1:4? What comparison is presented in this verse?
 - c. What was the response to Haggai’s call to rebuild the Temple? What encouragement was in his message? Note 2:6-9. What are the Lord’s promises for the returning exiles who would be the builders? How would these promises encourage the builders?
5. Notes from Zechariah:
 - a. What was the cause of Judah’s exile noted in Zech 1:2-6?
 - b. What promises were given to the returning exiles in Zech 1:16-17, 2:5, 8:7, 8:12, 9:9 & 12:1-2? How would these promises encourage them upon their return?
 - c. See Nehemiah 1:2-3. What realities did the remnant face upon their return?
6. Nehemiah’s Reforms:
7. Nehemiah acted as governor of Judah for 12 years following the reconstruction of the Jerusalem wall. Some years later he returned for a second term as governor, and he was disappointed to find the decline of many of his reforms. These are recorded in Nehemiah 13.

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8800 Peebles Road, Allison Park, PA 15101 | 412.364.9492

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8. Nehemiah 13:1-30

- a. List the problems that Nehemiah encountered when he returned to Judah for his second term as governor.
- b. How did Nehemiah solve these problems?
- c. Regarding the problem of mixed marriages, what was at stake?
- d. What of these problems do you see in our culture and churches today?
- e. What do these problems imply about people of Judah and their relationship to the Lord?

Note: Read "Excellence in Leadership" by John White, IVP, 1986 for a comprehensive study of Nehemiah's leadership style.