Wednesday Bible Study – Spring 2021
6:30 pm Every Wednesday Unless Otherwise Noted

Malachi: the faithful God and the disconnected people

"For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you,
O sons of Jacob, are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6).

April 14, 2021: Intro and Malachi 1:1 – 5, God Loves His Children

April 21, 2021: Malachi 1:6 - 2:17, God Disciplines His Children

April 28, 2021: Malachi 3:1 – 12, God Will Purify His Children

May 5, 2021: Malichi 3:13 – 4, Some will Revere and God will Bless

God Will Purify His Children (Mal 2:17—3:12)

Fourth Disputation (Mal 2:17-3:5) – Looking Ahead: God will vindication His justice

"Behold, I send my messenger" (3:1)

Purify some and Judge others (3:2-5)

Fifth Disputation (Mal 3:6-12) – A Begrudging Spirit brings destruction

"I the Lord do not change…" (3:6)

Robbing God? (3:8)

What It Means to Trust a Good God (3:10-12)

Disputation 1 – 1:2-5 - Malachi begins by defending the reality of God's elective love for Israel, a love which calls for robust covenantal obedience and sincere worship as its proper response. Instead, the people were dishonoring God by their worthless offerings and the hypocritical formalism of their worship.

Disputation 2 – 1:6-2:9 - Malachi exposes these offenses and rebukes the priests for condoning them and thereby violating the Lord's covenant with Levi.

Disputation 3 – 2:10-16 - Malachi condemns marriage to an idolater as infidelity against Israel's covenant with the Lord, and he condemns unauthorized divorce as infidelity against the marriage covenant between a husband and his wife, to which the Lord is witness.

Disputation 4 – 2:17-3:5 - Malachi broadens his indictment as he promises that the Lord will vindicate his justice. This will take place when "the messenger of the covenant" comes to judge the wicked (when the Lord will function as a witness not only against adulterers, as in 2:10–16, but also against other offenders) and to purify his people so that their offerings will be acceptable at last.

Disputation 5 – 3:6-12 - Malachi returns to the subject of Israel's begrudging offerings. The people experienced material adversity and were under a curse—not in spite of their behavior, but because of it. Accordingly, Malachi challenges them to conscientious tithing, which will be rewarded with divine blessing.

Disputation 6 – 3:13-4:3 - Malachi assures his grumbling contemporaries that evildoers, who seem to escape divine justice because of their prosperity, will yet be judged, while the Lord will deliver those who fear him.