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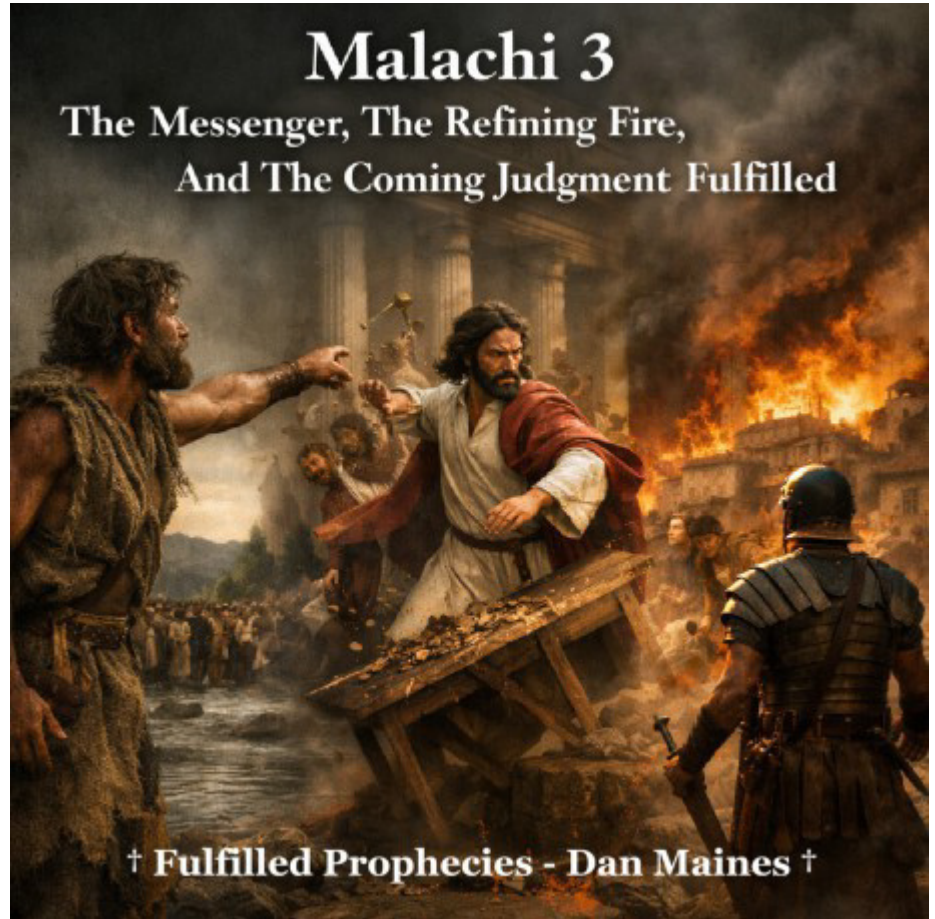
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Malachi 3 The Messenger The Refining Fire And The Coming Judgment Fulfilled



By Dan Maines

Malachi 3 The Messenger, The Refining Fire, And The Coming Judgment Fulfilled

Introduction

† Malachi 3 continues the warning to Israel's corrupt priesthood and unfaithful people, but now it shifts to the coming of the Lord in judgment, not in some distant future, but in their generation.

† The chapter reveals a messenger preparing the way, a refining fire, and a coming day of judgment that would purify a

remnant and destroy the wicked.

† From the fulfilled perspective, this is pointing directly to John the Baptist, Christ, and the judgment that came upon Jerusalem in AD 70.

Malachi 3:1

Behold, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear a way before Me. And the Lord, whom you are seeking, will suddenly come to His temple, and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, He is coming, says the LORD of armies.

† This is clearly fulfilled in John the Baptist preparing the way for Christ, as confirmed in Matthew 11:10.

† The Lord coming to His temple wasn't thousands of years later, it happened in that generation when Christ entered the temple and later judged it.

† The messenger of the covenant is Christ Himself, the one who brings the New Covenant and fulfills all promises.

Malachi 3:2

But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderer's soap.

† The coming described here is not gentle, it's a refining and purifying judgment.

† Jesus' ministry exposed hypocrisy, cleansed the temple, and brought division, showing this refining work had already begun.

† The ultimate fulfillment came in the destruction of Jerusalem, where only the faithful remnant remained.

Malachi 3:3

And He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness.

† The sons of Levi represent the priesthood, which was corrupt in Malachi's day.

† Christ purified a new priesthood, not based on lineage, but on righteousness, fulfilled in the church.

† This shows a covenant transition, from the old corrupt system to a purified people in Christ.

Malachi 3:4

Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

† This is not a return to animal sacrifices, but a restoration of acceptable worship through Christ.

† Hebrews 10 shows that the old sacrifices were replaced with a better offering.

† The true worship restored is spiritual, not tied to the temple system.

Malachi 3:5

Then I will come near to you for judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who

oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn away the stranger and do not fear Me, says the LORD of armies.

† God says He will come near for judgment, not far off in time.

† These sins were rampant in first-century Israel, exactly what Jesus rebuked in the Gospels.

† The judgment culminated in AD 70 when that system was removed.

Malachi 3:6

For I, the LORD, do not change, therefore you, the sons of Jacob, have not come to an end.

† God's unchanging nature is why a remnant is preserved.

† Even in judgment, He remains faithful to His promises.

† This shows mercy within judgment, not the absence of judgment.

Malachi 3:7

From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of armies. But you say, How shall we return?

† Israel's pattern of rebellion continued into the first century.

† Jesus called them to repentance repeatedly, yet most rejected Him.

† Their question shows blindness, they didn't recognize their own sin.

Malachi 3:8

Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, How have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings.

† Their worship was corrupted, even their giving was dishonest.

† This wasn't about modern tithing systems, but covenant unfaithfulness.

† The leadership had turned God's commands into empty rituals.

Malachi 3:9

You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the entire nation of you!

† The curse here ties directly to the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28.

† This shows they were still under the Old Covenant system at that time.

† That curse reached its climax in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Malachi 3:10

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and put Me to the test now in this, says the LORD of armies, if I do not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

† This is often misused today, but it was directed to Israel under the Law.

† The promise was tied to covenant obedience within that system.

† It cannot be separated from the temple and priesthood context.

Malachi 3:11

Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine fail to produce fruit in the field, says the LORD of armies.

† These are agricultural blessings tied to covenant faithfulness.

† Again, this is Old Covenant language, not New Covenant instruction.

† It reinforces that Malachi is addressing Israel under the Law.

Malachi 3:12

All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land, says the LORD of armies.

† Israel was meant to be a light to the nations.

† Their failure led to judgment, but the promise finds fulfillment in the global reach of the gospel.

† The nations are now included through Christ.

Malachi 3:13

Your words have been arrogant against Me, says the LORD.
Yet you say, What have we spoken against You?

† They spoke arrogantly against God while claiming innocence.

† This same attitude is seen in the Pharisees.

† Their blindness led to their downfall.

Malachi 3:14

You have said, It is useless to serve God, and what benefit is it that we have kept His requirement and that we have walked in mourning before the LORD of armies?

† They saw no value in serving God, showing a hardened heart.

† This reflects a religion without faith.

† Jesus confronted this exact mindset.

Malachi 3:15

So now we call the arrogant blessed; not only are the doers of wickedness built up, but they also put God to the test and escape.

† They believed the wicked were prospering without consequence.

† This confusion is common when judgment is delayed.

† But judgment did come, just as God said.

Malachi 3:16

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and esteem His name.

† Here we see the faithful remnant.

† God always preserves those who fear Him.

† This group represents those who followed Christ.

Malachi 3:17

They will be Mine, says the LORD of armies, on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.

† This is covenant language fulfilled in the New Covenant people.

† The faithful were spared during the coming judgment.

† History records that Christians fled Jerusalem before its destruction.

Malachi 3:18

So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

† The coming judgment would make this distinction clear.

† AD 70 revealed who truly belonged to God.

† The old system ended, and the true people of God were revealed.

Historical References

† Josephus records the destruction of Jerusalem and the suffering that came upon the people, confirming the judgment described.

† Eusebius notes that Christians fled Jerusalem before its fall, showing the preservation of the faithful.

† Tacitus also records the devastation of Judea, aligning with the prophetic warnings.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We see that God's promises are sure, He did exactly what He said He would do.

† The New Covenant is established, and we're not under the old system of law, tithes, and temple worship.

† We're part of the refined people, called to offer spiritual worship in righteousness.

† Judgment already came upon that system, and now we live in the fullness of what was fulfilled.

Q & A Appendix

Q Who is the messenger in Malachi 3:1

A John the Baptist, confirmed in Matthew 11:10

Q When did the Lord come to His temple

A In the first century, during Jesus' ministry and culminating in judgment in AD 70, Luke 21:5-6, 20-22

Q What is the refining fire referring to

A The purifying work of Christ and the judgment that removed the corrupt system, Matthew 3:11-12

Q Is Malachi 3:10 about Christians tithing today

A No, it was directed to Israel under the Law and tied to the temple system, Hebrews 7:12

Q Who are those written in the book of remembrance

A The faithful remnant who followed God and were preserved, Luke 10:20

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Malachi 3

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Tacitus, Histories

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