

God Are You Really There? - Part 6

Sunday, August 13, 2023

10:30 AM

“YOU HAVE LOST YOUR WAY” - An overview of Gods Messages in the book of Malachi that expose the condition of the people’s heart and relationship with God.

"I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED YOU" - Malachi 1:1-5

“YOU ARE NOT LOVING ME” - Malachi 1:6-14

“LISTEN” - Malachi 2:1-9

YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAITHFUL TO ME - Malachi 2:10-17

- By marrying women who worship idols but still bringing sacrifices to God’s House (Represents those who want to have a relationship with the World and with God)
- By being unfaithful to their marriage vows and divorce (cheating on God and then divorcing him...breaking fellowship with Him)

REPENT AND RETURN - Malachi 3:1-7

Malachi 3:1-7

3 “Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

2 “But who will be able to endure it when he comes? Who will be able to stand and face him when he appears? For he will be like a blazing fire that refines metal, or like a strong soap that bleaches clothes. 3 He will sit like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord. 4 Then once more the Lord will accept the offerings brought to him by the people of Judah and Jerusalem, as he did in the past.

5 “At that time I will put you on trial. I am eager to witness against all sorcerers and adulterers and liars. I will speak against those who cheat employees of their wages, who oppress widows and orphans, or who deprive the foreigners living among you of justice, for these people do not fear me,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

6 “I am the Lord, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed. 7 Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

“But you ask, ‘How can we return when we have never gone away?’

NOTE: This passage is a perfect example of what I have taught regarding prophecy have multiple applications to its fulfillment. It pertains to what was happening in their present day, it pertains to what would happen at the first coming of Jesus, and it pertains to what will happen at the second coming of Jesus. Look for all three of those applications in the verses we are looking at this morning and in the questions they seem to be asking.

Will we RECEIVE the message of The Lord?

3:1 “Look! I am sending my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me...

- First it applies to The Prophet Malachi (Remember his name means "My Messenger" God is sending his message through Malachi to prepare the people for what God wants to do.
- Secondly, this applies as a direct prophecy to the Ministry of John The Baptist (God sent John to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah - Jesus Christ)

Matthew 11:10 (NLT)

10 John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you.’

Mark 1:1-3 (NLT)

1 This is the Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. It began 2 just as the prophet Isaiah had written: “Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way. 3 He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord’s coming! Clear the road for him!’ ”

Luke 1:76 (NLT) - Zechariah's prophecy about his son when his lips were opened at the time of John's birth

76 “And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord.

- Finally, this applies to the Two Witnesses described in Revelation 6 who will prophesy for 1260 days (the first 3/12 years of the tribulation - preparing the way for the second coming of Jesus)

But the question is, "Will we receive the message?" And what is that message? Malachi's message was "repent and return" because the judgement of God is coming.

John's Message was "repent and return" because the Messiah was coming to bring a new covenant of grace and forgiveness.

Matthew 3:1-2

3 In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, 2 “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

Likewise the Two Witnesses will bring a message of "repent and return" because Jesus is coming to bring final judgement on the world, the antichrist and sin.

What does it mean to receive that message? Listen to it, accept it as truth and act upon it.

Will we RECOGNIZE His presence among us?

3:1 ...Then the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger of the covenant, whom you look for so eagerly, is surely coming,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

- The application in Malachi's day was would the people recognize that God was real, that He was involved in their lives even though they doubted that reality
- The application for the first coming was would the people recognize that the Messiah had been born. That God became flesh and made his dwelling among men

John 1:10 (NLT)

10 He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him.

- The application for the second coming is will we be ready and will the world recognize that Jesus is the Son of God before it's too late

Revelation 1:7-8 (NIV)

7 “Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen. 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

The question for us today is do we recognize that Jesus has come with a covenant of grace and forgiveness of reconciliation with God through His work on the cross. Do we recognize His promise to return and will we be found ready?

Will we RESPOND to His Convicting Charges?

5 “At that time I will put you on trial. I am eager to witness against all sorcerers and adulterers and liars. I will speak against those who cheat employees of their wages, who oppress widows and orphans, or who deprive the foreigners living among you of justice, for these people do not fear me,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

- Again there is application to all three prophetic timeframes, but the point is will we respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit when He shines the light of truth on our sin or will we continue on in our blind ignorance because there is no fear of God (no real belief in His existence, His truth, His plan of salvation, His coming judgment, Heaven, or Hell).

Will we REPENT and RETURN to Him?

6 “I am the Lord, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed. 7 Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

- God reminds us that it is only because of the unchanging nature of His love, patience and mercy that we are not already destroyed. Again and again He reaches out to us and calls us to repent and return.

Lamentations 3:21-23 (NIV)

21 Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: 22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Will we RESIST the work He wants to do inside of us?

2 “But who will be able to endure it when he comes? Who will be able to stand and face him when he appears? For he will be like a blazing fire that refines metal, or like a strong soap that bleaches clothes. 3 He will sit like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify the Levites, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord. 4 Then once more the Lord will accept the offerings brought to him by the people of Judah and Jerusalem, as he did in the past.

- God stands ready to change us from the inside out.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 (NIV)

25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

- His rhetorical questions reveal the truth of our need to surrender to the work that He wants to perform in us

Luke 9:23-24

23 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

James 4:7

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God...