

# OpenTheo

## Malachi Overview (Part 2)



### **Bible Book Overviews** - Steve Gregg

In this overview of Malachi, Steve Gregg highlights the prophet's message to deliver a warning of coming judgment, emphasize the importance of tithing and highlight the significance of marriage as a sacred covenant. Malachi's writings reveal that God was not pleased with the sacrificial system, but used it as a means to prepare people for Christ. Christians are reminded of the importance of building an intimate relationship with someone who shares their values and should prioritize their relationship with Jesus over romance. The book of Malachi contains a prediction of the coming of Elijah and the great and dreadful day of the Lord, which was fulfilled by John the Baptist and the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost.

### **Transcript**

All right, we're returning to Malachi and looking at chapter two right now. I pointed out that the priests were scolded in chapter one for the fact that they were actually accepting sacrifices that were of inferior sort. The people were bringing as offerings to God defective animals because, of course, they were of no value.

In other words, they were sacrificing to God that which cost them nothing. Essentially, they're going to lose the animal anyway. It shows the lukewarmness and the lack of zeal for God on the part of the people that they do this, but the priest should have turned it away.

He said, no, you can't do that. The priest is the one who actually slits the lamb's throat and puts it on the altar for the people. They bring the animal, the priest does the ritual.

The priest should have said, I'm sorry, that's not acceptable. But, you know, the priests weren't getting all the tithes, and the priest did eat part of the animal. I guess they're just saying, hey, I guess I can eat a blind animal as much as a non-blind animal.

I'm not sure why they were just compromising like this, but it was the priests that were charged with dishonoring God in this. And so he continues to talk against the priest in chapter two. He says, now, oh, priests, this commandment is for you.

If you will not hear and if you will not take it to heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord of hosts, I will send a curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already because you do not take it to heart. Now, I don't know what his their blessings are, perhaps the things that God blesses the priest with, including the the food from the altar and from the tithes and so forth.

And he says, I have already done it. It may be referring to the fact that already the tithes are not coming in, as we find later on chapter three. So the priests were already starting to feel the pinch economically.

And he says, hey, that's me. Don't think there's some kind of coincidence there. I'm cursing it because you are bringing this upon yourselves.

And he says, because you do not take it to heart. Verse three. Behold, I will rebuke your descendants and spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your solemn feasts.

And I will take you away with it. Now, in the course of offering an animal sacrifice, the priest did all kinds of rituals with the animal. They dismember it in certain ways.

They take certain organs out and treat them certain ways. They'd wave some of them before the Lord. They'd burn some on the altar.

But they would not offer a couple parts. Well, usually the head was not burned. Usually the skin was not burned.

And certainly the contents of the intestines were not offered. And so there was a place outside the camp, according to the law, where they would take the unclean parts of a sacrifice, including the, frankly, the feces of the animal. And they dump it there.

Now, what he's saying is. He's saying, I will spread the refuse. He means the feces of the sacrifice on your faces.

The refuse of your solemn feasts and one will take you away with it. Now, there was there. It was one of the Levites job to take the feces, all this unclean stuff out to this other place and dispose of it.

He says, it's going to be all over you. You're going to have to. I'm going to spread this on your face and they'll take you out as if you're as unclean as it is.

Probably hyperbole, probably not referring to something that actually happened that way. But the priesthood was destroyed. The priesthood was eliminated.

The priesthood was taken out and punished when the when the city was destroyed and the temple was destroyed in 870. And much we'll see that Malachi does look forward that far. Malachi later on talks about 87.

He does talk about this curse coming on the land when the temple is destroyed and so forth. So that's probably what he's referring to. You're going to be you know how you take the feces out and get rid of it.

I can take you out and get rid of it. Get rid of you as if you were feces. You're not any better than that.

That's kind of unflattering. It'd be a shame to be a man in the ministry and have God have that evaluation. I wonder how many people in history today.

God has that evaluation. You're not doing what I told you to do. You're not teaching the word of God like you're supposed to do.

You're compromising. You're letting people get away with all kinds of dishonoring of my name in your church. So maybe I'll just treat you like feces.

So he did with the priests. He says, verse four, then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you that my covenant with Levi may continue, says the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him, one of life and peace.

And I gave them to him that he might fear me. So he feared me and was reverent before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth and injustice was not found on his lips.

He walked with me in peace and equity and turned many away from iniquity for the lips of the priest should keep knowledge. And people should seek the law from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But you have departed from the way you have caused many to stumble at the law.

You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts. Therefore, I have also made you contemptible and base before the people because you have not kept my ways, but have shown partiality in the law. Now, he makes these statements about Levi, how he was a boy.

He practiced righteousness. He taught people the right way. He was loyal to me.

And you go to when's he talking about? Who's he talking about here? He says Levi. But it's clear that just like when he said Esau, he means the nation of Esau. And when he said Jacob, he's the nation of Jacob.

When he says Levi, he means the tribe of Levi. Because the man Levi was one of the sons of Jacob and not a good guy. We don't read of him ever being a good guy.

He was denied the birthright, even though he was near the top of the list of those who would be receiving it. Reuben was disqualified because of his fornication. And then Simeon and Levi, the next in line, were disqualified because they had ruthlessly wiped out innocent people of a village after tricking them into being circumcised so that they

would allegedly marry intermarried between their tribes.

So Levi was not a good man. But it was later, generations later, that the Levites kind of stood out within their zeal for God in the days of Moses. Now, Moses and Aaron were both Levites, too, which may have something to do with it.

But when the people of Israel made the golden calf, which seems like it was Aaron's fault as much as anybody's, God made the calf be destroyed. And he told the remaining Israelites to go out and slaughter those who had been worshipping the golden calf. And three thousand people were slaughtered.

The ones who did it were the Levites. That's the ones who slaughtered the offenders were the Levites, the tribe that Moses and Aaron belonged to. And God said, well, because you have shown such zeal for God, I'm going to make you special.

And eventually he said, I'm going to let you have charge over the tabernacle and over. And then he chose Aaron's family in particular to be the priest. So the Levites were a large tribe.

Actually, it was one of the smaller tribes, not the smallest. But within that tribe was a family of Levites that were Aaron's family, that were the priests. And sometimes in the discussion of the priests and the Levites, the two are kind of merged together.

It's like the Levitical tribe was like an extension of the priesthood, almost like they could be considered together. You had to be an actual son or descendant of Aaron to be a priest. But all the Levites were your relatives and the Levites were set aside to do things for the priests.

They'd tear down the tabernacle, set it up again. They'd move things around. They're the ones who would take out, you know, the dirty things and clean the temple and things like that.

So they were like junior priests in a way. So when he has Levi, he means the Levites, which includes the priest. And he's saying the Levites used to be different than you guys are.

They used to be zealous. They used to teach the law. Now, I don't know that they did that very often.

We don't have much record of that in the Old Testament. We have a lot of record of them compromising and not doing that. But we do know there were times when the Levites did carry out their duties.

And that he must be referring to the Levites at the time, you know, the ideal Levites, you know, at the best times, the Levites did these things. Levi did this. This is when Levi was

doing what Levi is supposed to do.

And now you guys are supposed to, you're not doing it. So why aren't you like the Levites in their ideal, you know, generations? So he says the priest should keep knowledge and people should inquire of him to know the law. You know, the very first priest were Aaron and his four sons.

And the very first day that the tabernacle opened and the sacrificial system began, two of those four sons were killed as a judgment from God. Now when you got three million people, your ministry, that's a mega church, three million. And they all have to offer animal sacrifice and the priests have to do it.

So you got three million people bring their sacrifices. You've already got just Aaron and his four sons, he's still kind of understaffed. And then the first day that the religion begins, God kills two of the priests, which makes them even more understaffed.

But it means that God is much more interested in the purity of the priesthood than he is in the logistics of the priesthood. And if you look at Leviticus chapter 10, this is where that happened. And God said something on that occasion that is related to what Malachi says here.

In Leviticus chapter 10, it's at the beginning of the chapter, it says that Nadab and Abiut, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and put incense on it. They offered strange fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. So the fire went out from the presence of the Lord and devoured them.

So they were wiped out, his two priests, leaving only two other priests plus Aaron. But when this happened, God spoke to Aaron, verse eight, and he said, do not drink wine or intoxicating drink. You are your sons with you when you go into the tabernacle meeting.

Lest you die, it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations that you may distinguish between the holy and the unholy, between the clean and the unclean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses. So God appointed the priest to teach the children of Israel all the statutes, the law. It was their duty now to be the Bible teachers in the country.

Now, it sounds from that command about drinking that maybe they'd have been a Bible had been drinking because you shouldn't drink because you'll lose touch with the difference between the holy and the profane. These people had holy fire. They're supposed to use.

They use profane fire. They weren't making a distinction. Probably they were drinking too much and a little too careless.

So don't do that. Don't drink before you go in there. And he said, you need to be able to

distinguish between the holy and the common and you need to teach the people.

And so Malachi agrees that this is the priest's duty. The lips of the priest should keep knowledge that people should seek the law at his mouth for he's the messenger of the Lord. But it does say in verse nine that they've shown partiality in the law.

This is Malachi 2:9. And God has therefore made the priest contemptible before the people. That is, the people didn't respect them. It used to be in Israel's better times that the priests were the most prestigious people in the country.

After all, God had chosen them to represent him to everybody else. That's quite a privilege. But now they're contemptible inside of people, which is, again, probably why the tithes were not being brought in.

The people were not eager to bring their tithes to feed the priests because the priests were compromised. The priests were not doing what they should do. The people, for one thing, weren't learning the law from them.

Therefore, even the law that said they should tithe wasn't, although the priest probably didn't neglect to teach that. I find that many times churches, even that don't teach the Bible much, usually will teach about tithing once in a while. I'm not sure why it works out that way.

Then in verse 10, have we not all one father has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another by profaning the covenant of the fathers? Judah has dealt treacherously and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the Lord's holy institution, which he loves. He has married the daughter of a foreign God.

May the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob, the man who does this being awake and aware. Actually, in some translations, it doesn't say being awake and aware. It says the teacher and the student.

May God cut off the man who does this, the teacher and the student, who brings an offering to the Lord of hosts. Now, the priest is supposed to be the teacher. So both the priest and those who were his students supposedly learning the law are going to suffer because they're not following the law.

Now, you may have noticed if you're reading a different translation that in the middle of verse 11, I read the phrase the Lord's holy institution. A lot of translations say the Lord's sanctuary, which means a holy place. The issue here is that in the Hebrew, it doesn't say what holy thing is in mind here.

It just says they have despised the Lord's holy, which he loves. Now, the holy temple could be involved if that's because they're bringing bad sacrifices. The holy, the new

King James says the holy institution, which leaves open the possibility that it could mean marriage because the next rebuke is about people who are abandoning their marriages.

And in this very place, it does talk about the man who does this is marrying the daughter of a foreign God. That is marrying women of another religion than Judaism. What we seem to find here, especially in the next verses, is that men were in fact divorcing their wives.

And it may be they were divorcing their aging Jewish wives and marrying younger women who are pagans. Now, we don't know if that's what's going on, although these words would certainly fit that scenario. We do know that in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, there were some compromises in those areas by the Jews.

And this is roughly, you know, this is a little later than that time. But Ezra made the Jews divorce all their pagan wives because they had been marrying pagans. Now, we don't know if they had divorced Jewish wives to marry the pagans, but they were marrying pagans and they weren't supposed to do that.

Here, we are going to read a rebuke of these people who were divorcing their wives. And then there's reference to people marrying the daughter of a foreign God, which sounds like they're marrying pagan women. So it's possible that verses 10 through 12, though marriage is not stated explicitly, could be what's in view.

And this is the holy institution which God loves. It says that in verse 11. Judah has profaned the Lord's holy institution, which he loves.

Now, if it's talking about the sacrificial system, I don't know that God loved the sacrificial system. And in Isaiah or in Psalm 40, God says sacrifices and offerings you did not desire. You had no pleasure in those, but you have prepared.

You've opened my ear, he says. And in Psalm 51, David says, you did not desire sacrifice or else I would have brought them. But the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart.

In other words, the Old Testament, at least David's writing, sometimes indicate that God didn't really. He wasn't all that jazzed about the sacrificial system as a necessary teaching device to prepare people for Christ. But it wasn't something that really thrilled him.

So when it says you profaned the holy institution, which God loves, it may be he's talking about marriage. And it would make sense if he goes on to say in verse 16, the Lord hates divorce. If he says he loves marriage, then it would make sense that he hates divorce, which is the undoing of marriage.

It is, there's differences of opinion about this. Verses 10 through 12 might be about

marriage or not. Although there is a reference to marrying the daughter of a foreign God.

So it kind of sounds like it. But then he does talk without any ambiguity about marriage and divorce. In verse 13, says this is the second thing you do.

You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and crying. So he does not regard the offering anymore, nor receive it with goodwill from your hands. Now, earlier he told the priest that he was not receiving the sacrifices favorably from their hands.

And here's another reason he doesn't. Because while they bring offerings, in a sense, they're covering the Lord's altar with tears. Whose tears? Well, it's not made clear whose tears they are.

Maybe it's saying that they are being all emotional in their religion and acting all sad and weeping and bawling and crying in their repentance. But they're not really repenting because they're still cheating their wives. Or maybe saying that their wives are the ones who are coming to the temple, covering the altar with their tears.

Because their husbands have left them and their children to go after pagan women. It's not clear, but it's very clear that God's saying, I don't regard your sacrifices. Why? Because you're getting divorced.

I have long felt that a person cannot break their marriage vows without breaking their vow to God. When people get married, they make vows. And if they're in a Christian setting, they actually make oaths in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

That they will never leave each other as long as they're both alive. And they'll stay together for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer. Now, those lines are not found in the Bible, but those have made their way into the traditional vows of Christian marriage.

Because those things are clearly a part of what the Bible regards marriage to be. Since Jesus said anyone who divorces his wife for any cause other than fornication and marries another is committing adultery. And causes her to commit adultery.

So, in other words, you can't divorce except for fornication, he said. Which would mean you can't divorce because your spouse is sick or poor or things have gotten unpleasant. That's why the vows are legitimate, saying for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, for better or for worse.

And forsaking all others to cleave only unto her means it's a lifetime commitment. It's a vow, it's a sacred covenant. And when someone makes a covenant like that between their spouse, themselves, and God.

And then they break that covenant, they're breaking their covenant with God. I seriously



believe that a person who regards himself a Christian and lightly divorces their spouse without grounds is breaking their covenant with God, too. God's saying these people are divorcing, I will not listen to your worship.

I will not heed your sacrifices. I'm not interested in what you have to say to me. I'm not interested in what you have to offer to me.

You are a covenant breaker. And you broke your covenant with your spouse, which you made before me, you've broken your covenant with me, too. That's what I believe is implied here.

And he says this. He says, he does not regard your offering anymore, nor receive it with goodwill from your hands. Yet you say, for what reason? Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously.

Yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Now, I want to say this. This verse and the next few verses read very differently in some translations, including some good translations.

And I was very surprised to see how widely different they are. I'm going to have to assume that in the Hebrew, there are some ambiguities in this section. Because to me, the passage makes perfectly good sense.

The way I first read it through my life in the King James Version and now in the New King James Version makes perfectly good sense. But versions like the New American Standard and I think it was the, I don't remember, the Holman Christian Standard, some of the modern translations, which are pretty good translations, read really differently and get a whole different meaning out of it. I'm not going to survey all those meanings.

I'm assuming that because the translators can't agree, then it's one of those things you really can't settle completely, or else they'd all say the same kind of thing. And I can't settle the problem either. So I'm going to go with what's here.

For one thing, it's entirely biblical. And for another thing, I don't know that any other reading is superior. So we're just going to go with the New King James.

If you've got another translation, you'll find it says something different, perhaps. So he says, you have dealt treacherously with your wife of your youth. Now, the wife of your youth means you got married when you're young and you're apparently not young anymore.

So she's probably an old wife. The wife that was young with you when you were young, when you got married. But now, you're not in your youth anymore, and probably she's not either.

And so they may well have abandoned their wives because their wives got old and unattractive, and they went for perhaps younger women. I don't know. But he calls it treachery, which may be another reason to see verses 10 through 12 as about the same subject, because in verse 10, he says, why do you deal treacherously with one another? But now he says specifically with your wife.

What is treachery? Treachery is betrayal at a heinous level. You have to understand, even though in our country, people can divorce for any reason they want to, the courts will grant them a divorce, even if no one's at fault. You know, a generation ago, you pretty much, if you want a divorce, you used to have to hire a detective to follow them around to make sure that you knew they were committing adultery, because you couldn't divorce them without grounds.

Then in the 60s, we come up with the no-fault divorce laws, which means, there ain't no good guy, there ain't no bad guy, there's just you and me, and we just don't agree. So let's go different directions. Now, the problem with this is, although there's times when people agreed that they don't want to be together, even so, they're not free to leave each other if they're married, but in most cases, they don't agree to leave.

It doesn't matter to the courts. Marriage is a contract that the courts give a license for, right? But they will do nothing to defend that contract against violators. If you sign a business contract with someone and you violate it, the courts will uphold the contract.

You sign a contract that affects the stability of society, the well-being of the children, the rights of your spouse, the person to whom you're the most indebted of all people on earth, except your parents. You break that, the courts couldn't care less. Okay, who cares? And usually, it causes incredible misery to one of the spouses, to the children.

People say, oh no, we fought so much, the kids will be much happier to be in a peaceful home when we're separated. That's not been shown to be true. In surveys, it's been clear that almost all children of divorced homes say they would have preferred when their parents, in fact, were fighting, if they'd stayed together rather than get a divorce.

Kids are torn apart by it. The children of divorce are statistically in extremely high risk groups for antisocial behavior. Children of divorce statistically are at a very high percentage of risk for suicide, drug abuse, promiscuity, certainly abortion, criminal behavior.

Most people in prison are from homes whose their original parents are divorced or never married. The point is, you get a divorce for any reason, even if you have an excellent reason for divorce, you are damaging your children, or at least putting them at incredible risk of damaging themselves. Most people who get divorced couldn't care less about their kids.

They say they do. But if they did, they wouldn't get a divorce in most cases. Now, there are times when the kids are grown and the kids are, you know, not that involved in the marriage.

You know, there's adultery and things like that. You know, that's a different thing. But it's still hard on the kids because after a couple divorces, it's hard on everyone, everyone who knew them.

The friends don't know, well, whose side are we on here? We used to get together with these people as a couple. But now, if we get together with the husband, the wife feels like we're betraying her. If we get together with the wife, the husband thinks they both want our loyalty and they both want to talk bad about the other person.

We liked it better when we could just be friends with them both. And so usually, divorced people start making some new friends because the old friends are uncomfortable. Certainly, the in-laws, the grandparents are certainly sufferers for it.

I mean, there's nothing good about divorce. Sometimes divorce may be unavoidable as a means of, you know, saving somebody's life in some cases or in some other serious matter. But it's never a good thing.

I'm not even sure if it's ever the lesser of two evils. It might be the lesser of two evils, but the lesser of two evils is still an evil. And so divorce should never really be considered by Christians.

And God hates divorce, he says here. He can forgive divorce. It's not the unforgivable sin.

But the reason that divorce is terrible is it's treachery. It's a betrayal. You stand at the altar with somebody who's giving up the rest of their life and all their other options in order to be faithful to you because you're promising to do the same for them.

And maybe you do that for a few weeks, a few years, maybe a few decades. But then you decide, eh, tired of this, I'm going to go out and do something else now. Well, the person who promised himself to you for life, that wasn't in the bargain that you're going to run off and do something else.

They weren't renting you. They own the deed. And, you know, and yet our society takes marriage so lightly.

Why? Because our society is ungodly. Marriage is a sacred thing. It's a holy institution that God loves and he hates divorce.

People who love God will not divorce if they do not have to get divorced. They will find ways to make it work if unless the other party is just checked out, not going to come

back. You know, they're unfaithful and all that.

But the covenant, that's what makes marriage is a covenant. Someone was asking me recently, even tonight, you know, what makes a couple married? A lot of people just live together, even have kids together, never even dream of getting married. Does that make them married because they're living together? No.

He says here, she's your wife. He says by covenant. A covenant is a contract only more sacred.

You know, if you and I make a contract that you're going to buy my car, make payments for a certain amount, we sign the contract and so forth. And then you find out you really can't keep that up. And I say, well, I want my car back anyway.

So let's just tear up the contract. We can do that. We can agree.

We made a contract between ourselves. We can say, oh, we both want to change it. Let's both change it.

We both have buyers and mores or whatever. OK, that's fine. But a covenant isn't like that.

You don't just the two parties don't just say, oh, we had a bad deal. Let's tear up the contract and go our ways. No, that covenant is a sacred thing made before God.

Now God's in the transaction, too. And if he doesn't say that he wants it to end, then if the couple make it end, they are in violation of what they promised to God and to all their friends who heard them make their vows and to each other and to the children who had every reason to believe that the two people who brought them into the world will care for them together. And we'll love each other and work as partners for the good of the children.

That's marriage. Our society has lost sight of that. And so so had they.

And this is another sign of lukewarmness. Here's some guys who apparently left their Jewish wives of the same faith and have married women of another faith. In the New Testament, we're told that we can't marry outside the faith.

It says in Second Corinthians, Chapter six, that we should not be unequally yoked together from believers. And in First Corinthians seven, Paul talks about widows who, because they are widows, they are free to remain, but only in the law, only somebody who's another Christian. When I was first in the ministry, I was 17 years old.

And the first teaching assignment I had was with a ministry to the Jesus people, actually not far from here in Stanton nearby. There was a coffee house called the Fire Escape. And a Christian coffee house.

And the people there asked if I would, on Tuesday nights, gather there. Anyone remember the Fire Escape in Stanton on Beach Boulevard? No? You just weren't around early enough, I guess. That was a long time ago.

But they had me come and answer Bible questions for the new converts on Tuesday nights. So I did. And one question I was asked so frequently by new Christians is, is it OK to date a non-Christian? And I thought, well, first of all, the Bible doesn't say anything about dating, because I'm not even sure that dating is OK in itself.

It might be, but the Bible does not give grounds or instructions about dating, because people didn't couple through dating in biblical times. They did it through something called betrothal and mostly arranged marriages. But as far as dating is concerned, I will say this.

If we see dating as a courtship ritual in our society, why would you date somebody that you know you can't marry? I mean, these guys who asked the questions, they knew they couldn't marry a non-Christian. They said, well, can we date one? Well, if you know you can't marry him, why would you want to do a courtship ritual with them? And more than that, what in the world can you be attracted to? If you love Jesus with all your heart and you have somebody you're thinking about dating who doesn't love Jesus even a little bit. I mean, it's like if you were someone who idolized football and you're kind of attracted to a girl, but she finds football to be appalling.

And you want to watch every time there's games on TV, but she can't stand it. I think you'd say, I don't think we're well matched. You don't love what I love.

And if you love Jesus, if he's your whole life and he's not any part of her life, what is there to be attracted to? I mean, I know what kinds of things there are to be attracted to besides. But how could anyone who puts Jesus, who Jesus is the center of their life, have even the slightest interest? How could they even imagine building an intimate relationship or a romantic relationship, which is what dating usually does, with somebody who doesn't have the interest you do? Now, I'm not saying Christians never are drawn that way, but the fact that somebody is shows they're lukewarm. That's another sign of the lukewarmness here.

Even if the Bible didn't ever say, don't marry a heathen, a person who's hot for God, who's zealous for God, you wouldn't have to tell them, don't marry a heathen. What's a heathen? What do I have in common with them? Everything about my life is about God. Nothing about their life is about God.

Where would we even connect? But when people say, well, we can find things to connect on that aren't God. Yeah, I'm sure you can, but if that's how you're thinking, it shows that God is not your passion. You're lukewarm.

A believer who wants to date or certainly who wants to marry a non-Christian is lukewarm toward God. There's just no other, it's a symptom. It's obvious.

You can't explain it any other way. You want to join your life with somebody who's going to match you in primary commitments and values and pursuits. And anyone who thinks that they as a Christian could live harmoniously with a non-Christian must be planning to not live very much like a Christian.

Now, I know you say, well, I can win them over. Well, there are better ways to win someone to Christ than missionary dating. The problem with missionary dating, some people have gotten saved through dating a Christian.

It's happened. I've met people like that. Or even through marrying a non-Christian, marrying a Christian.

It shouldn't have happened, but some have gotten saved that way nonetheless. But more often what happens is the non-Christian drags down the Christian. It's not the Christian who drags the non-Christian up.

And in many cases, usually the guy or even the girl who knows, I can't marry this person unless I'm a Christian. They will become a Christian for the convenience to get what they want. Anyone who becomes a Christian to get what they want is not becoming a Christian.

They're joining a religion. They're professing beliefs. They are not becoming a true disciple of Jesus for whom you forsake all.

So that you even hate father and mother and wife and children. He says, anyone who doesn't can't be my disciple. In other words, no one who gets comes to Christ only because he wants to marry this woman or because she wants to marry this guy.

Is really becoming a Christian. But there are indeed cases where non-Christians having married or dated a Christian have come to Christ. But that's not an authorized way of bringing people to Christ in the Bible.

The apostles never really evangelize people that way. Let me date this non-Christian woman. Maybe that's what these Jews are doing.

I'll marry this daughter of an unknown God or of a foreign God and maybe she'll become a follower of Jesus. Yeah, how'd that work out for Solomon? Solomon was a pretty wise and strong and powerful man, but his wives turned him from the Lord. I'm sure he didn't intend for them to.

He married pagan women. No, that's not open to a believer. He says in verse 15, but did he not make them one having a remnant of the spirit? Now, here's where the

translations are really all over the map.

This particular line here is really hard to know what it means. Verse 15, did he not make them one having a remnant of the spirit? Now, I know somebody said my bar. My Bible is really different on that line.

I know I've read five versions today. I know how many difference they are. I'm just going to go with this because it makes perfectly good sense.

And I don't know that any of the other renderings would make any more sense than that. But he says, and why one? Now, when God made them one, that's, of course, talking about Genesis chapter two and verse 24. The two should become one flesh in marriage.

Jesus quoted that in his argument against divorce. He said, but God has made one, let not man make two in Matthew 19, verses one through nine. Paul also quoted that Genesis passage in Ephesians five.

That man leaves his father, mother, wife, claims to his wife, they become one flesh. That's a pretty important verse, apparently, about marriage. It's the first marriage described in Genesis 224, and it's repeated by Jesus and Paul as the basis of understanding marriage.

Now, why did God make them one? He says, because he seeks godly offspring. Now, again, some translations read that differently, but this makes perfectly good sense from Genesis. Because when God made man, and he brought all the animals to him to name, it says there wasn't really one that corresponded to him, so God made a woman.

He says it's not good for man to be alone. Well, why is it not good to be alone? Some people say, well, God didn't want man to be lonely. Well, that's one reason it might not be good to be alone, if you're going to be lonely.

It also might not be good to be alone if you're supposed to reproduce. And it seems that when God made a woman, he said, be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth. He gave man a partner.

He could have given man a guy to hang out with. Frankly, if a guy is lonely, he can probably find more things in common with another guy than with a woman. I mean, throughout history, men and women have the hardest time understanding each other, getting along with each other.

They work at it for the benefits, but frankly, it's not the easiest thing in the world. Two guys can usually get along pretty good. If one offends the other, they forget it the next day.

A man offends a woman, she never forgets it. I mean, it'd be easy if God just didn't want

man to be lonely. He'd just give him another guy to hang out with.

But that wouldn't change the part that's not good. The part that's not good is that man alone cannot be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, but he can with a woman. And so God gave a woman.

And Malachi says, why? Did God make two people one? So he was seeking godly offspring. So I think this is probably, even though it reads differently in some translations, an appropriate way to look at this. Therefore, take heed to your spirit.

Let none of you deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. For the Lord God of Israel says he hates divorce for it covers one's garment with violence. Those lines are different in some translations, too, but I'm not going to worry about it.

Says the Lord of hosts. Therefore, take heed to your spirit that you do not deal treacherously. You have wearied the Lord with your words.

Yet you say, in what way have we wearied him? And that you say everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord and he delights in them. Or where is the God of justice? Now, when they said everyone who does evil is good inside, it doesn't mean that they are saying that evil people really are good. Although there are times when people actually say that Isaiah says, Whoa, to him, calls good, evil and evil.

Good. There are times when people say, yeah, those bad people, those are good people. Well, these good people, they're bad.

Christians, bad. LGBT activists, good. Black Lives Matter activists, good.

Are Christians not so good? You know, I mean, there are people who call good, evil and evil. Good, but that's not what these guys are saying. When they say everyone who does good in the sight of the Lord is evil or vice versa.

What they're saying is God is letting evil people get away with it as if they're good in his sight. Because they say, where is the God of justice? Why isn't God punishing the bad? He's treating them like they're good. What they're saying is we have been worshipping God and we don't get blessings.

People who don't worship God, he seems to bless them plenty. How come he treats the evil as if they are good in his sight? Where is his justice? They're saying. Now, what he's saying is, yeah, I know it looks that way sometimes.

Sometimes the good aren't getting immediate blessings and the bad seem to be. But you guys are not the good. You guys are bad.

That's what he's been pointing out. You say you want God to be just. Well, if God does the just thing, it's not going to work out well for you guys.



Because you guys don't deserve good. You deserve the worst. Now we come to the coming of John the Baptist.

Chapter 3. Behold, I send my messenger before, my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek, that second one is the Messiah, will suddenly come to his temple. Even the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight.

Behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. Now there's one that comes before the Lord to prepare his way. And John the Baptist identified himself as that one.

And the gospel writers identified John the Baptist as that one. And then after he comes, then the Lord that you're seeking will come. He's the messenger of the covenant.

He's the one who will come in fulfillment of the covenant God made with Abraham. The one through whom all nations will be blessed. He's the one who will make a new covenant with the house of Israel.

The Messiah is going to come in whom you delight. But he says this. But who can endure the day of his coming? And who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire, like a fuller's soap.

He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer the Lord an offering in righteousness. Now he's saying that gold has to be a shade.

It has to be purified. It has to be heated up, melted down. So the impurities float to the top and get that off.

So you got pure gold. You got to get the dross out from the gold. The priesthood, the Levites, they're full of dross.

God wants a pure priesthood. Messiah will come and he'll purge that. He'll get rid of the dross.

The remnant will be spared. But the dross will be gotten rid of. Now when it says who can endure the day of his coming? When I was young I used to think this meant, well, okay, when he suddenly comes to his temple and who can endure it? I thought maybe this is talking about when Jesus came with a whip of small cords and drove the money changers out of the temple.

That was kind of a scary thing for some people. Maybe that's what it's talking about. But then as I got older and I learned more, I realized that his coming here is not this statement, who can endure his coming, is referring to his coming in judgment.

Now sure, a few guys who sold cattle, you know, maybe were a little scared when Jesus drove them out of the temple. But most people endured it. Most people survived it.

It was not deadly to anybody and certainly not to most. The question who is able to stand, who is able to endure it, is will there be any survivors? And we see this, for example, in Revelation chapter 6, how this phrase has that kind of intensity about it. In Revelation 6 it says in verse 14, Then the sky receded as a scroll when it was rolled up and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

Kings of the earth and great men and rich men and commanders and mighty men, every slave and every free man hid themselves in caves and in rocks and in the mountains. And they said to the mountains, fall on us, hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath has come and who is able to stand? Who is able to endure this? Who is able to stand? Well, not many.

The remnant could, but the rest wouldn't. This is not a small crisis being described here. The question is, is anyone going to survive this? And certainly that's, I believe, what is meant here too.

When the Lord comes suddenly to his temple, it's going to be a hard thing for you guys. Many of you will not survive it. He's going to purge like fire.

Now, the rest of this book is going to be about this fire that God brings, and it's going to be fulfilled in AD 70 when he destroys the nation of Israel by the Romans. But there's also reference to the remnant that will be saved as we go through here. But it says, then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the Lord as in the days of old as in former years.

And I will come near you in judgment. I will be swift witness against the sorcerers, the adulterers, the perjurers, against those who exploit wage earners, and widows and the fatherless, and against those who turn away the alien because they do not fear me, says the Lord. These are the ones, the Jews, that were punished when this nation was destroyed.

But God will now have a pure offering from the remnant, the church, the body of Christ, who are the remnant of Israel, who offer up spiritual sacrifices. And it says, for I am the Lord. I do not change.

Therefore, you are not consumed. Oh, sons of Jacob, if I weren't faithful and constant and loyal, I would have wiped you out. But I have a covenant with your ancestors.

And because I don't change, even though you guys have changed, the reason you're not wiped out is because I don't change. I'm faithful. You may not be, but I am.

And that's why you haven't been consumed. Yet from days of your fathers, you have gone away from my ordinances. You've not kept them.

Return to me and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you said, in what way

shall we return? And he said, Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, in what way have we robbed you? In tithes and offerings.

You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be food in my house and prove me now in this, says the Lord of hosts. If I will not open to you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such a blessing that there will not be enough room to receive it.

And I'll rebuke the devourer for your sakes so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field, says the Lord of hosts. And all the nations will call you blessed for you will be a delightful land, says the Lord of hosts. Now, I'm not going to go at length into tithing, but I will say this.

I've heard these verses, Will a man rob God? You're robbing me in tithes and offerings. Bring all the tithes in the storehouse. I've heard that from my childhood in church sermons.

Most churches, when they preach about tithing, are saying this. You need to give your tithe to the local church that you attend. Why? Because it says bring the tithe into the storehouse.

Where's the storehouse? Here's how they argue. The storehouse is where you go to get your food. Your local church is feeding you.

So you bring your tithe to them. And that's called the doctrine of storehouse tithing. It's not a New Testament doctrine at all.

In fact, there's not one command in the New Testament to bring tithes at all to anywhere. But if they did, there's certainly no such thing as a local church in the New Testament. Not like we have now.

The institutional churches, there was one body of Christ in every town in the biblical times. Now there's a hundred in every town. That's certainly not the house of the Lord.

Those are man-made houses. The house of God is made up of spiritual stones, living stones, people who are born again, people who follow Jesus. God's church is made up of all his people, and that's the temple of the Holy Spirit.

All the people of God combined in the world are the temple, not a building that you go to church in on Sundays. Now, by the way, the storehouse was not where they went to get their food. The storehouse was where the Levites got their food.

People would bring every year the tenth, that's what the word tithe means, the tenth of the produce of their farms. They'd bring it to the temple and they'd put it in the store rooms of the temple. Why? Because all year long the Levites were going to live off of

that.

That was their food. He says, bring all the tithes and storehouses so that there'd be food in my house. For who? Well, for the Levites and the priests.

The people who brought tithes were not the ones who were being fed by those tithes. They didn't take them to where they were fed. They took them to feed the Levites.

There's nothing in this passage that is likened to a local church by that description in our modern times, nor are we ever told in the New Testament to give tenth anywhere. The idea of giving a tenth is an Old Testament practice for the support of the Levites and the priests and the temple. There is no such temple of the type.

There's no priests or Levites of that type, and there's no 10% mandate. In the New Testament, what is the mandate? 100%. Jesus said in Luke 14, 33, unless you forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciples.

To be a disciple of Jesus, now you don't give him 10% and you live off 90. You give God 100%. Now, that doesn't mean you give it to the church.

You just recognize that 100% of what you have belongs to God, and you have to steward it the way he wants his things stewarded. He wants you to pay your rent. He wants you to buy food for your family, put clothes on, probably wants you to have a car if that's necessary for your line of work.

There's lots of things he may want you to have. That's because you're his servant. He has to provide those things for his servants, and he wants you to take that out of what he provides.

The rest of it is elective money, and what we do with that shows where our heart is. And some people can't afford to give 10% to the church, and maybe they shouldn't. Some could give a lot more, and maybe they should.

Or maybe the local church isn't where the need is greatest. Maybe the need is your neighbor who doesn't have enough to feed his family or to buy shoes for his kids. Or a missionary in another part of the world.

They're part of the kingdom of God too if they're Christian. They're part of the house of God. Everything we have 100% belongs to God.

We steward it. We manage it. As his servants, he expects us to use some of it for our support, our family support, to meet our obligations.

The rest of it is still his and should be used as we think is the best management of his materials for which we will give an account when he comes back. When he comes back, he says, what did you do with my stuff? Oh, you got three houses? Oh, you bought a new

car every year? Oh, you spent it all on these entertainment systems? Now I'm not saying God doesn't want you to have a car, house, or even an entertainment system. But whatever you have, you're buying it with God's money.

And that money can be used for something else. It's your choice. You can use it for that and just count on the fact that when Jesus comes, he'll say, oh yeah, I think it's a good purchase.

Great. Great idea. Or you can use it on things that you know he'll say, well done, good and faithful servant.

You've been faithful with a few things. Rule over ten cities with me. I mean, those are the choices.

There's a parable Jesus told in Luke 16. It says there was a man, a steward, and it was reported to his master that he'd wasted his goods. And the master called him and said, you're fired.

Stewards don't waste their master's goods with impunity. We live in a very, I don't know what to say. We live in a very affluent time and place.

And, you know, people around us, non-Christians and Christians, like they live in, they drive as comfortably and live as comfortably as they can afford to. And therefore, we don't feel it's strange that we do, too. But the real question is, does God think that's strange when we know what we know, when we know people are dying without the knowledge of Christ, when we know there are people who don't have what we have and could be relieved by part of what we have, if that's how we directed it.

I mean, God knows what we know. And he expects us to act on what we know. And that is our responsibility.

Tithing is not a New Testament obligation. Tithing was for the support of the Levites. We don't have them anymore.

Now we have the kingdom of God, our global concern, which is to be supported with all of our enthusiasm, all of our resources, the best we can. Now, you might say, oh, you make it sound like, you know, I have to live in my car. No, not necessarily.

You might have to sell your car and give to the poor. I don't know. But I don't, I'm not saying you do.

My wife and I, we have two cars and both of them are, we feel very justifiably owned and used for God. But the point is, I'm not telling you what you have to do or can or cannot do with the money God has given you. What I'm saying is, I'm just warning you.

God knows what you're doing with it. And there will be an accounting. And what you do

with it will show where your heart was, because Jesus said where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

So, again, another sign of lukewarmness is a reluctance to invest in the things God cares about. Because where our money goes, you don't know where your heart is. Pull out your checkbook, if you set one of those.

Look at the register. After you see you've paid your mortgage or rent or your food and your necessities, where's all the rest of it going to? That's where your heart is. There are better places for your heart, probably.

But that's not mine to judge. I don't judge anyone about that. I just, I'm a teacher.

Don't shoot the messenger. I'm just telling you, the Bible says, you will give an account to God for what you did with His stuff, which is everything you have. I live in a comfortable house.

I eat well. I have cars. I have a computer.

I can justify all those things, but I don't need to to you. I need to to God. And you don't have to justify to me or anyone else how you steward your money, but you will have to to God.

And that's just one of the most kind things I can tell anyone, if they don't already know it. Because when Jesus comes and says, okay, how do you, what? You said you're my disciple. What? All that money went to what? My money? You know, it's going to be an embarrassment for many people.

It's putting it mildly. There's one steward that's described as being thrown out into outer darkness where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth because he didn't steward the money well. So I'm not making this up.

But tithing is usually not good stewardship. If you think I'll give God 10%, I'll live on 90% as comfortably as 90% can buy me a lifestyle. I'll live on that.

If you live in America, probably living on 90% is living on more than you need to. And that's again between you and God entirely. You say, well, he's pretty hard.

He probably thinks I'm really in violation. I don't have any of who's in violation. David lived in a mansion, and I don't think he was in violation for God want him to do.

But I'll just, I just think preachers are not faithfully telling Christians what Jesus told Christians in this particular room. And so I don't want to be one of those because I have a stewardship to Paul said we are stewards of the mysteries of God. We were teachers.

So if I know this, I don't tell people I'm a bad story. So it's an awkward vocation. Okay,

verse 13.

Your words have been harsh against me, says the Lord. Yet you say, what have we spoken against you? You've said it is vain to serve God. What profit is it to us? In other words, that we have kept his ordinance and that we have walked as mourners before the Lord of hosts.

So now we call the proud blessed for those who do wickedness are raised up. Yes, those who tempt God go free. And out here we have gone as mourners.

We have served God. We've kept the laws. And here's some people who don't do it.

Those are proud people and bad people. And they live in a more blessed life than I am. What profit is there in serving God? It's a vain thing to serve God.

Yeah, I guess if you think serving God is supposed to make you rich, then it probably is a vain thing. It's probably not going to make you rich. If you think serving God is for your benefit.

Then you may find that you like Paul said, we are of all men, most miserable. For the time being, there'll be a time when we are of all men, most enviable. But that time is not now.

So if people are saying, I'm going to serve God because it'll be good for me. Well, then you're kind of probably going to find out what these people have done. It's vain, vain to serve God for reasons like that.

You should serve God. Well, why should you serve God for him? Kind of obvious answer, isn't it? You serve God for him. Okay.

Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another and the Lord listened and heard them. So a book of remembrance was written before him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on his name. And they shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, on the day that I make them my jewels.

And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God and the one who does not serve him. Now, in this context, this is about when the messenger of the covenant, Christ comes and he's like a purging fire.

It's a fiery thing. When you look at chapter four, verse one, it says, for behold, the day of the Lord is coming, burning like an oven. This burning is the same burning that John the Baptist saw.

He says he's going to cut down the fruitless trees and throw them in the fire. The chaff he's going to burn with unquenchable fire. This is the judgment coming on Israel at the

end when they did come to their end in AD 70.

But he says there's a faithful remnant who fear the Lord. He says, I'm going to spare them. It's like a man when his house is on fire.

He runs and gets the jewelry and his kids. He's not leaving the house. You're not leaving the burning building with his kids still inside or his valuables.

He says, these people fear God. He says, they're mine. I'm going to make them my jewelry.

I'm going to make them my sons. I'm going to spare them. The remnant, they are valuable to me.

The whole system is going down in flames, but not my people. I'm getting them out. And as it turned out, we know historically that the Christians in Jerusalem did flee from Jerusalem before the Holocaust happened there.

Actually, a prophecy was given in their church, according to Eusebius, the historian, telling them to get out of town. They did. They fled.

And so they all escaped. Like jewels or children rescued from a burning building. God got them out.

Now, verse four, for behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven and all the proud. Yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day is coming and shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, that they leave them neither root nor branch.

But to you who fear my name, that's the ones who were the ones mentioned in verse 16, the previous chapter. Those who feared his name, they're his remnant. But to those who fear my name, the son of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings and you should go out and grow fat like stabled calves.

You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this, says the Lord of hosts. Now, when God judged Israel, his children were gathered out. He says they shall go out like calves led out of the burning barn.

The farmer goes out and gets his calves and brings them out of the burning barn. They'll go out and they will trample on the wicked. Now, this refers to the fact that after AD 70, when the church went out to all the world out of Jerusalem.

The nation was the nations were conquered by the gospel. Not all of them. It's continuing to this day.

But paganism was driven out of the Roman Empire eventually. Europe, which was pagan, eventually became ostensibly Christian. The missionaries going out to Asia, to Africa, to



South America transformed much of those areas.

And the wicked Satan is being trampled under feet. Paul said to the Romans in Romans chapter 16, I think it's in verse. I better look it up before I say I think it's verse 20.

Romans 16 20. Paul said, and the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. He's talking to the church.

Satan is going to be crushed under your feet shortly. If you're obedient to God and God and carry out the commission. And he says, you should go out of Jerusalem.

You'll go out like calves led out of the barn and you'll trample the wicked Satan. And make them ashes under your feet, says the Lord. Now it says to you, fear my name.

Verse two, the son of righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. A famous line from the King James and others. But I think the NIV says with healing in its rays, we think of Jesus as the son of righteousness.

As you and it could be referring to Jesus. It certainly is referring to Jesus coming or his effect. But he's talking about a sunrise too.

And the rays of that sun bring healing to the world. And Jesus, when he came, brought healing in his in his ministry. And that the healing is not only physical healings.

The church, like a sunrise, bringing it's the rays of the light and the glory of God to the world. Brings healing to the nations in another sense. Healing of their blindness, healing of their evil, of their paganism.

And the church has been successfully doing that for 2000 years. So that do you know how many, do you know what percentage of the earth's population at this moment claim to be Christians? I know we can't say who is and who isn't. How many people claim to be Christians in the world today? 1.7 billion.

What's that? 1.7 billion. 1.7 billion. That may be the right number.

I've heard it's about a third. A third of the population. So that would be maybe even a little more than that now.

But Catholic and Protestant we have to include in Eastern Orthodox. But you have to realize the whole world was pagan before Jesus came. Now it's like about a third of the world's population.

Acknowledge him verbally at least as their own. Now let's finish this real quickly. I know we've got a little late.

Remember the law of Moses my servant. Now this is what the priests had failed to be

teaching the people. So the people had gone wrong.

Which I commanded him in Horeb, which is Mount Sinai, for all Israel with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, the hearts of the children to their fathers.

Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. Now he says, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. I'm going to send Elijah the prophet.

So that he can reform things. Hopefully turn the hearts of the children back to the hearts of their fathers and vice versa. What this means is not entirely clear.

Whether it means patch up family relationships or whether it means your father's like the patriarchs. You know like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They're the fathers.

Their children, their descendants are far from the place that the hearts of the fathers were at. And Elijah the prophet will come to restore the hearts of the children to the hearts of the fathers and so forth. It's not entirely clear what that phrase means.

But it does reoccur in the New Testament. In talking about the fulfillment of this prophecy. It's in Luke chapter 1. When Zacharias is told by the angel that he's going to become a father.

And his son is going to be of course John the Baptist. But in Luke chapter 1 when the angel is describing John the Baptist. It says verse 17.

He will also go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah. To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. And the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord. This is John. John came in the spirit of Elijah.

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. Whatever that means is what he did. That is he called the nation to repentance.

And baptized the ones who were repentant before he was arrested and killed himself. Now is this the fulfillment of Malachi? Sounds like it. Some people think not.

Some think that Elijah is still going to come in the end times. During the tribulation period or something like that. But apparently Jesus didn't think so.

And apparently the angel didn't think so either. If you look at Matthew chapter 11. Matthew 11.

Jesus is talking about John the Baptist. In verse 10 he says. For this is him of whom it is

written.

Behold I send my messenger before your face who will prepare the way before me. That's Malachi 3.1. He says. As I assuredly I say to you among those born of women there is none greater than John the Baptist.

He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than him. From the days of John the Baptist till now the kingdom of God has been suffering violence. And he says in verse 14.

If you are willing to receive it. He is Elijah who is to come. Now if you can receive it.

John is Elijah. What a different Elijah? No the one that is to come. The one that is predicted.

Where is he predicted? Well there is only one place in the Bible that is predicted. That is Malachi chapter 4 verses 5 and 6. The only prediction that Elijah will come. Yeah that Elijah who is to come.

That is John. If you can receive it. Now why if you can receive it? Because he is not literally Elijah.

He came in the spirit and power of Elijah. And the carnal man can't receive. The natural man can't receive the things of the spirit of God.

These promises are fulfilled spiritually. But only those who are spiritual can receive it. If you can receive it.

He is him. He is the one. And so later on in Matthew 17.

Jesus and the disciples are coming down from the mount of transfiguration. Three of the disciples with him. And in Matthew 17 it says.

They said to him. Verse 10. Why then do the scribes say Elijah must come first? Well why did they? Because Malachi said so.

That is why the scribes said they are looking for Elijah to come first. And Jesus said to them. Elijah truly does come first.

And will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already. And they did not know him.

But did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the son of man is also about to suffer at their hands. Then the disciples understood.

That he spoke to them of John the Baptist. Now twice Jesus says. John the Baptist is Elijah who is to come.

The angel told Zacharias. Your son is going to come in the spirit of Elijah. And he is going to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.

There is an unmistakable reference here to Malachi chapter 4. So John the Baptist is the one. That is predicted here. And it says in verse 5. Malachi 4.5 He is going to send Elijah.

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Now the expression the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Is found in one other place.

In Joel. And in Joel. It is actually a very well known passage.

Joel chapter 2. It says in verse 28. It shall come to pass afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

Your old men shall dream dreams. Your young men shall see visions. And also on my men servants and my maid servants.

I will pour out my spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens. And in the earth.

Blood and fire. Pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness.

And the moon into blood. Before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. In Malachi.

Our Bible says. The great and dreadful day of the Lord. In Joel it says great and terrible day of the Lord.

It is the same word in Hebrew. The phrase the great and dreadful day of the Lord. That phrase is exactly the same in Hebrew.

As the great and terrible day of the Lord. Joel. Same day.

There is a great and dreadful awesome terrible day of the Lord. Coming. It is the day of judgment.

On Jerusalem. That is why. In Acts chapter 2. Peter said.

What you see happening. Is what Joel said would happen. God said he'd pour out his spirit on all flesh.

Then there'd be blood and vapor and smoke. And because of the day of dreadful day of the Lord. Coming.

That is what happened just before God came. And brought the Roman armies to destroy Jerusalem. On that dreadful day.

It was a terrible day. If you read Josephus. Horrendous.

But before that he sent Elijah the prophet. Before that. He poured out his spirit.

Joel said God would pour out his spirit before the horrendous day of the Lord. Malachi said he'd send Elijah before that. And both happened.

John came. The spirit came. Then the horrible dreadful day of the Lord came.

And it says. At the very end of Malachi. And he'll turn the hearts of the fathers of the children and vice versa.

Lest I come and strike the land with a curse. And that curse of course is the curse that God threatened in Moses. Through Moses to.

In Deuteronomy 28. Verse 15. That if they would turn against God.

He would turn against them. He'd take the land from them. He'd drive them out of the land.

He would take delight in destroying them. Just as he had taken delight. He said as I as I took delight in building up.

I'll take delight in destroying you and bringing you to nothing. That's what happened. In 70 AD.

That is the curse. That God brought. Why? Because the nation did not.

Listen to John the Baptist. And did not listen to Jesus. Some did.

And they were the jewels. They were the sons that God rescued from that. Burning.

House. So that the remnant of Israel who followed the Messiah. Remain to this day.

Whereas the nation of Israel has been gone. For 2000 years almost. And Malachi.

Is one of the places where that warning was given. And it's the last warning. That was given until John the Baptist came.

To be continued.