



September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 • Malachi 3:13 – 4:6

Page 802 in the church Bibles • The Book of Malachi

Message #6/6 • by Pastor Marcus Johnson

“Fearing the Great Name of the LORD & Experiencing His Love”



Sermon Series Theme Verse – “For from the rising of the sun to its setting

my name will be great among the nations . . . says the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 1:11)

Audio versions of Sermons and detailed sermon notes are available on our website: [LakeRegionBibleChurch.org](http://LakeRegionBibleChurch.org) (see “Messages 2024” tab)

## Fearing the LORD – before the Day of the LORD comes & because that Day is coming!

### 1. The LORD of Hosts has spoken –

- His people spoke hard words against Him: “It is vain to serve God...”
- Those who feared the LORD spoke with one another & He heard them...
- The great & awesome day of the LORD is coming...

### 2. Fearing the great name of the LORD & Experiencing His covenantal love

- Praise, trust & serve the LORD – even when evildoers prosper & people are slandering God
- Speak with one another & esteem Jesus’ great Name – as His treasured possession

- Remember the LORD’s commands – & behold the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ

### Excursus: Some Highlights of the Book of Malachi (taken from Message #1)

**Background:** “The book of Malachi reflects a period of tension. God had not brought in the greatness of his kingdom after the construction and dedication of the temple (see Hag. 2:6-9) ... But neither had his people conformed to God’s expectations ... The people of God were in dire straits. They had suffered from drought and famine. The poor were forced to sell their sons and daughters into slavery if they could not pay their debts. Since financial gain was hard, many divorced their wives in order to marry pagan women for financial profit. In contrast to God’s people who struggled, the wicked prospered. God seemed to overlook their evil and to be apathetic to the condition of his own people. Malachi entered into this historical context to explain the delay in fulfillment and to set before his hearers the unpopular message of ‘human failure and divine promise’” (*Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, VanGemeren, p.202).

**Six Disputations:** Malachi records 6 disputes the LORD has with His people. In each case His people dispute with Him (designated by the recurring phrase “but you say”). These 6 disputations are based on 3 repeated themes arranged as a \*chiasm & summarized below (\*using repetition to list points, such as ABBA or ABCCBA instead of ABCDEF).

A. The LORD’s Love & Israel’s Experience: (1:1-5) The LORD rebukes Israel for doubting His love. Despite her unfaithfulness, the LORD still loved Israel, but she was not experiencing His love because of her sin & her focus on her troubled circumstances.

B. The LORD’s Name & Israel’s Begrudging Offerings: (1:6 – 2:9) The LORD rebukes the ungodly priests for allowing Israel to give begrudging offerings which dishonored the LORD’s Name among the nations.

C. The LORD’s Favor & Israel’s Ungodly Marriages: (2:10-16) The LORD rebukes Israel for being unfaithful in her covenantal relationship with Him (marrying women outside the Jewish faith, divorcing & treating their wives violently, shamefully & with neglect).

C’ The LORD’s Justice & Israel’s Ungodliness: (2:17 – 3:5) The LORD rebukes Israel for questioning His justice (based on her troubled circumstances), when she was the one living unjustly (embracing sorcery, committing adultery, and oppressing the needy). But God will purify His people who repent and bring judgment on those who do not.

B’ The LORD’s Faithfulness & Israel’s Begrudging Offerings: (3:6-12) The LORD rebukes Israel for robbing Him of their tithes & He exhorts her to return to Him in whole-hearted worship. Those who do will experience His abundant blessings & protection.

A’ The LORD’s Vindication & Israel’s Experience: (3:13 – 4:6) The LORD rebukes Israel for her blasphemous charge that God blesses those who do evil & He warns about the coming judgment. He also promises that those who fear & serve the LORD are His treasured possession, and one day He will make a distinction between the righteous & the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.