
RELATED SCRIPTURES

Exodus 33:18–23 | Isaiah 40:3–5 | Mark 1:1–8

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.12.25

SUMMARY

The next charge brought by Malachi is that the people have grumbled against God. Their behavior goes beyond Israel's grumbling in the wilderness about food (Exodus 16:2-3). They assert that God delights in the evil done by people and that he is not just, denying his character as good and righteous. God responded to the charges in chapters 1 and 2 with reminders of who he is and how Israel has been unfaithful. Now he responds to Israel's question, "Where is the God of justice?" with a prophecy of what he will do. Israel asking for justice is akin to Moses asking to see God's glory (Exodus 33:20)—both would result in death because of man's sin. In response, God provides mercy. He provides a way for the purification of his people before he sends judgment. The prophecy in Malachi 3:1 echoes Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 40:3). Both point to a messenger to come ahead of the Lord, which is fulfilled in John the Baptist as the forerunner of Jesus. John the Baptist preached repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:3), which would be accomplished through Jesus Christ. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Christ's death and resurrection provide purification in a way that Old Testament sacrifices could not. "How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews 9:14). Yet we await Christ's second coming when Malachi 3:5 will ultimately be fulfilled, bringing eternal life to those who put their faith in Christ, and judgment to those who continue in sin (Revelation 21:8). We can rest assured in this, because God does not change, nor will he fail to fulfill his promise. "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Malachi 2:17–3:6.

Israel's question in Malachi 2:17 is focused on their current condition rather than remembering God's promises. Are there particular promises in the Bible that have encouraged you through difficult seasons in your life? How does this change your perspective on evils that seem to go unpunished?

How do you answer the question, "If God is good, why does he allow evil?"

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.