

Malachi 2:17-3:5

Christ: The Messenger Who Refines And Purifies

Introduction: God's Providence & Evil

1. Have you ever thought: Why does not God do away with evil? Why does He permit evil to exist or go on?
2. Have you ever thought: God does not judge the evil that exists, He must not care? Or He is not just?
3. God hates evil, but He is patient and He uses it for His purposes – This does not make God complicit or guilty of sin (**James 1:13**)
4. God's motivation is always good and pure – He will use evil and sin to accomplish what He wills
5. Examples: Joseph – **Gen 45:7 & Ps 105:16-17 (Gen 50:20)**; Job – **Job 42:11**; Micaiah – **1 Kings 22:21-3**; Paul – **2 Corinthians 12:7-9**; Jesus – **Acts 4:26-28**
6. Israelites in Malachi's Day were Cynics and Skeptics: They did not believe in God's sovereign purposes and promises – they were impatient with God
7. God therefore would purify the faithful and judge unbelievers

Main Idea of the Text:

God uses FIRE (Pain, Suffering)! God refines His people with FIRE to cause them to walk in His way and prepare them for everlasting joy. God consumes the wicked with FIRE for their unrepentant hearts.

God Grows Tiresome Of Cynicism and Skepticism (v. 17)

1. God is Wearied with Unbelief
2. God is Wearied with Empty, Sinful Words
3. The Cynic: All who do evil are good and God is pleased with them
 - a. Sneers at God
 - b. Evil prospers under the Hand of God, and the good are being ignored
 - c. What we think: He must be pleased with the evil doer
4. The Skeptic: Where is the God of Justice? God is not

fair and not acting according to our views of righteousness

- a. When Will He Come and Do Something About This?

God Refines His People With Fire (3:1-4)

1. God is like a Crucible for His people
2. Three Individuals are like a Refining Fire
 - a. Verse 1a – God Himself
 - b. Verse 1b – John the Baptist – **Mt 11:10, Mk 1:1-4, Lk 7.27 (Malachi 4:5; Luke 1:17)**
 - c. Verse 1c – The LORD Jesus Christ
3. Words of Hope to the People
 - a. I Am Going to Send Someone To You to Herald a Message – John the Baptist
 - b. Then I AM Going to Come to You – Jesus
 - c. *You are Gold to Me – I Am Going to Refine You!*
4. The People are Refined because of Sin within
5. We do not get rid of our own Sin! Jesus Comes To Us to Justify Us Before God!
6. We must place our faith in the Purifying acts of a Loving, Merciful God who uses FIRE to refine
7. Salvation is by Grace through Faith through the Refining Fire of God's Mercy Found in Jesus Christ

God Consumes The Wicked With Fire (v. 5)

1. God is like a Wild Fire or Crematorium for the Wicked – In the End, there is Nothing Left
2. God is a Consuming Fire, Judging the Wicked
3. Words of Despair
 - a. I Am Going to Come and Condemn the Unrepentant Unbeliever
 - b. A Distinction between those who are His and those who will have None of Him

Christ is Coming Again: What Will Happen to You when He does? **Psalm 1**