

Dr. Gary Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30, Malachi

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30, Malachi, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Gary Yates concludes his 30-part series on the Book of the Twelve by focusing on Malachi, the last of the post-exilic prophets. He explains that the anticipated joyful resolution of restored marriage between God and Israel has not yet occurred. **Yates discusses the historical context of Malachi's ministry, aligning his messages with the problems faced by Ezra and Nehemiah.** The prophet addresses issues such as intermarriage, failure to pay tithes, and social injustice, indicating a spiritual ebb and flow within the community. **Yates examines the structure of Malachi, focusing on the disputation speeches reflecting arguments between God and his people.** He details the disputes regarding God's love, corrupt worship, Israel's unfaithfulness, wearied obedience, and the failure to pay tithes, pointing towards an ultimate future restoration heralded by an eschatological prophet.

2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Book of the Twelve [Minor Prophets]).



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on30.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30, Malachi

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from Dr. Gary Yates's Session 30 on the Book of Malachi.

Briefing Document: Dr. Gary Yates on Malachi

Overview:

Dr. Yates's lecture focuses on the Book of Malachi as the concluding book of the "Book of the 12" (Minor Prophets). He highlights Malachi's role as the last classical prophet before the intertestamental period and emphasizes the book's central theme: God's persistent love for a people who repeatedly fail to reciprocate that love and their need for repentance. The lecture breaks down the six disputations in Malachi and their historical context.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

- **Unresolved Relationship:** Despite the return from exile, the relationship between God and Israel remains fractured. Malachi ministers in a post-exilic period where the people have not fully learned from their past and continue in patterns of sin and disobedience, echoing Hosea's initial portrayal of a broken marriage.
- "In Malachi, we have the idea that the marriage that God has promised to restore has not been resolved."
- "Hosea begins the book of the 12 talking about the love between God and his people. The opening statement of Malachi is the Lord says, I have loved you. The shocking part is that the people respond back, how have you loved us?"
- **Historical Context:** Malachi's ministry likely occurred just before or shortly after Ezra and Nehemiah (458-445 BC). The problems Malachi addresses – intermarriage, failure to pay tithes, social injustice – mirror the issues faced by Ezra and Nehemiah.
- "I think that it indicates to us that probably the best dates for the ministry of Malachi are going to be just prior to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. He is dealing with the same problems, but the reforms that they bring about have not taken place yet."

- "Even after they have had a strong leader and even after someone has led them back to God, a few years later, God is back on the back burner of their lives, and they are repeating the same pattern of sins that were in the past."
 - **End of Prophetic Era:** Malachi marks the end of the classical prophetic voice in Israel until the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus.
 - "Malachi's ministry marks the end of the classical prophets in the land of Israel. There is not going to be another prophetic voice to speak to the people until the birth of Jesus and, prior to that, the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist."
 - **Disputation Speech:** Malachi's message takes the form of a "disputation speech," characterized by arguments and challenges between God (through the prophet) and the people. The people respond to God's accusations with sarcastic or doubting replies.
 - "The primary prophetic genre in the book of Malachi is what we refer to as a disputation speech...Malachi is almost like a marriage counselor here because there is an argument between God and his people, reflected in the way that they respond to the message of the prophets."
 - **Contrast with Habakkuk:** Yates contrasts Malachi's cynical questions with Habakkuk's sincere questioning of God. Habakkuk represents faithful doubt that leads to deeper trust, while the people in Malachi express rebellion and apathy.
 - "Habakkuk represents the questions of a faithful servant of God who doesn't understand God's ways...However, in Malachi, we have questions as well...It reflects questions that are, instead of questions from a person of faith who genuinely is seeking God and wants to understand God's ways, they are questions that reflect rebellion against God, cynicism, doubt..."
1. **Six Disputations (Key Issues): God's Love (1:2-5):** The people question God's love despite His preservation of them. God reminds them of his love for Jacob (Israel) and hate for Esau (Edom).
 2. **Corrupt Worship (1:6-2:9):** The people offer defiled sacrifices and their lifestyle does not match up to their worship. They offer defective animals and their actions toward the poor are unjust.
 3. **Faithlessness (2:10-16):** Israel has been unfaithful, specifically in the areas of marrying foreign women and divorcing the wives of their youth. The issue with

foreign wives is not primarily racial but spiritual as they were led away by syncretism/idolatry.

4. **Wearying the Lord (2:17-3:5):** The people challenge God's justice and goodness, claiming evildoers prosper. God promises to send a messenger (John the Baptist) to prepare the way for the Lord's coming and judgment.
 5. **Failure to Pay Tithes (3:6-12):** The people are robbing God by not paying tithes and offerings, resulting in a curse. The teacher warns against misinterpreting this passage as a guarantee of wealth under the New Covenant.
 6. **Arrogance Toward God (3:13-4:3):** The people claim it is vain to serve God, challenging His justice.
- **Remnant and Future Restoration:** Despite widespread apostasy, there is a small group that fears the Lord and responds to His word. God promises a future restoration and the coming of Elijah to prepare the way, connecting this to John the Baptist.
 - "Even in the post-exilic community, God's going to bless those who respond...Again, though, as we've worked our way all the way through the book of the Twelve, the responses that are made to God, these limited examples of repentance, are not the full return, the full restoration..."
 - "The Book of the 12, focuses so much on the need to repent, the need to turn back to God, and the failure of the people to do so. It closes with the promise that when the eschatological prophet Elijah comes in the future, he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."
 - **Response to God's Word:** Yates concludes by emphasizing the importance of how we respond to God's word, acknowledging that it is a matter of life and death.

Key Quotes:

- "I have loved you with an everlasting love, and my love is reflected in the way that I have drawn you with my hesed."
- "When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those who are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor."

- "An idol in comparison to God or in contrast to God is safe. An idol never challenges you. It doesn't judge or demand loyalty, but the Holy One of Israel is a jealous God."
- "It is a matter of life and death, how we respond to God's word, how we listen to his prophets, and how we listen to the prophetic word that God has given to us in Scripture."

Conclusion:

Dr. Yates presents Malachi as a poignant reminder of God's unwavering love and the persistent human tendency to resist His call to repentance. The book serves as a bridge between the Old and New Testaments, anticipating a future restoration and the coming of a messenger who will prepare the way for the Lord.

4. Study Guide: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30, Malachi

Malachi: A Study Guide

Quiz

1. What is surprising about the people's response to God's declaration of love in Malachi 1:2?
2. According to Dr. Yates, what are the possible time periods for Malachi's ministry and why?
3. What genre is the book of Malachi, and how does this impact the way that the people respond to God?
4. According to Yates, how were the people despising God's name through their worship?
5. How does Dr. Yates tie intermarriage to idolatry in the book of Malachi?
6. What does Dr. Yates say is the significance of God sending his messenger?
7. Why does Dr. Yates think it is so important to pay attention to your response to the word of God?
8. According to Dr. Yates, how are the people wearying God?
9. What does Dr. Yates say about Malachi 3:10 and tithing?
10. What promise does Dr. Yates point to in Malachi chapter four?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The people respond with the question, "How have you loved us?" This is surprising because God had delivered them from exile and preserved them as a nation.
2. Dr. Yates suggests Malachi ministered either just prior to Ezra and Nehemiah (458-445 BC) or shortly after (around 400 BC). This is due to the similar issues addressed, such as intermarriage and failure to pay tithes, suggesting a time before or shortly after Ezra and Nehemiah's reforms.
3. The primary prophetic genre in Malachi is a disputation speech. This means that Malachi has an argument between God and his people reflected in the way that they respond to the message of the prophets.

4. The people were offering defective sacrifices (lame, blind, or sick animals) and practicing social injustice. This showed a lack of reverence for God and His standards.
5. Dr. Yates connects intermarriage with foreign women to the danger of syncretism and idolatry. The foreign wives often followed other gods, which led the Israelites away from exclusive devotion to the Lord.
6. God sends the messenger to prepare the way for the Lord and to warn the people and call them back to God. In doing this, He will ultimately bring justice.
7. It is a matter of life and death because when we respond to the word of God in the right way, we will enjoy God's blessing. When we return to God, God will turn to us.
8. The people are wearying God by challenging and questioning His justice. They are saying that everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord.
9. Dr. Yates cautions against legalistic application of Malachi 3:10 and suggests to be careful that we do not impose the passage on people without a proper understanding of the Mosaic law. This passage, as it was written to ancient Israel under the Mosaic Covenant, is promising specific covenant blessings to them in that covenant that related to the enjoyment of the land.
10. Dr. Yates points to the promise of the eschatological prophet Elijah who will prepare the way and turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers. There will no longer be generational conflict and all of the people will be righteous, and God will purge his people.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the "disputation speech" genre in the Book of Malachi. How does it reveal the relationship between God and the people of Israel during the post-exilic period?
2. Explain the various ways the people of Israel were showing contempt for God's name in their worship, as described in Malachi. How do these actions relate to their overall spiritual condition?
3. Analyze the connection between social injustice and religious practice in the Book of Malachi. How does Malachi argue that one cannot exist without the other?

4. Examine the issue of marriage and divorce in Malachi 2:10-16. What does this passage reveal about God's view of covenant faithfulness and the importance of marital commitments?
5. Discuss the application of Malachi 3:10 on tithing for modern-day Christians. Does the blessing apply today, and why or why not?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Post-Exilic Period:** The time in Israelite history after the return from Babylonian exile, roughly from 539 BC onwards.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief or principle.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the final events in history.
- **Prophetic Disputation:** A literary genre in which a prophet engages with the real or imagined objections of the audience to convince them of the truthfulness of the prophetic message.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew word for steadfast love, mercy, and faithfulness, often used to describe God's relationship with Israel.
- **Syncretism:** The amalgamation or attempted amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought.
- **Mosaic Covenant:** The conditional covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai in the Book of Exodus.
- **Tithing:** Giving a tenth of one's income or produce, traditionally for religious purposes.
- **Intertestamental Period:** The period of time between the Old and New Testaments, from about 400 BC to the time of Christ.
- **Remnant:** A small remaining group of people who are faithful to God during a time of widespread apostasy or judgment.

5. FAQs on Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 30, Malachi, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Malachi FAQ

- **What is the central problem Malachi addresses in the post-exilic community?**
- Malachi confronts the post-exilic community about their spiritual malaise and disobedience despite having experienced significant historical events like the exile and return. They repeat the sins of their forefathers, demonstrating a failure to fully learn from the past. The fractured relationship between God and his people, first highlighted in Hosea, remains unresolved. The people show hard-heartedness, cynicism, and apathy toward God and His commands.
- **When did Malachi likely minister, and how do we know?**
- Malachi probably ministered either just before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (458-445 BC) or shortly after, around 400 BC. This is suggested because he addresses similar issues of intermarriage with foreigners, failure to pay tithes, and social injustice that Ezra and Nehemiah also confronted. The cyclical nature of the people's obedience and reversion to sin supports the possibility of either dating. Regardless, Malachi's ministry signifies the end of the classical prophetic era in Israel until John the Baptist.
- **What is a "disputation speech," and how does Malachi use it?**
- A disputation speech is a prophetic genre where the prophet engages with the real or imagined objections of their audience to convince them of the truth. Malachi heavily employs this genre because the people directly and sarcastically challenge God's messages. For example, when God says, "I have loved you," they respond, "How have you loved us?" Malachi uses these dialogues to address their defiance and resistance to repentance.
- **What is the first dispute in Malachi, and how does God respond?**
- The first dispute centers on the question of God's love. The people ask, "How have you loved us?" God answers by contrasting their fate with that of Edom, reminding them that He has preserved and blessed Jacob's descendants (Israel) while judging and laying waste to Esau's descendants (Edom). This underscores God's election and continued care for Israel despite their hardships.

- **What are the issues of corrupt worship that Malachi raises?**
- Malachi rebukes the people for bringing corrupt worship, which demonstrates a lack of reverence for God. This includes offering defective sacrifices (lame, blind, or sick animals) and engaging in social injustice while performing religious rituals. They are also accused of offering animals that they stole from their neighbors. God emphasizes that their worship should reflect His greatness and glory, but their actions reveal contempt for His name.
- **What are the two main issues related to marriage that Malachi addresses?**
- Malachi addresses two key issues regarding marriage: intermarriage with foreign women and divorce of the wives of their youth. Intermarriage with foreigners devoted to other gods leads to syncretism and compromises their exclusive devotion to God. Divorcing their original wives is viewed as a betrayal of a covenant made before God and suggests a motive of marrying foreign women to acquire land and resources.
- **What does Malachi say about tithing, and how should it be applied today?**
- Malachi rebukes the people for robbing God by not paying their tithes and offerings. He promises blessings if they bring the full tithe into the storehouse. However, applying this passage today requires caution. While generosity and giving are valued, the promise of specific physical prosperity is tied to the Mosaic Covenant and should not be taken as a guarantee of wealth in the same way for New Testament Christians. The New Testament emphasizes grace-giving rather than legalistic tithing. Also, the Old Testament tithe was tied to providing for the Levites and priests at the Temple, and cannot be solely used to say people must tithe only to a local church.
- **How does Malachi conclude, and what hope does he offer?**
- Malachi concludes with a focus on Israel's arrogance and challenging of God's justice, but offers hope through the promise of a future eschatological prophet like Elijah, who will prepare the way for God's return. This prophet will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and vice versa, symbolizing a restoration of relationships and unity. The book ends with the assurance that God is committed to restoring His people and purging the wicked, rewarding those who fear His name.