HOWARD THURMAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

Rev. White's reading notes
based on synthetic reading of the book

Malachi

Synthetic Reading
2008290130

Malachi is the 39th book of the Bible and the last book of the Old Testament. Malachi, whose name means *my messenger*, prophesied to the post-exilic remnant 100 years after the end of the exile. The remnant had survived the exile, the temple appeared to be rebuilt, and the remnant had the benefit of ancestral example. Unfortunately, not only did the remnant not do any better than their ancestors, but also the hearts of the remnant were as hard as their ancestors' hearts were.

Chapters 1-3 of the prophesy of Malachi confronted the carelessness, negligence, and hard-heartedness of these post-exilic survivors by engaging in a series of dialogued disputes. The disputes were like formal conflicts or legal arguments. In each case, a dispute is presented, the opposition disagrees, and the response makes the case for the truth. Malachi utilized this format to prophetically challenge the people in several areas including their lovelessness towards God, their *lame* worship, their covenant unfaithfulness both in their marriages and to God, their impatience with God's justice, their failure to support the temple and the work of God, and the cynical idea that serving God was futile.

Chapter 4 concludes the prophetic work by reflecting on the future, reminding the people of the purpose and the power of the Law and the Prophets, and closing with the anticipation of prophet Elijah coming again and preparing the hearts of the children. When Malachi closes out his prophetic work, he closes out the Old Testament and the people did not hear again from God for 400 years.

1 Israel's Worthless Worship
2 Problematic Priests
3 Get Right with God
4 The Day of the Lord is Coming