

# Answers to Sermon Notes

“Turning Hearts, Part III”

“Responding to the Love of God...With Incorruptible Instruction”

Malachi 2:1-9

3/5/23

<sup>5</sup> “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”

- 1) The Day of the Lord is **coming**.
  - a) Just as his first coming occurred in time, bringing the **Day of Salvation**.
  - b) His second coming will occur in time, bringing the **Day of Judgment**.
- 2) Prior to that day, the Lord has purposed to **prepare** his people by sending Elijah (John the Baptist) to **reissue** the call of the Law and Prophets: Repentance and Faith.
  - a) The ongoing testimony of this voice, along with the **good news** of the gospel, leads them with seriousness to the **cross** of Christ, where they find both forgiveness and ongoing **sanctification**.
  - b) In the language of Malachi, the **effect** of this is:
    - i) to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, concerned with their **eternal destiny**,
    - ii) to turn the hearts of the fathers to the Lord, as they seek to lead their children by **example**,
    - iii) and to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers as they witness the **genuineness** of that example.
- 3) Last week we saw that all of the activities of this turning must be generated by a deep and **profound** understanding of the **love** that God has shown us, which, in turn, produces **honorable** offerings.
  - a) A heart **turned** toward the Lord, then, is committed to **true** worship in response to His **love**.
    - i) This is where we all **are** and where we all **should be**.
- 4) Today we see that a heart turned toward the Lord is also committed to **incorruptible instruction**.
  - a) Instruction has been at the **center** of God’s relationship to his people from the **beginning**.
    - i) To be a child of God is to be constantly **learning**. (Mt. 5:5)
      - (1) For, on our own, we are **ignorant**. (**morally**)
      - (2) More than that, we are **fallen**.
        - (a) We are naturally drawn to what is **immoral**.
    - b) It is for this reason that God not only **revealed** moral truth to his people in his **law**.
      - i) He commissioned certain persons to see that it was **taught**, guarded, and **applied**.
        - (1) For, not everyone understands it to the same **depth** or **clarity**.
        - (2) And everyone needs someone to **speak truth** to them.
      - ii) These people were the **Levites**, the priests.
      - iii) Here, God seems to be using a form of **personification**, referring to the group of Levites as though they were a single person: Levi.
        - (1) For we have no record of Levi receiving this covenant or of **serving** in this **capacity**.

- (a) However, we do have record of many **Levites** doing so.
- (2) In the **Covenant** with Levi:
  - (a) God gave Levi **life** and **peace**. (vs. 5)
  - (b) Levi gave God **fear, awe,** and **true** instruction. (vs. 5-7)
  - (c) Through Levi's true instruction, he gave that **life** and **peace** to the people.
- c) While the **ongoing** instruction of God's people was obviously very important, the role of this instruction in our preparation for the Day of the Lord is **critical**.
  - i) **Unlike** their ongoing experience in the Old Testament, once that day arrives there is no **second chance**.
- d) But, as important as this instruction has been through the years, it has also been **regularly** corrupted – corrupted by a **competing** covenant.
  - i) The Covenant of **Blind Eye**.
    - (1) Here the **people** of God give the **priest** “life and peace.”
    - (2) The priests give the **people** fear, awe, and **false** instruction.
      - (a) His teaching becomes **whatever** the people **want** it to be.
      - (b) And because he is obviously **spineless**, he is despised and **abased** before the people.
        - (i) He is a **joke** and he makes God look like a **joke** too.
    - (3) Through this false instruction, the priest **takes away** both life and peace **from** the people.
      - (a) And to those whose hearts are being **turned**, this is a **critical** issue.
      - (b) And a **convicting** one.
    - (4) While the role of the priests (pastors/teachers) in this is **inexcusable**, and God justly condemns them here, it is what it is because the **people** want it to be that way.
    - (5) Therefore, no matter who you are, priest or lay person, you **have** a **role** in restoring and securing true instruction.
- e) If there is one **central** problem that God's people have in **our** day, which is leading to countless thousands being **unprepared** for the Day of the Lord, it the firm establishment of the Covenant of **Blind Eye**.
  - i) As we have been **told** would be the case. (II Timothy 3:1-5, 4:3-4)
  - ii) And what we are **to do** about it. (II Timothy 4:1-2, 5)
  - iii) Though this is not a **surprise**, it is a serious **challenge**.
    - (1) Requiring us to decide which **version** of, “life and peace,” we want.
- f) Perhaps he would have you become an **instructor**. Instruct **well**. (vs. 6)
  - i) Or, perhaps he would have you **support** true instruction. Support **well**.
    - (1) **Individuals**, Organizations, **Schools**, etc.
  - ii) And all as a **response** to his **love**.