

The  
REFINER'S  
FIRE

MALACHI 3



## MALACHI 2:17

- <sup>17</sup> You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, “How have we wearied *Him*?” In that you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them,” or, “Where is the God of justice?”

The people  
could no  
longer  
discern  
between  
good and  
evil

This caused  
them to  
challenge  
God  
regarding  
His Justice

As we shall see, God  
takes this charge  
seriously and now  
affirms that He is  
indeed a Just God  
and that is why He  
will deal with the sins  
of the people in two  
distinctly different  
fashions.

## MALACHI 3:1

- “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.

# THE FIRST COMING OF OUR LORD

- God had promised to send a Messenger to prepare the way for His Messiah. (Isaiah 40:3-5) God now reiterates that same promise.
- We know this Messenger to be none other than John the Baptist. (Matthew 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13)

# THE FIRST COMING OF OUR LORD

- God also renewed His promise to send the Messiah.
- The Lord Himself would come to His own Temple!
- This Messiah would be the Messenger of a New Covenant. (This also had been prophesied before, Jeremiah 31:27-37)



## THE FIRST COMING OF OUR LORD

- Throughout the centuries God had sent numerous messengers to be His mouthpiece communicating His desires to the world. (Moses, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah...)
- But now He sent His Son! Not just to purchase our redemption, but to communicate directly to the world. (Hebrews 1)
- God also inaugurated the New Covenant through His blood. (Hebrews 8:7-13)

MALACHI  
3:2-3

- <sup>2</sup> “But **who can endure** the day of His coming? And **who can stand** when He appears? For **He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap.** <sup>3</sup> He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and **He will purify** the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, **so that** they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness.



# JESUS IS COMING BACK

When Jesus comes again, it will be a day unlike any other.

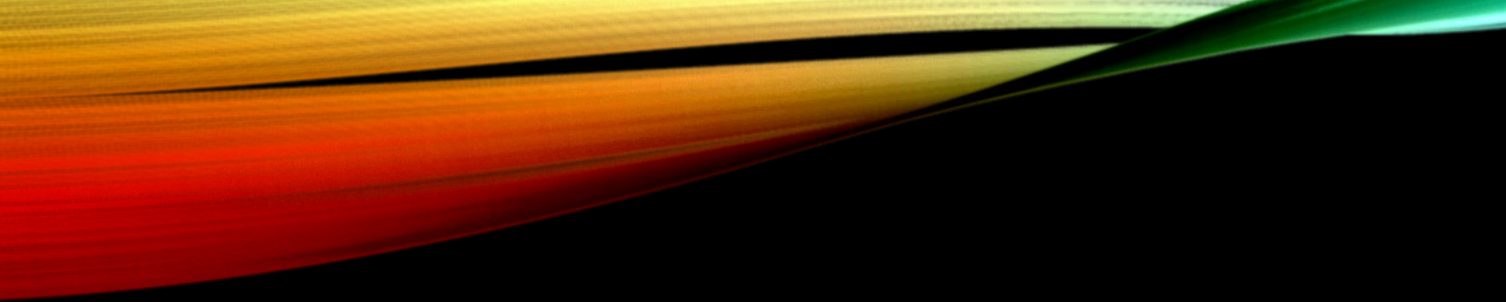
Who can endure...

Who can stand...

- It does not say in verse 2 that he is like a forest fire, or like an incinerator's fire. It says that he is like a refiner's fire. A forest fire destroys indiscriminately. An incinerator consumes completely.







- A refiner's fire refines. It purifies. It melts down the bar of silver or gold, separates the impurities that ruin its value, burns them up, and leaves the silver and gold intact. He is like a refiner's fire.
- This purification begins with the spiritual leaders



# JESUS THE REFINER

THE  
REFINER  
PROVIDES  
THE FIRE

THE  
REFINER  
REMOVES  
THE DROSS

THE REFINER  
DETERMINES THE  
LENGTH OF TIME  
NEEDED IN THE FIRE


THE REFINER KNOWS  
WHEN THE SILVER OR  
GOLD ARE PURE  
ENOUGH FOR HIS  
PURPOSES

THE REFINER  
WILL SEE HIS  
REFLECTION IN  
THE MOLTEN  
METAL

THE REFINER  
WILL NOT  
LEAVE THE  
TASK ½  
DONE!!!

MALACHI  
3:4

- **4** Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem **will be pleasing** to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

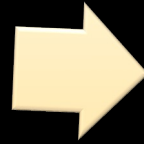
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- Clearly the refining process has a purpose!
  - The offerings/sacrifices will once again be pleasing to the Lord.
  - In the future there will be a reinstatement of sacrifices to the Lord. (Ezekiel 43)
    - Not to take away sins, but as a gift to the Lord
    - Commemorative in nature, similar to the celebration of communion today.

MALACHI  
3:5-6

- <sup>5</sup> “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a **swift witness against** the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and **do not fear Me,**” says the LORD of hosts. <sup>6</sup> “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.



What is a refining fire for some will be judgment/condemnation for others.



God, Himself, will be the one called upon to testify as an eyewitness of their sinfulness. (He is an excellent and unimpeachable witness)



There is a common thread to this section: all of the sins listed relate to perpetual social evils which contributed to the people departing from the Lord and His commandments.

# GOD AS A WITNESS

- Sorcerers: one who practices witchcraft.
- Adulterers: literally, one who has sexual relations with another person's spouse. Figuratively, one who combines their relationship with God with serving idols or false gods.
- Perjurers: one who testifies falsely against his neighbor.

# GOD AS A WITNESS

- Exploiters: one who oppresses others, who takes advantage of those less fortunate than themselves
  - Wage earners
  - Widows
  - Orphans
- Those who turn away the sojourner: one who is a newcomer lacking resources and rights, an alien/foreigner

# GOD AS A WITNESS

- All of these have one more thing in common
- They did not “FEAR THE LORD!”
  - THEY DID NOT:
  - TREAT GOD AS HOLY
  - STAND IN AWE OF WHO HE IS
  - FEAR THE JUDGEMENT, HE PROMISES

# GOD STILL GIVES HOPE!

**GOD'S CHARACTER IS UNCHANGING**

**GOD HAD PROMISED THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE A  
REMNANT**

**GOD CANNOT LIE**



*The refining pot is  
for silver and the  
furnace for gold,  
But the Lord tests  
hearts.*

*~Proverbs 17:3*



## APPLICATION

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God still desires His people to be pure and holy. That we reflect the image of Jesus.

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God still plans on refining His people.

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Some of this refinement happens in this life

## 1 PETER 1:6-7

- <sup>6</sup> In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;



## JAMES 1:2-4

- <sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the **testing** of your faith **produces endurance.** <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be **perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing.



# APPLICATION

- SOME OF THE REFINING TAKES PLACE AFTER THIS LIFE IS DONE

An aerial photograph of a demolition site. A yellow excavator is positioned in the upper center, surrounded by a large amount of rubble, including wooden planks, metal sheets, and other debris. The scene is dimly lit, with a dark, moody atmosphere. The text is overlaid on this background.

# 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

- <sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. <sup>11</sup> For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

- <sup>12</sup> Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> **each man's work will become evident**; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and **the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.**

## 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15

- <sup>14</sup> If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

- HOW ARE YOU BUILDING UPON THE FOUNDATION OF JESUS CHRIST?
- ARE YOU PREPARING FOR THE REFINERS FIRE?
- MAKE THIS YOUR PRAYER: "I WANT TO GET SO CLOSE TO HIM THAT IT'S NO BIG CHANGE ON THE DAY THAT JESUS CALLS MY NAME!"

