

The Minor Prophets “The Twelve”

Hosea	Nahum
Joel	Habakkuk
Amos	Zephaniah
Obadiah	Haggai
Jonah	Zechariah
Micah	Malachi

Prophetic Ministry: 800 – 430 B.C.

Malachi

Historical Background:

- Date: between 460 – 430 B.C.; contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah
 - 538 – Cyrus’ decree; remnant returns to Judah
 - 520 – Haggai & Zechariah; temple work begins
 - 515 – the temple is completed
(478 – Esther becomes queen of King Xerxes)
 - 458 – Ezra returns; a scribe and a priest
 - 445 – Nehemiah returns; rebuilds walls and brings wide-sweeping spiritual reforms

Malachi

Historical Background:

- Spiritual Climate
 - ❖ temple has been finished for many decades, still no visible prosperity or success
 - spiritually lethargic; lost their passion, fear and awe of God; settled into their culture
 - displayed in many “sins”

Malachi

Message:

- Title: “Return to Me and I will Return to you”
 - return to covenant faithfulness – must begin with the priests
 - this will ultimately come about at the Lord’s coming as a “refiner’s fire” (3:1-5)

“Defiled Worship”

1. The Origin of Defiled Worship

- *A failure to see and sense the greatness of God*
 - 1:6 – they did not honor God as a father or fear Him as a master
 - Their treatment of God in worship was vastly disproportionate to His inherent greatness
 - 1:11-12; 1:14 – His name is great!
 - Their worship is unacceptable because it utterly fails to recognize the greatness of God
 - 1:8 – have more respect for their governor

“Defiled Worship”

2. The Expression of Defiled Worship

A. Specific Form

- worthless offerings – brought the blind, lame, sick
- Disdainful attitude – despised the entire practice

B. Principles

- (1) offering God “non-sacrificial sacrifices”;
 - we demonstrate God’s worth when we give Him what is our best and what costs us
- (2) performing worship out of a “begrudging obligation”

“Defiled Worship”

3. The Opposite of Defiled Worship

- **Worship, which is a declaration of God’s worth and value, is pure when it...**
 - Comes from a heart that treasures God above all people and possessions
 - Is expressed by giving Him one’s best with great joy
- **Applies not only to corporate worship, but to all of life (Romans 12:1)**