

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## Prophecy

### December 1: Malachi 1-4 (Wade Stanley)

Malachi is the final book of prophecy in the Old Testament both chronologically and canonically. While we cannot precisely nail down when Malachi ministered to Judah, there are a few internal clues that lead us to a general time period.

1:7-10: We read of sacrifices being offered at the temple.

1:8: At the time of Malachi's writing, the Jews were under the rule of a governor.

2:11: There was a problem with Jewish men marrying foreign wives, a problem that existed during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

These internal clues suggest that Malachi was written at some point during the fifth century B.C.

Unfaithfulness is the principle theme of Malachi. The priests were unfaithful to God by allowing the people to offer substandard sacrifices (1:6-14) and by being lax with the covenant in general (2:1-9). The people showed their unfaithfulness by treating the covenant of marriage with contempt (2:10-16). God will condemn the unfaithful (2:17-3:5) and therefore urges His people to repent (3:6-7).

One of the interesting features of Malachi is how God uses the objections of the people against them. Their excuses do not stand up to divine scrutiny. The righteous, however, will stand (3:16-18).

Chapter 4 is most certainly Messianic. Notice the prediction of John the Baptizer in 4:5-6.

Only four more weeks of prophecy to go! On to Revelation...

### **Comment:**

Marc Hermon:

4:6 is an interesting verse. "Turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers". I think there is a lot of possibilities here but the general idea is that the "children" of Israel are in a bad place during the time of Malachi and will be for the 400 year intertestamental period and then the final opportunity will arise when God the Father will once again turn his heart towards his children and offer them salvation through His son. John the Baptist will call out, "Repent" and return to the faith of your fathers, in particular Abraham (a new Son will carry the wood up the Mount.) I think Jesus refers to all of this in John 8:25-42 which is too much to paste here but verse 39 is probably key when Jesus accuses them of no longer being children of Abraham. "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."

**Comment:**

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Wade!

**Comment:**

Ginger Hermon:  
Thank you, Wade! Where has this year gone? This month in Revelation will really fly!