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Malcolm M. Hutton

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EXEGESIS OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI

Religion 391-392. Honors Course

Malcolm M. Hutton, Jr.
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Honors Thesis
Dr. Frank E. Eakin, Jr.

The work of an exegete is invaluable if one is to uncover the intended meaning of any passage. Contrary to what many religionists so demonstrably insist, scripture is no exception. Scholars declare that to shy away from scripture simply because it is God's Holy Word is to do great injustice to the passage. Scripture should be open to the same careful scrutiny as is applied to any other writing. Certainly a careful study of God's Word to mankind would not cause us to dismiss scriptural utterances but would only serve to enhance our understanding of what is being transmitted to us, the modern reader.

In an exegesis of the Book of Malachi, it will be necessary to look at any number of significant matters. It will be necessary to analyze the Nevi'im within the Tenakh. It will also be quite appropriate to consider the Book of Malachi within the Nevi'im. Significant, critical data will then be looked at including author, dating, provenance, and other worthy critical concerns. I will thereupon seek to propose a suitable commentary to the book, delving into more particularistic concerns of the author, seeking to gain more of a proper insight into what the author was meaning to say to his audience. Upon conclusion of this task, I will seek to offer the reader a literal translation of the passage being considered, giving the location and syntax of each word, followed by a smooth translation, and concluding with a brief analysis of significant words and phrases.

The Tenakh is composed of three sections of writings- Torah, Nevi'im, and Kethuvim. The Torah consists of the Five Books of Moses. The Nevi'im contains the message of the prophets along with

a historical analysis of the events that led up to their ministry. The Kethuvim is a collection of general writings including Psalms, Proverbs, and the Song of Solomon. The Tenakh is of ultimate importance to the Jew. It gives to him his meaning for existence.¹

In the Tenakh, we are given a picture of the history of the Jewish people, a history in turn being understood in light of the authors' own personal religious and theological convictions.

Contemporary archaeology has found that much of the historical record of the Tenakh is accurate. Some part of this record may not be exactly verifiable, but their veracity is probable in view of the accurate picture they give of the general conditions of the period in which they deal. Other parts have been slanted in line with the theological position of the writers and the message they wished to convey. There are portions that may have to be regarded as myths and demythologized in order that they may reveal their spiritual message for us today.²

The Nevi'im contains the message of the prophets along with a historical analysis of the events that led up to their ministry. The middle of the eighth century B.C. was distinguished by the rise of the prophet in Israel who was to be of ultimate significance in the development of the Jewish faith. They were men of extraordinary genius in the spiritual world. Gifted not only with a strong moral integrity but also a keen spiritual sensitivity, they were able to experience the presence and reality of God in marvelous ways and were able to convey those visions of revelation to the people of the day who were in spiritual darkness. But, interestingly enough, "these revelations were never given to them for their own blissful enjoyment of mystic ecstasy with the deity but always the purpose of mediating them to the people always for service, for insight and

will, not for feeling."³

The urge to write down their message came about after the failure to influence the people through oral means. The prophet spoke at the crisis points in Israel's history, when God was about to strike her down with the terrors of history. Believing that Yahweh was a God whose righteousness and sovereignty enabled him to maintain control over the established order of nature, the prophet perceived God as being quite active in the affairs of men. The prophet was terribly distraught when he perceived that the will of God was being defied in the lives of his own special children. The prophet felt that God's judgement was impending and warned the people to turn from their evil ways, lest they perish.

The essence of the prophetic message was essentially religious, for it spoke of a reconciliation that must take place between man and God. But this reconciliation was to be evidenced by some kind of outward manifestation of that inward change that had taken place. Social behavior and ethical matters were also religious concerns. Although the prophets often had more insight into social matters than did the political and religious rulers of that day, they were not social reformers or political statesmen. They were messengers of God, entrusted with a revelation of his will and purpose, this message being embodied not only in their words but also in their personalities. Perhaps "this constitutes their greatest service and this has been of supreme value throughout the ages."⁴

The great political movements of the Persian Period, after Haggai and Zechariah, are of little value and importance when seeking to come to an understanding of the Jewish situation in Malachi's

day. Judah was a Persian province. After Zerubbabel, the Jews were living in the hands of Persian governors. The pressures of foreign rule were keenly and sorely felt. Although the Jews did have a good deal of internal freedom due to the somewhat liberal policy adopted by the Persians, the situation was a difficult one with which to cope. As the days progressed, the people became more despondent as little by little their faith flickered. God's watchful care over them was doubted, and perhaps more tragic, they began to doubt whether it was indeed worthwhile to care for him.

An amazing lack of reverence and devotion abounded among the people. Priests were neglecting their sacrificial duties. People became negligent in paying their tithes and contributions. Signs of spiritual apostasy abounded unceasingly as can be evidenced by the presence of perjury, oppression, divorcing of wives, and outright adultery. A spirit of rationalism pervaded that had yet to be seen in the history of the Israelite nation.⁵

The bitter frustrations of the post-exilic period were being sorely felt. The end of the Babylonian Exile had seemed a promise that the messianic age was close at hand. It was believed that the nation was about to recover the vanished glory of the days when David had ruled in righteousness and power. Realities, however, were far different. Only a small portion of the nation, in fact, returned, and those who did found life in the community just as difficult as it had ever been. The Jewish nation appeared to be only a small insignificant iota within the vast Persian Empire.

Three groups of literary prophets exist in the history of the nation of Israel. With the Babylonian Exile serving as the watershed mark for Israel's history, one properly classifies these three groups as pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic prophets. The pre-exilic prophets all were relatively close together and were active during a comparatively short period of history. Although their messages were in no way identical, essentially the same conditions confronted all the members of this pre-exilic group of prophets. The exilic prophets were like their predecessors, not in their message, but in the fact that they were active during a comparatively short time in the life of the Jewish nation. The same cannot be said of the prophets of the post-exilic period. Being scattered over nearly four centuries, the conditions in back of the writings vary considerably. Less unity is therefore to be expected.⁶

The post-exilic period of Old Testament history can properly be divided into the Persian Period, extending from the fall of Babylon in 538 B.C. through the conquest of Judah by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., and the Greek Period, beginning in 332 B.C. and ending with the Maccabean Revolt in 165 B.C. Of the Jewish community in this post-exilic period, little is known. One can, however, gather that three crucial events have become fixed in the nation's memory, namely, the return from Babylon, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem.⁷

The prophets spoke to a different man, standing at a new and unique occasion in history. The political ambitions of pre-exilic times were no more. "There was no aggressive nationalism, no militaristic

spirit, against which the prophets were forced to contend as in earlier days."⁸ Likewise, the religious tone was different from what it had been in former days. In the pre-exilic period, the prophet had stood face to face with the heathen, confronting a worthy and formidable opponent. Yahweh was not the God of all, but only of his chosen few. Men recognized the validity of other gods and respected men's God-given right to believe and worship as they so desired.

This situation, however, was drastically changed by the events of the Exile. "What the prophets were unable to accomplish was accomplished by the logic of the events of the Exile."⁹ The Jews returned from the Exile a monotheistic people. Yahweh had proven himself more than worthy in satisfying the needs of his people. He had suitably demonstrated by his works that his sovereignty and righteousness extended beyond the confines of one particular chosen nation. The community as a whole had now adopted the faith of the earlier prophets. Evils, of course, still abounded, but they were of quite a different nature. Resultant thereto, the religious needs of the people became as they had never before been.

Although all of the people's hopes had yet to be realized, hope was not abandoned. National consciousness was not at all lost among the people, nor was a lessening of interest in organized religion. In fact, these tendencies became more pronounced than ever. "Organized religion took the form of an elaborate legalistic system, the national feeling became more exclusive than ever, and hope took on a more distinctly Messianic or apocalyptic character."¹⁰

Particular external and specific concerns did at times seem to dominate the writings of these prophets, but the prophet does not make these external requirements the essence of religion:

Instruction by classroom and disputation is preparing to take the place of the fiery oracles of the older prophets. There is an interest in the details of ritual which would have provoked the angry impatience of an Amos or a Jeremiah.¹¹

But under new forms, one sees the old spirit still quite alive.

Of all the significant critical data that one can gather from a scrutiny of the Book of Malachi, perhaps the most surprising and most helpful piece of data is that data concerning the probable author. The evidence for attributing the book to a prophet who bore the name of Malachi is minimal, being based only on the superscription of 1:1. This superscription, however, clearly is an editorial preface, the prophecies beginning in 1:2. There has been the suggestion that Malachi is an abbreviation for "Malachiah," which would tend to make it read "Yahweh is a messenger or angel," a rather impossible concept.¹² The Septuagint reads "his messenger," and both the Talmud and Targum identify "my messenger" in 1:1 as being Ezra the Scribe. Similar traditions abound attributing authorship to Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, but little merit is given to such tradition. The probable solution is that the Book of Malachi was written by an unknown and anonymous author, the editor of the Book of the Twelve having given it a name for convenience sake on the basis of the phrase in 3:1.¹³

Despite this bit of evidence against the existence of an individual named Malachi, the book is clearly the product of a single literary mind, the unity of the book only occasionally being called into question.

Such an unyielding conclusion can be drawn by looking at vocabulary, literary mannerisms, and the amount of historical background that is assumed. The only verses that seem to stand outside the general scheme are 4:4-6, which is not a part of the book, but an appendix to the Book of the Twelve Prophets. Another section which has aroused some suspicion is 2:11-12, which seems to introduce a seemingly irrelevant discussion of marriage into a section which has originally dealt only with the subject of divorce. This latter passage, however, is not considered an assertion by most scholars but is seen as merely being the result of the author's seeking to deal with an extremely complex social situation.¹⁴

Although the date of the Book of Malachi cannot be pinpointed with absolute surety, certain unmistakable historical allusions make it easier to determine the approximate period in which the book was written. Judah is under rule of a governor. The general spirit of the people is at a low ebb. Priests are so slack in the performances of their duties that they are an utter shame and disgrace before God. There is a declining respect for marriage. People are quite slack in the payment of their tithes and offerings. Indeed, the heathen are far better than the people of Israel, for at least they make no claim of an allegiance to Yahweh.¹⁵

The above-stated facts point to a date somewhere around 460 B.C. Certain more specific references make such a date quite feasible. The people have returned from Exile and are under the rule of a governor. It is obvious that the Temple has been around long enough for the priests apparently to have become wearied of the services and for certain irregularities to have crept in. Also, such references as there are to the

Pentateuchal laws and institutions have more affinities with Deuteronomy and not any of the other codes. Evidently, the laws of the Priestly Code have yet to be introduced into the life of Judah as is evidenced by the terminology used for the sacrificing priests, who are called sons of Levi, and not sons of Aaron. This suggests a time before Ezra, to whom, the promulgation of the Priestly Code is due. A date no later than 444 B.C. (Nehemiah's return) can also be noted due to the fact that some of the community have married foreign wives, thus indicating no knowledge of the reforming work of Nehemiah.¹⁶

As mentioned earlier, with Malachi, a new spirit is evident. He did not relate his message to military campaigns or the victories of undermanned armies. His thought was exclusively concerned with the proper relationship between God and his chosen people.¹⁷ He was not a cloistered man, but a man with powerful spiritual drive and force who felt compelled to go into the marketplace or wherever necessary in order to spread the truth in which he so firmly believed.

Concerned with the correct performance of ritual as the earlier prophets had not been, Malachi nonetheless insists on the inwardness of true religion. The performance of correct ritual is not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end, that end being proper devotion and performance before God. "Malachi points the way back to a renewed clarity in ethical instruction as well as the renewed significance in the observance of religious ritual. The way back to significance

in either area is through a renewed vision of the Lord of Hosts."¹⁸

Together with the books of Haggai and Zechariah, the Book of Malachi forms a sufficient block of post-exilic prophecy, and affords valuable evidence of a period that is otherwise scantily documented. The book's closest connection seems to be with the concluding chapters of Zechariah (9-14). Seeing it in such fashion, the book appears to be the third section of a collection of prophecies (Zech. 9:1-Mal. 4:6) which have apparently been added to the Book of the Twelve. Two of the sections have been added to the work of the sixth-century prophet Zechariah, (9-11, 12-14), while the third section has been given a separate identity in the Book of Malachi. This proposal is not without justifiable reasons, namely that each of the three sections begins with the identical superscription, "An oracle of the word of Yahweh".¹⁹

The detachment of the third section from the Book of Zechariah has been explained as an editorial device in order to achieve the sacred number of twelve prophets, but clearly the justification for such a division comes solely from the clear difference in theological content and tone.²⁰

The basic problem that Malachi (for convenience sake, I will refer to the prophet as Malachi) attempts to address concerns the supposed justice of God. Why was not God's love manifest in a more visible way? Why were the rewards seemingly distributed so unevenly? God's hands appeared seemingly absent from the affairs of men. Malachi's response seems to be given in a three-fold manner.

Malachi suggests that the apparent injustices being experienced by man may be the direct result of disloyalty to God. Priestly duties were being performed halfheartedly, the people seeing no worthwhile

value in proper ritualistic practices. This, however, seemingly raises more questions than it answers in that it goes back to the orthodox tradition that had lost its attractiveness. Perhaps it is true that, because of man's own self-indulgence, he finds himself in many a predicament. Or perhaps man's troubled state of affairs lies in the fretfulness of mind that results from his being estranged from God. As mentioned earlier, one major fault that many find with the thought and emphases of Malachi is his overemphasis on cultic concerns and his inattention to some of the more pressing social concerns of the day. Malachi's more particular focus can partly be explained due to the time during which he lived, a time when the legal system of post-exilic Judaism was just beginning to take shape.²¹ In addition,

in his mind, disrespect toward cult is not important for its own sake but because it is a symbol of a general indifference toward God. It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual disgrace, since a man who will deliberately offer the worst animal in his flock on God's altar is obviously not right with God in his heart. ²²

Malachi's second proposed response is that in spite of the general hardness of the times, at least one contemporary event shows that God is still in control. The impending or already having occurred collapse of the Edomites is good evidence that God does not allow cruelty and unfaithfulness to go unchecked. Perhaps this was used due to the fact that it was the only available example, but even so, Malachi is appealing to the principle that there is indeed a moral law operating in the history of the universe.²³ A modern, day example would be the destruction of Nazi Germany, whose power was built upon nothing more than cruelty and deception.

Malachi's third and final proposal to explain the apparent uninvolved involvement of God in men's affairs was that the day of God's judgement is not so distant, and when it comes, rewards will be allotted as they are due. This day, coming with the terror of a relentless purging, gives a note of urgency to all of Malachi's sayings. The conviction that God will place the whole secular order under divine judgement is a conviction held by many Old Testament folks. This eschatological kind of statement increases rapidly after the Exile and is the immediate background for the New Testament announcement that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Thus, the fundamental aspect of Biblical religion is that there is a divine purpose which runs unimpeded throughout history.²⁴

The Book of Malachi itself consists of a series of indictments of God's people through a series of imaginary questions addressed to God by the people. To these imaginary but pointed questions, Malachi responds in the name of the Lord of Hosts. The only division that is sufficiently necessary in the book is provided by this dialogue between God and man, represented by six oracles.

The first oracle (1:2-5) is a reaffirmation of Hosea's proclamation of Yahweh's love for Israel. Malachi is facing some ardent skeptics, who look about them and see no signs of God's love in any shape or form. Being subject to foreign dominion, the lack of rainfall, and a plague of locusts, it is not so difficult to sense the apparent inaction of God. Pointing to the sorry plight of Edom, "the prophet's reply is in the spirit of the man in the proverb who complained that his shoes pinched, until he met a man who had no feet."²⁵ Jacob and Esau

were twin brothers, and yet Yahweh had somehow singled out Jacob to be uniquely blessed, while visiting Esau and his people with apparent divine displeasure. The prophet's message is that Edom will not recover from her downfall, while Judah still has lingering hope after the discipline of the Exile.²⁶ Ironically, it was an Edomite, Herod, who later came to rule over the Jews in such unforgettable fashion.

Man's inhumanity to man is said always to be prefaced by man's ingratitude to God. Of all the problems with which religion is confronted, the problem of evil is undoubtedly the most serious. "That problem is the sunken rock on which all immature religions suffer shipwreck."²⁷ Why Edom and Judah had such a poor relationship is not difficult to understand historically, but from a moral perspective, it is not so simple a matter. Perhaps the root of man's inhumanity to man lies in the relationship man carries on with the Divine. God is not to be blamed for the mishaps of people or nations, for in reality, God favors no nation over another. The Jewish nation was firmly convinced that the explanation to the mishaps of the Edomites lay in God's hatred of Esau for his crafty ways. A modern understanding of the Divine allows one to view the picture in a more objective fashion, for has not man devised only more craftier ways?

In the second oracle (1:6-2:9), Malachi strongly denounces the priesthood for their failure to give proper moral and spiritual guidance. The people's woes are apparently being explained as the result of a flaw in leadership. Yahweh asks his priest where the honor is that is due him, honor that even an earthly child would unquestionably give to his father. The Law stated that only spotless and unblemished animals

were to be sacrificed upon Yahweh's altar, and yet the priests had the gall to offer maimed animals, offerings that they would not dare present before their governors. A curse was to fall upon those presenting such a makeshift offering and to those who would participate in it or encourage it in any way.²⁸

Yahweh had founded the priesthood upon Levi, who was the ideal of what a priest of Yahweh was called to be. "In return for the knowledge of the meaning of life and the inward peace divinely given, which came by virtue of his sacred office, the true priest must stand in awe before the Lord and reverence his holy name."²⁹ From his lips, truths of Yahweh must proceed. But the priests had woefully failed in their tasks. They had profaned this sacred relationship that had been pronounced by God between him and the priesthood. The prophets were exposed as unworthy pastors. They were a disgrace to their profession and were responsible for the troubles of the day. Even among the Gentiles, there was more reverence, for at least they did not give the appearance of giving allegiance to Yahweh as did the Jewish nation.

Can Yahweh be morally justified in bringing chaos and disorder upon an entire nation for the wickedness of a few men in prominent leadership roles? If such be the case, then the possible innocence of countless numbers of individuals is not being considered. The point of living a life worthy of commendation is then thwarted by a couple of individuals who seemingly have no such ambition. Likewise, can the sacrificial death of one man pardon countless individuals who have been living their lives in an utterly shameful manner? The theological ramifications of such an idea are too numerous to consider, especially when it comes to the value of Jesus' death on the cross. This is not

to say that this emphasis upon individual responsibility was an issue in the thought of the Jewish nation at this point in their history, but it very well could have been.

The third oracle (2:10-16) is a charge of faithlessness to Yahweh by marrying foreign women, women who have not chosen to follow the way of life ordained and chosen by Yahweh, but who have chosen to give their allegiance to foreign gods. In so doing, they have neglected their Israelite wives who have been so faithful in keeping the commandments of Yahweh. Having "married the daughter of a foreign god," the prophet implies that, like Solomon of old, the men not only have taken these foreign wives, but have chosen also to give allegiance to their gods. Not only was this an affront to the nation as a whole, but it was moreso to Yahweh, who had witnessed a renewal of his covenant with each subsequent marriage.³⁰

The charge that union with foreign wives is disrespectful towards Yahweh may seem to be inconsistent with the universalism stated in 1:11, but it is one thing to feel sympathy for the heathen but quite another to allow them to get within the faith structure of Israel, a structure already being more than contaminated from within. By introducing women into the Temple who had little understanding of Israel's God, one runs the risk of a kind of foreign infiltration that must be described as being entirely unhealthy.³¹ In our own day, one sees abundant evidence of the kinds of dangers that exist when mixed religious loyalties exist within a marriage.

This oracle begins with a general principle held by all, namely that each Jew could claim God as their Father. An interesting thought is that maybe Malachi is here speaking of God as Father not merely

of the nation, but of pious individuals as well.³² "It should of course be remembered that both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, the idea of God's Fatherhood connotes progenitorship and authority quite as much as affection."³³ God's Fatherhood is based on his being creator and is probably thinking more in terms of the nation and not individual men, although his words carry possibilities that extend beyond his original intent. "The ideal of common brotherhood under a common Fatherhood, which is the ideal for the Jewish community, is capable, under the prophetic mindset, to extend to the whole of humankind."³⁴

The fourth oracle (2:17-3:5) is a prophecy of the coming of God in judgement. He has grown weary of the bitter complaints voiced by his people. Again the prophet returns to the issue of theodicy, reconciling God's love with the injustices in the world that seem to readily abound. "With the growing sophistication of the post-exilic age and the growth of rationalism, a skeptical spirit threatened to undermine the prophetic faith in a righteous God who rewards the good and punished the evil"³⁵ Malachi, however, has strong intent to show that God's failure to act immediately is not the result of any indifference on his part.

Malachi's response is that God will soon come to correct the troubles of the day. Malachi's eschatology has two primary acts, the first being the coming of the messenger to purify the priesthood, and second being the coming of the Lord himself to purify the Temple and give his people their just recompense. The purpose of the preliminary coming of the messenger is to purify the Temple in preparation for the full advent of God's coming. This messenger will correct the abuses and return things to the way they were in former days. God is seen as a king, with the Temple being the palace. He cannot return until his house

is set in proper order.³⁶

Malachi 3:5 gives further evidence that Malachi is no mere ritualist, in the sense of his being overly occupied with cultic concerns at the expense of overlooking humanitarian issues. "Looking more deeply into the human heart than some of his predecessors, he saw that contempt for the symbols of religion may be not a sign of spiritual emancipation, but the symptom of a profound contempt for religion and morality itself."³⁷

The fifth oracle (3:6-12) traces the divine disfavor of which the people complain to the failure of the people to give Yahweh his just dues. Yahweh's change in attitude toward his people is not without cause. The people have turned away from a God whom formerly they had served with their full heart and devotion. If they will but return to the proper sense of obedience, their prosperity will once again be restored.³⁸ The thought here is not so much of turning in a particular direction, but more the sense of retracing one's steps from the direction that one has just come.³⁹ Repentance must of necessity involve a basic change in attitude, but to the Hebrew mind, this change must manifest itself in action. Unlike the modern day religionist who is content in pronouncing his faith with his lips and yet doing little in the way of action to defend those words, the mindset of the Hebrew was that faith naturally gave blossom to acts done in the name of that faith.

In this section, Malachi is merely repeating the dogma of retribution of which Deuteronomy gives classical expression.⁴⁰ Although this doctrine was not so fully embraced by Jews in the post-exilic

period, Malachi here gives evidence that its precepts were still being felt and practiced by many an ardent Jew. A modern day scholar looks with great skepticism at a doctrine that sees God operating in such retributive fashion, but to the Jews in this time in their history, they sensed a single causation that prompted them to see God's hand in every piece of human affairs, not excluding the material prosperity or lack of it experienced by man.

In the sixth oracle (3:13-4:3), Malachi again returns to the problem of the moral order of the universe. The devout and faithful wonder what value lies in continued service to Yahweh. The performance of religious obligation is going apparently unnoticed, the wicked seeming to fare much better. The value of piety is being seriously called into question. Malachi is not here speaking to those who openly and flagrantly scoff at religious beliefs and practices, but to those who practice piety and who are disturbed at the first signs of doubt in their minds.⁴¹ To raise questions is not the sign of an irreligious spirit, and may, in fact, be the sign of a growing and healthy sensitivity. To remain silent to a state of affairs over which one has serious questions is only to cause oneself extreme harm. Healthy questioning is a signal of a flowering individual. When one ceases to ask the pointed questions, one ceases to receive the life-changing answers.

A careful record is being kept in heaven of man's deeds so that one day, each man will receive his just deserts. The belief in a heavenly Book of Remembrance contains the seed out of which would one day develop the doctrine of eternal life for the righteous. "This verse [3:16] illustrated the disintegration of a sense of national solidarity and

the rise of a separate group of 'the pious.'"⁴² The total victory of the righteous and total annihilation of the wicked is in this section quite forcibly pictured by Malachi.

The Conclusion to the Book of the Twelve (4:4-6) is an editorial insertion intending to give to the reader what he considered to be the burden of the book. The mysterious messenger is here identified by Malachi as being Elijah. Elijah's ascension into heaven would make him a prime candidate for this kind of mission. Thus, he comes to play a considerable role in later apocalyptic thought. Some have tried to say that Malachi is to be identified as the messenger, but evidence is meager, to say the least. Jewish tradition requires that verse 6 be read before verse 5 so that the Book of the Twelve not end with a threat.⁴³

According to some, Malachi cannot be reckoned as being one of the great prophets.⁴⁴ Adherents to this view see him as not sharing the same moral insights and sensitivity of an Amos or a Jeremiah. But one must bear in mind that, living at a time when prophetic utterances were no longer accepted as direct revelations from God, he was forced to argue his case in a fashion earlier prophets had not been called upon to do:

Men were dissatisfied with the old and sometimes oversimplified answers that had been given by the great prophets to the problems of good and evil, rewards and punishments, and they now were beginning to question the providential government of life, both in the narrower community and in the world at large. Malachi obviously enters into their difficulties insofar as he sees that it is not enough merely to enunciate high doctrine and moral principles, but seeks to enshrine them in a practical code of behavior and points toward a final solution of the world's disorder in the Day of Yahweh.⁴⁵

The basis of Malachi's desire for correct ritual is that nothing short of the best is suitable for Yahweh.⁴⁶ A casual stance toward ritual denotes a casual stance before God. He shares the prophetic insight in knowing that true obedience to God must stem from a true personal commitment but also recognizes that at times this must be expressed through small meaningless acts of discipline.

Malachi, therefore, may be said to stand looking across the prophetic years which lie between the unprophetic years of the Intertestamental Period to the rebirth of prophecies in the life and ministry of Jesus. "He [Malachi] remains a classic exemplar of the thesis that the messianic hope of Israel burned brightest just when the world seemed darkest."⁴⁷

When one speaks out with a loud voice as does Malachi, there is always present the danger of exhibitionism. In the religious life, it may subtly come in the form of wearing one's heart on one's sleeve, of exposing to an eagerly listening crowd the most sacred things of one's character. "To exhibit one's soul too freely and too often is to run the risk of losing the sense of one's sanctities."⁴⁸ Most of us, though, are in the opposite direction. Being too self-conscious, too afraid of what the crowd will say, we choose to remain silent as our soul beats relentlessly within us.

Perhaps the answer to Malachi's questions and even those of this and any day are best to be found in Augustine's time-preserved passage, one that is quite Biblical in its content:

Blessed is he who loves Thee, and his friend in
Thee, and his enemy for Thee. For he alone loses
no one dear to him, to whom all the dear in Him
who never can be lost.⁴⁹

1:1

"oracle". Translated literally "burden," and idiomatically "oracle," it is derived from the Hebrew verb לָחַץ "to lift up." The expression goes back to the phrase "to lift up the voice," later coming to mean the words which the voice utters. The oracle of a prophet can be described as his burden.⁵⁰

1:2

"Yahweh of Hosts" This phrase occurs 24 times in this rather short book. Hosts are heavenly bodies, the phrase thus being universalistic and monotheistic in nature. It is rather interesting that the phrase "God of Israel" occurs but once in the entire book.⁵¹

1:3

"Edom" This verse, taken by itself, might seem to indicate that God's hatred of Edom is the result of nothing less than an arbitrary decision. However, from other passages in post-exilic literature, one comes to learn that the Edomites had failed to come to the aid of their brothers during the siege of Jerusalem and may have actually participated in the siege. Edom thus became the living symbol of cruelty and faithlessness.⁵²

1:5

"beyond the border of Israel" As great as Yahweh's love is for his people, it is not given to them alone. His love is so great that it extends elsewhere and blankets each and every nation. Here, as in other literature that scholars uncovered from within the post-exilic time period, an explicit statement of universalism and monotheism is being made.⁵³

1:8

"blind animals" This is a clear reference to Leviticus where blemished animals are seen as unacceptable for sacrifice, blindness being one such blemish. (see Leviticus 1:3)

1:9

"Entreat the favour of God" This phrase originally had a strong anthropomorphic sense, implying that man by his worship could remove the anger and disapproval from the face of God. It is here being used as a simple metaphor for prayer.⁵⁴

1:9

"with such a gift from your hand " According to many, this phrase is best omitted as a gloss. It is "syntactically awkward in Hebrew, stands outside the metrical scheme, and the verse reads more smoothly without them."⁵⁵

1:13

"you sniff at me" This is based upon a Jewish tradition that the original reading was changed to "at it" to avoid any charge of irreverence.⁵⁶

2:2

"I will curse your blessings" The pronouncement of the priestly blessing during the course of the service was a most revered and solemn occasion, and ultimately came to be the only occasion on which God's name was verbally pronounced in Israel. "To threaten that the blessing be turned into a curse was to undermine and overthrow the whole fabric of institutional religion in Israel."⁵⁷

2:3

"dung" This does not refer to excrement, but the contents of the bowels of the slain animals. The figure is used to show as forcibly as possible the extent to which the priests have fallen into degradation.

2:4

"Levi" In Deuteronomy, no distinction is made between a Levite and Priest, whereas the priestly code understands the Priest as being the descendent of Aaron, with Levi being a mere assistant. This passage indicates to the reader that the prophet is speaking from a period somewhere between the time of Deuteronomy and the time when the Priestly Law became the accepted law of the land.⁵⁸

2:5

"covenant" Attempts to determine the nature of בְּרִית by analyzing the etymology of the word have failed to reach a consensus. Of the explanations so far offered, the most likely one appears to be that the Hebrew word is the equivalent of the Assyrian word beritu, meaning "bond" or "fetter."⁵⁹ Although the usual understanding given of the word is "an agreement between two parties," the original meaning of the Hebrew word in fact implies "first and foremost the notion of 'imposition,' 'liability,' or 'obligation.'"⁶⁰

2:6

"true instruction" Historically, the original function of the priest among the Hebrew was one of casting sacred lots. The Torah, therefore, spoke of matters pertaining to superstition although ethical concerns were also within its jurisdiction. Malachi revitalizes this whole conception of the priest as a teacher by relating it to religion.

2:7

"messenger of the Lord of Hosts"The priest is here described as a "messenger of the Lord of Hosts," thus taking over the position formerly held by prophets. As the charismatic age of the prophet faded, the authority passed to men without claim to special revelation, but whose authority lay in an objective commission. The danger inherent in substituting authorized teachers for inspired prophets is that religion may fall prey to mere professionalism.⁶¹

2:14

"wives of your youth" The emphasis upon this concept seems to say to the reader that the elderly Jewish women were being cast aside in favor of women whose beauty and age were more appealing. Monogamy is here being assumed.⁶²

2:15

"remnant" The remnant terminology is represented in the Old Testament by four roots, *srd*, *plt*, *ytr*, and *sh'r*. The fourth root, the one used here by Malachi, means "to remain" or be "left over." The "remnant" often is made up of a group of survivors of some great catastrophe, the calamity probably being as a result of sin. "Since election is the prior and positive context of the idea of the remnant, it will be seen that, logically speaking, the remnant is not at first a saved remnant which becomes a saving remnant, but both functions of the remnant are original, the remnant survives and is therefore saved just as it also seeks to save others."⁶³

2:15

In Hebrew, this is one of the most obscure verses to be found anywhere

in the Old Testament. The verse appears to be saying that one of the sacred purposes in marriage is the rearing of children who will adopt the faith of their fathers, something that could not happen if men continued to take foreign women as their wives.⁶⁴

2:17

"justice" It is interesting to note briefly that this word is not found in the New Testament. It is oftentimes translated "judgement" when it is found in the Old Testament, and one of the two forms of the word is oftentimes translated "righteousness."⁶⁵

3:9

"nation" The prophet here quite intentionally applies a word to the Hebrews that he usually intended only to be spoken to the heathen.⁶⁶

3:12

"nation" There is widespread agreement among most scholars that the Hebrew word goy is derived from the West Semitic gawum/gayum. Von Soden translates it as "people," whereas others give it a more precise definition of "work" or "gang."⁶⁷ Some consider it to be a tribe or territory. Goy most often refers to an individual national entity, thus enabling one to see its significance when applied to Israel. This, however, is not the case here, as it is a clear reference to nations outside the boundaries of Israel.

3:16

"fear" The fear of the Lord is one of the more dominant themes to be found within the Old Testament scriptures. Fear is recognized

as one of the demands of God placed upon man. The situation is really a moral one, filling man with a sense of extreme unworthiness. Perhaps this fear is not so much a fear of what God might do to man if he should fall into grievous sin, but more a fear of what man might do to God. "It transforms man's anxiety about himself and his world, leaving him with only this one fear which is a trembling adoration of the transcendent Holy Lord."⁶⁸

3:19

"burn" There is one point of special interest here when considering the use of the burning fire in the Old Testament. One usage has it burning incense and sacrificial offerings which are offered to Yahweh for his enjoyment. The other usage sees the burning fire denoting the destructive force of Yahweh coming down upon the wickedness of the day. The latter usage is more appropriate in this case.⁶⁹

3:23

"Elijah" The importance of Elijah in the development of Israel as a prominent world religion cannot be overstated. He is seen as the champion of Yahweh's cry for social righteousness and is here used in an eschatological sense indicating that Yahweh's judgement is close at hand. His ascension into heaven makes him a prime candidate for such a usage as this.

בְּיָד

אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל

דְּבַר־יְהוָה

וַיִּשְׁאָל

prep.

n. pr. prep.
m. of
genf. to

n.pr. m.s. noun
m. deity
Yahweh word

n.m.

Oracle

Israel

מִלְאָכְיָי:

n.m. with 1 c.s.
pron. suffix

my messenger

The oracle of the word of Yahweh to Israel through my messenger.

וְאָמַרְתֶּם

qal per. 2 m.p.
from **אמר** with
w.c.

but you have said

יְהוָה

Yahweh

אָמַר

qal per. 3
m.s. from
אמר

says

אָתְּכֶם

sign of D.O.
and fem. pers.
pronoun

You

יְאֱהָבְתִי

qal per. 1 c.s.
from **אהב**

I have loved

לְיַעֲקֹב

prep. and n.
pr. m. cf.
genf.

to Jacob

עֵשָׂו

n.pr. m.

Esau

הֲלוֹא-אָח

n.m.s. interrog.
w/ a neg.
sign

brother

was not

אֲהַבְתֶּנוּ

qal per. 2 m.s.
from **אהב**

you have loved us

בְּמָה

interrog.
pronoun

wherein

אֶת-יַעֲקֹב:

D.O.
sign

Jacob

וְאֶהְבֶּנּוּ

qal per. 1
c.s. from
אהב

I have loved

יְנַאֲם-יְהוָה:

n.m.

Yahweh

declaration

"I have loved you," says Yahweh. But you have said, "How have you loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" But I have loved Jacob.

שָׁמָה	אֶחָדָרְיוֹ	וְאָשִׁים	שָׂנְאֹתִי	וְאֶחָד־עֵשָׂו
n.f.	m.m. D.O. w/ 3 m.s. suffix	qal impr. 1 c.s. from אָשַׁם with w.c.	qal per. 1 c.s. from שָׂנְאָה	w.c. and D.O.
a waste	his mountain	I have made	I have hated	Esau
		מִדְּבָרִים	לְתַנּוּתֵי	וְאֶחָד־נַחֲלָתוֹ
		n.m.	n.f. with prep	n.f. w/ 3 m.s. D.O. and w.c. suffix
		the wilderness	for jackals	and his inheritance

But Esau I have hated. I have made his mountain a waste and his inheritance for jackals of the wilderness.

וְנִבְנֶה	וְנָשׁוּב	רָשָׁנוּ	אֲדֹם	יִכְרַחֲמֵנוּ
qal imp't 1 c.p. from וְנִבְנֶה w/w.c.	qal imp't 1 c.p. from וְנָשׁוּב w/w.c.	pu'al per. 1 c.p. from רָשָׁנוּ		qal imp't conj. 3 f.s. from יִכְרַחֲמֵנוּ
and we will build	but we will return	we are beaten down	Edom	says because

יִבְנוּ	הֵמָּה	צְבָאוֹת	יְהוָה	אָמַר	כֹּה	תְּרִבּוֹתַי
qal imp't 3 m.p. from יִבְנוּ	pron. 3 from pl.	fem. pl. n.		qal per. 3 m.s. from אָמַר	dem. adv.	fem. pl. noun
build them they		hosts	Yahweh	says	thus	wastes

וְהָעָם	רָשָׁעָה	גְּבוּל	לָהֶם	וְקָרְאוּ	אֶתְרוֹם	וְאֵנִי
w.c. and n.m.	n.f.	n.m.	pron. pl.	qal per. 3 c.p. from וְקָרְאוּ w/w.c.	qal imp't 1 c.s. from אֶתְרוֹם	conj. and pron. 1 c.s.
and the people	wickedness (of) territory	them	They are called	fear down	but 3	

עַד-עוֹלָם:

יְהוָה

אֲשֶׁר-יָעַם

n.m. n.m.

gal. per. part. of rela-
I m.n. tion
from
097

forever until

Yahweh

he is
indignant

with whom

Because Edom says, "we are beaten down, but we will return and rebuild wastes." Thus says Yahweh of Hosts, "They may build them, but I will tear them down. They will call them a territory of wickedness and the people with whom Yahweh is indignant forever."

יגדל	תאמרו	ואתם	תראנה	ועיניכם
jussive qal imp't 3 m.s. from גדל	qal imp't 2 m.p. from אמרו	w.c. and pron. 2 m. pl.	qal imp't 3 f.p. from ראו	n.f. with 2 m.p. pron. suffix and w.c.

let he magnified you shall say and you shall see this and your eyes

ישׂראלו	לגבול	מעל	יהוה
	n.m. w/ prep.	subst. as adverb	
Israel (of)	in the border	beyond	Yahweh

and your eyes shall see this and you shall say, "Let Yahweh be magnified beyond the border of Israel."

אֲדֹנָי	וְעַבְדִּי	אָב	יִכְבֵּד	כֵּן
n.m. pl. w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	w.c. and n.m.	n.m.	pi'el imp't 3 m.s. from כִּבֵּד	n.m.
his masters	a servant	father	honours	a son

	קְבוּרִי	אֵיךְ	אֲנִי	וְאִם־אָב
	n.m. with 1 c.s. pron. suffix	interrog. adv.		hypoth. part.
	my honour	where	I am	a father but if

אָמַר	מוֹרְאִי	אֵיךְ	אֲנִי	וְאִם־אֲדֹנָיִם
qal per. 3 m.s. from אָמַר	n.m. with 1 c.s. pron. suffix			
says	reverence due me	where	I am	masters and if

וַאֲמַרְתֶּם	מִגֹּאֵל	לֶחֶם	עַל-מִזְבְּחִי	וַיִּגִּישִׁים
qal per. 2 m.p. from 70X	pu'al part. from 70X	n.m.	n.m. w/ 1 c.s. suffix	High. part. from 70X w/ mas. pl. ending

but you say defiled food my altar upon the ones drawing near

יְהוָה	שֻׁלְחָן	בְּאֲמַרְכֶּם	גִּיאֲלִינֻדֵי	כִּימָה
	n.m.	inf. construct from 70X w/ 2 m.p. suffix	pi'el per. 1 c.p. from 70X with 1 c.p. pron. suffix	

Yahweh table by thinking to yourself we defiled it how

הוּאִי	נִבְזָה
m. pron. of 3 p.s.	Niph. part. from 70X
itself	despised

You are the one's drawing near in order to offer defiled food upon my altar.
But you say "How have we defiled it?" By thinking that Yahweh's table is despised.

רָעִי	אֵין	לְנִבְחָהּ	עוֹר	וְקִרְתָּגְשׁוֹן
adj.	noun	prep. and noun	adj.	Hiph'il w.c. and imp't 2 conj. m.p. from גָּשַׁן

evil	no	for a sacrifice	blind	you offer and when
------	----	-----------------	-------	--------------------

אֵין	וְחִלָּהּ	פֶּטֶחַ	תְּגִישׁוּ	וְכִי
	qal part. from חָלַח	adj.	Hiph'il 2 m.p. imp't from גָּשַׁן	

no	lame and sick	lame	you offer	and when
----	---------------	------	-----------	----------

תִּרְצֶהּ	לְפִתְחֶיךָ	אֲנִי	תִּקְרִיבֶהָ	רָעִי
qal imp't 3 m.s. from רָצָה with interrog.	n.m. with 2 m.s. pron. suffix		Hiph'il inf. const. from קָרַב w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	

he be pleased with you	your governor	I pray	you bring it near	evil
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יְהִי	יֹאמֵר	פְּנֵי	הַיְשָׁא	אוֹ
	ηαι per. 3 m.s. from 70X	n.m. pl.	ηαι imp't 3 m.s. from XΩ]	
Uahweh	says	faces	be gracious to	or
				צְבָאוֹתִי:
				hosts

"and when you offer blind animals for a sacrifice, is that no evil? and when you offer lame and sick animals, is that no evil? You bring that near to your governor. Will he be pleased with you or will he receive you graciously?" says Uahweh of hosts.

מִיְדְּכֶם

וְיִחַנְנֵנוּ

פְּנֵי-אֵל

חִלּוֹנָא

וְעַתָּה

prep. n.f.
and 2 m.p.
ending

nal imp't 3
m.s. from נחן
w/ 1 c.p.
ending with
w.c.

n. pro- n.m.
per. gent.

pi'el imper.
2 m.p. from
חלה

from your hand

and shew favour

God

presence 3
pray

you entreat
the favor of

and now

פָּנִים

מִכֶּם

הִשָּׂא

זֹאת

הֵיטָה

n. m. pl.

nal imp't 3
m.s. from [שח]

dem. pron.

nal per. 3 f.s.
from היה

faces

from you

be gracious to

this

he

צְבָאוֹתֵינוּ

יְהוָה

אָמַר

hosts

Yahweh

says

"and now, I pray, entreat the presence of God that he may shew favour to us. From your hand, this has come to he. Will he be gracious to you?" says Yahweh of hosts.

וְלֹא־תֹאדְרוּ	דְּלֹתַיִם	וַיִּסְגֵּר	גַּם־בְּכֶם	וַיֹּמַר
High. imp't 2 m.p. from לֹא	n.m. pl.	qal imp't 3 m.p. from סָגַר	prep. adv. pron.	conj.
you light	and not doors	he shut	among you	that

בְּכֶם	חִפְּץ	אֵינֶנִּי	חִנָּם	מִזְבְּחִי
	n.m.	adv. with prep. w/ 1 c.s. pron. suffix	adv.	n.m. with 1 c.s. pron. suffix
in you	delight	nothing to me	in vain	my altar

מִיָּדְכֶם	לֹא־אֶרְצֶה	וּמִנְחָה	צְבָאוֹת	יְהוָה	אָמַר
	qal imp't 1 c.s. from רָצָה	n.f.			
from your hands	accept not	offering	hosts	Yahweh	says

That one among you would shut the doors in order that you may not light my altar in vain. "I take no delight in you," says Yahweh of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

שְׁמִי גָּדוֹל וְעַד־מִבֹּאֵו מִמְּוֶרֶחַ־שֶׁמֶשׁ יִכְיִי

adi. n.m. n.m. n.m. w/ prep.

my name great sunset until sun (of) from the rising for

מִגִּישֵׁי מִקְטָר וּדְבָרֵי־מָקוֹם בְּגוֹיִם

Hophal part.
from ש ל ג n.m. n.m. pl. n.m. with m.p.
ending

offered incense places and in all in nations

יִכְרַגְדוֹל טְהוֹרָה וּמִנְחָה לְשִׁמִּי

adj. w/ fem. ending n.f.

great for pure offering to my name

צְבָאוֹתַי:

יְהוָה

אָמַר

בְּגוֹיִם

שְׁמִי

hosts

Yahweh

says

in nations

my name

"Far from the rising of the sun until the sunset, great is my name in the nations; and in every place, incense is offered in my name; and a pure offering. Far great is my name in the nations," says Yahweh of hosts.

שֶׁלְחַן	בְּאִמְרָתְכֶם	אוֹתוֹי	מְחַלְלִים	יִיאָתֶם
n.m.	qal inf. const. from אָמַר with 2 m.p. ending and prep.		pi'el part. mas. pl. from חָלַל	
table	you say	it	profane	but you

	וְנִיבּוֹי	הוּא	מְגַאֵל	אֵלַי
			pu'al part. from גָּאָל	
and food		it	polluted	Lord (of)

	אֶקְלוֹי:	נִבְיָה
	n.m.	Niph'al part. from בִּלָּה
(added food emphasis)		despicable

but you profane it in that you say, "The Lord's table is defiled and that the food of his table is despicable."

אוֹתוֹ

וְהִפְחַתְתֶּם

מִתְלָאָה

הִנֵּה

וַיֹּאמְרוּתָם

Hiph. per. 2
m.p. from ןחף

n.f.

qal per. 2 m.p. from
רמח with w.c.

it

and you have
sniffed at it

weariness

behold

and you say

גְּזוּלֵי

וְהִבֵּאתֶם

צָבָאוֹתֵי

יְהוָה

יֹאמֵר

qal pass. part. from גלז
Hiph. per. 2 m.p. from רבא

mutilated

and you cause to
bring

hosts

Yahweh

says

אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה

וְהִבֵּאתֶם

וְאֶת־הַחֹלִיָּה

וְאֶת־הַפֶּסֶחַ

n.f.

qal active
part. from חלה

adj. D.O. and w.c.

offering

and you have brought sick

lame

אָמַר

מִיָּדְכֶם

אוֹתָהּ

הֶאֱרָצָהּ

א.ו.

not imp't l c. H.
from יָדָךְ

says

from your hand

I accept

יְהוָה:

Yahweh

That being so, you say, "Behold what a weariness; and you sniff at it," says Yahweh of hosts. That being so, you have brought the mutilated, that is, the lame and sick. And you have brought the offering. "I shall not accept this offering from your hand," says Yahweh.

זָכָר

בְּעֶרְוֹ

יֵשׁ

נוֹכַח

יֵינְאָרִיר

n.m.

n.m. w/ 3 m.s.
ending

subst.

qal active
part. from
נָכַח

qal passive part.
from נָאָר

male

his flock

being

knave

but cursed

כִּי מֶלֶךְ

לְאֵדֵנִי

מְשֻׁחָת

וּבָחַ

וְנָדַרְי

n.m.

Hophal part.
from נָבַח

qal active
part. from
w/ w.c. נָבַח

qal active
part. from נָדַר
w/ w.c.

king for

to Lord

spoiled

and sacrifice

and vow

צְבָאוֹתֵי

יְהוָה

אָמַר

אֲנִי

גָּדוֹל

pron. 1 c.s.

hosts

Yahweh

says

I

great

בְּגוֹיִם:	נִרְא	וּשְׁמִי
n.m. pl.	Niph. part. from אָרַא	
in nations	feared	and my name

but cursed be the knave, for there exists in his flock a male; and cursed be the one naming it but sacrificing that which is blemished before the Lord. "For I am a great king," says Yahweh of hosts. "My name is feared in the nations."

הוא	המצוה	אליכם	2 יועדה
dem. pron.	n.f.	prep. and pron.	w.c. and adv.
this	commandment	for you	and now

הכהנים:

n.m. pl.

priests

And now, priests, this commandment is for you.

על-לב

n.m. prep.

תשימו

qal imp't 2 m.p.
from ש'ו

ואם-לא

תשמעו

qal imp't 2
m.p. from
ש'ו

ואם-לא

heart upon

you give

and if not

you hear not if

צבאותי

יהנה

יאמר

לשמי

כבוד

לתת

n.m.

qal inf. constr.
from תתן

honis

Yahweh

says

to my name

honour

for the purpose of
giving

את-כרכותיכם

וארותי

אתהמארה

בכם

ושלחתי

n.f. w/ 2 m.p.
ending

qal per. 1 c.s.
from ארר w/ w.c.

n.f. D.O.

pi'el per. 1 c.s.
from שלח w/ w.c.

your prosperity

and I will curse

a curse

to you

and I will send

על-לב:

n.m.

שמים
qal active
part. from
ש'ו

איןכם

prep. and pron.

כי

ארותיה

qal per. 1
c.s. from ארר
w/ 3 f.s. ending

וגם

adv. and
w.c.

heart to

take

without you

for

I will curse it

and moreover

"If you will not hear and if you will not take seriously to heart to give honour to my name," says Yahweh of Hosts, "then I will send a curse to you. And, that being so, I will curse your prosperity. And, moreover, I will make it a curse, for you have not taken anything to heart."

פָּרַשׁ	וּרְיִחִי	אֶחָד־הַזֹּרְעִי	לְכֶם	גַּעֲרִי	וַהֲנִנִּי
n.m.	pi'el per. 1 c.s. from לָרַח	n.m.		nal active part. from גָּעַר	adu.
dung	I will scatter	the offering	to you	rebuke	behold

אֶתְכֶם	וַיִּשָּׂא	הַגִּזְיֹתִים	פָּרַשׁ	עַל־פְּנֵיכֶם
	nal per. 3 m.s. from שָׂא	n.m. pl. w/ 2 m.p. ending		n.m. pl. w/ 2 m.p. ending
you	lift up	your offerings	dung	your faces upon

אֶלָּיו־
prep. w/
3 m.s. ending

unto him

Behold I will rebuke your offering, and I will scatter dung in your faces, the dung of your festivals; and he will lift you up unto him.

את	אֵלֵיכֶם	שְׁלַחְתִּי	בִּי	וַיֵּדְעֵתֶם
n.o.		ni'el per. 1 c.s. from שלח		gal per. 2 m.p. from ידע
	unto you	I sent	you	and you shall know

את־לְוִי	בְרִיתִי	לְהַנִּיחַ	הַזֶּה	הַמִּצְוָה
n. pr. m.	n.f. w/ 1 c.s. suffix	gal inf. constr. from ה' ה'		n.f.
Levi	my covenant	be	this	commandment

צִבְאוֹתָיִךְ	יְהוָה	אָמַר
hosts	Yahweh	says

"and you shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you concerning my covenant with Levi," says Yahweh of hosts.

וְהַשְׁלוֹם

הַחַיִּים

אִתּוֹ

וְהָיְתָה

בְּרִיתִי

n.m.

n.m. pl.

prep.

qal per. 3
f.s. from
וְהָיָה

n.f. w/ 1 c.s.
ending

peace

life

with him

was

my covenant

שְׁמִי

וּמִפְנֵי

וַיִּרְאֵנִי

יִמְרָא

וְאֶתַּנְּסֶם-לּוֹ

n.m. and
prep.

qal imp't 3 m.s.
from וְיָרָא w/ 1
c.s. pron. suffix

n.m.

prep. w/
3 m.s.
pron. suffix

qal imp't 1
c.s. from
with suffix
נָתַתִּי

my name

from the face of he fear me

fear

to him

I will give
them to him

וְהוּא:

נִתַּתִּי

Niph. per. 3 m.s.
from נָתַתִּי

him

put in awe

My covenant with him was one of peace and life. And I gave them to him so that he would fear, and then he feared me. And at my name he is put in awe.

וְעוֹלָה

n.m.

injustice

בְּפִיהוּ

n.m. w/ 3
m.s. pron.
suffix w/ prep.

in his mouth

הָיְתָה

qal per. 3 f.s.
from הָיָה

was

אֱמֶת

adj.

true

הַחֲרָת

n.f.

instruction

אִתִּי

prep.

with

הֵלַךְ

qal per. 3
m.s. from
הָלַךְ

he walked

וּבְמִישׁוֹרִי

n.m. and w.c.

and uprightness

בְּשָׁלוֹם

n.m.
and
prep.

in peace

בְּשִׁפְתָיו

prep. n.f.
pl. w/ 3
m.p. pron.
suffix

on his lips

לֹא־נִמְצָא

Niph. per. 3
m.s. from
נִמְצָא

adv. of
negation

he found not

מִעֲוֹן

n.m.

iniquity

הִשִּׁיב

Hiph. per.
3 m.s. from
שָׁבַח

he turned away

וְרַבִּים

m.p. noun

many

True instruction was found on his mouth, and no injustice was found on his lips. He walked in peace and uprightness and turned many away from iniquity.

ותורה

n.m. w/ w.c.

and instruction

ישמרדשת

n.f. qal imp't 3
m.p. from
שמר

knowledge they treasure

בהן

n.m.

priest (of)

יקי-שפתי

n.f. pl.

lips for

יהוה-צבאות

hazta

Yahweh

מלאך

n.m.

messenger

כי

for

מפיהו

n.m. w/
3 m.s. pron. 3
suffix
w/ prep.

from his mouth

ויבקשו

pi'el imp't
3 m.p. from
בקש

they seek

הוא:

m. pron.
of the 3rd
pers. sing.

he

For the lips of a priest treasure up knowledge; they should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of Yahweh of hazta.

רבים	הקשלתם	מן הדרך	סרתם	ונאתם
n.m. pl.	Hiph. per. 2 m.p. from כש	n.m. prep.	nal per. 2 m.p. from 710	w.c. and pron. m. pl.

many you cause to stumble the way from you shall turn aside and you

אמר	הלוי	בְרִית	שחתם	בתורה
			pi'el per. 2 m.p. from שח	n.m. w/ prep.

says Levi (of) covenant you violate in instruction

צבאותי	יהוה
hosts	Yahweh

"And you have turned aside many from the way and have caused many to stumble due to your instruction. You violate the covenant of Levi," says Yahweh of hosts.

ושפלים	נקיים	אתכם	נתתי	קוגם-אני
adj. pl.	Niph. part. pl. from		qal per. 1 c.s. from	pron. adv. and m.c. 1 c.s.

humiliated	despised	you	I make	I	and moreover
------------	----------	-----	--------	---	--------------

שמרים	אינכם	אשר	כפי	לכל-העם
qal active part. pl. from	subst. with 2 m.p. pron. suffix	connecting link	conj.	n.m. prep. and n.m.

kept	nothing for you		according to	people for all
------	-----------------	--	--------------	----------------

פתורה:	פנים	ונשאים	אחד-דרכי
n.f.	n.m. pl.	qal pl. active part. from XWJ	n.m. w/ 1 c.s. pron. suffix

instruction	faces	shown partiality	my ways
-------------	-------	------------------	---------

Moreover, I make you despised and humiliated before all people; inasmuch as you have not kept my ways or shown partiality in your instruction.

אל	הלווא	לכלנו	אחד	אב	הלווא ¹⁰
n.m.		n.m. w/ 1 c.p. suffix w/ prep.	adj.	n.m.	adv. and interr. inviting an affirmative response

God	not	for us all	one	Father	not
-----	-----	------------	-----	--------	-----

באחי	איש	ונבגדו	מדוע	בראנו	אחד
prep. and n.m.	n.m.	qal imp't 1 c.p. from גדל	adv.	qal per. 1 c.p. from אל	

to brother	man	deal treacherously with us	wherefore	create us	one
------------	-----	-------------------------------	-----------	-----------	-----

אבותינו	ברית	לחלל
n.m. w/ 1 c.p. pron. suffix		pi'el inf. const. from חלל

our Father	(of)	covenant	violate
------------	------	----------	---------

Do we not all have one Father? And did not one God create us? Wherefore then do men deal treacherously with one another and violate the covenant of our Father?

יִשְׂרָאֵל

נַעֲשֶׂה

וְתוֹעֵבָה

יְהוּדָה

וַיִּבְגְּדוּ

n. pr. et
gent.

Niph. per. 3 f.s.
from טוה

n.f.

n. pr. m.

qal per. 3 f.s.
from בגד

Israel

make

abomination

Judah

deal treacherously

קֹדֶשׁ

יְהוּדָה

וְהִקְלִי

כִּי

וּבִירוּשָׁלַם

n.m.

pi'el per. 3
m.s. from קלל

n. pr. loc.
w/ w.c.

sacredness

Judah

he defile

for

and Jerusalem

בְּתוּלָה

וּבָעַל

אָהָבִי

אֲשֶׁר

יְהוָה

n.m. n.f.

qal per. 3 m.s.
from בעל w. w.c.

qal per. 3 m.s.
from אהב

god (of) daughter and marry

he loved

which

Yahweh

נָכְרִי

adj.

foreign

Judah has acted treacherously and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sacredness of Jahweh whom he has loved, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.

יעֲשֶׂה

אֲשֶׁר

לְאִישׁ

יְהוָה

יִכְרֹת¹²

qal imp't 3 f.s.
from]טו[

Hiph. imp't 3 m.s.
from אכר

does

which

to the man

Yahweh

cut off

וּמְבִישׁ

יַעֲקֹב

מֵאֶהֱלֵי

וְעָנָה

עָרִי

Hiph. part.
from שג]

n. pr. gent.

prep. and n.
m. pl.

qal active part.
from ענה

qal active
part. from
עיר

one who brings

Jacob (of)

from tents

answer

awake

צְבָאוֹת:

לַיהוָה

מִנְחָה

n.f.

hosts

to Yahweh

offering

May Yahweh cut off the man who does this and awaken from the tents of Jacob the one bringing an offering to Yahweh of hosts.

דמעה	כסותי	תעשו	שנית	וזאת
n.f. collective	pi'el inf. constr. כסה	qal imp't 2 m.p. from עשה	adu.	adu. w/ w.c.
tears	you cover	you do	again	and this
עוד	מאין	ואנקהי	יבקי	אתמוכת
adu.	subst.	n.f. w. w.c.	n.m.	n.m.
again	so that there is no	and groaning	weeping	Yahweh
מירכס:	רצון	ולקחת	אלהמנחה	פנות
	n.m.	qal inf. constr. from לקח w/ w.c.	n.f.	qal inf. constr. from פנה
from your hand	favour	and receive	offering in	regard

and this again you do; you cover Jehovah's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favour from your hand.

בִּינְךָ	הֵעִיד	בִּיָּהוָה	עַל	עַל־מָה	וַיֹּאמְרוּם
subst. w/ 2 m.s. suffix	Hiph. per. 3 m.s. from דִּיַּע			adu. subst. qal per. 2 m.p. from דָּמָא	

between you	hear witness	Yahweh	for	on account of	what	on account of	you say
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בְּגִדְתָּהּ	אָמַרְתָּ	אִשְׁרָ	נְעוּרֶיךָ	אִשְׁתְּ	וּבֵין
qal per. 2 f.p. from גִּדַּתְתָּ			n.f. pl. w/ 2 f.p. ending	n.f.	

you deal treacherously	you	whom	your youth (of)	wife	and between
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בְּרִיתְךָ	וְאִשְׁתְּ	חֵבְרֶתְךָ	וְהִיא	כֹּה
n.m.	n.f.	n.f.s. w/ 2 m.s. pron. suffix	pron. of the 3 ps. f.s.	prep. and pron.
covenant	wife	your wife	she	against her

You say, "Why does the Lord do this?" Because Yahweh has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth, in whom you have acted treacherously, though she is your wife by covenant.

ומה	לו	רוח	ושאר	עשהי	ואל-אתך
	3rd per. pron.	n.f.	n.m.	qal per. 3 m.s. from עשה	adj. num.
and what	himself	spirit	remnant	make	one and this not

ונשמרתם	אלהים	ונרע	מבקש	האתך
Niph. per. 2 m.p. from ושמרתם w/ w.c.		n.m.	pi'el part. from מביקש	adj. w/ interr. part.
and you be on guard	God	need	seek to find	one

אל-יבגרו	נעוריה	ובאשת	ברוחכם
qal imp't 3 m.s. from בגד			n.f. w/ 2 m.p. ending
deal not treacherously with	your youth	(of) and to the wife	spirit

Has not the one who has done this as a remnant of the Spirit for himself?
And what does he require? Godly offspring. Be on guard for your spirit;
let none deal treacherously with the wife of your youth.

יִשְׂרָאֵלִי אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה אָמַר שְׁלַח וּכְרִי-שָׂנְאִי
 pi'el inf. constr. 3 m.s. from שָׁלַח 3 m.s. from שָׂנְאָה

Israel (of) God Yahweh says divorce he hates for

יְהוָה אָמַר עַל-לְבוּשׁוֹ חָמָס וְכָסְהוּ
 n.m. n.m. pi'el per. 3
 w/ prep. f.s. from
 w/ w.c. כָּסָה

Yahweh says his garment upon violence he cover over

חֲבָרָה וְלֹא בְרוּחֲכֶם וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם צְבָאוֹת
 nal imp't 2 m.p. from חָבַר prep., n.f., with 2 m.p. suffix Niph. per. 2 m.p. from נִשְׁמַר w/ w.c.

you act treacherously and not in regards to your spirit so you be on guard hosts

Because he hated divorce," says Yahweh the God of Israel," and he covered over violence with his garment," says Yahweh of hosts. "Be on guard in regards to your spirit and do not act treacherously," says Yahweh of hosts.

בְּמִן

וְאָמַרְתֶּם

בְּדַבְרֵיכֶם

יְהוָה

יְהוָה לְגַעַתְּכֶם

qal per. 2 m.p. n.m. pl. w/ 2
from **אָמַר** w/ m.c. m.p. pron. suffix

Hiph. per. 2 m.p.
from **גָּלַעַת**

וְאָמַרְתֶּם

and you say

by your words

Yahweh

you have caused to
weary

טוֹב

רָע

כָּל-עֲשֵׂה

בְּאָמְרֵיכֶם

הוֹגַעְתִּי

adj.

n.m.

qal
act.
part.
from
עָשָׂה

prep., n.m., w/
2 m.p. ending

Hiph. per. 1 c.p.
from **גָּלַעַת**

good

evil

do

all

by your saying

I have caused to
weary

חָפֵץ

הוּא

וּבָהֶם

יְהוָה

בְּעֵינַי

qal per.
3 m.s. from
חָפַץ

pron. of 3rd
ps. sing.

pron. 3 pl. m.
w/ prep.

n.f. w/ prep.

take delight in he

in them

Yahweh (of) in sight of

הַמִּשְׁפָּט:

אֱלֹהֵי

אֵי

אֵי

n.m.

interr. adv.

conj.

justice (of)

God

where

or

You have wearied Yahweh by your words. And you say, "How have we wearied him?"
By your saying all who do evil are good in the sight of Yahweh; and he takes
delight in them; or where is the God of justice?

לפני	ופנה-דרך	מלאכי	שלח	3 יהני
prep. and pron.	n.m. pi'el per. 3 m.s. w/ w.c. from פנה	n. pr. m. w/ 1 c.s. pron. suffix	qal part. from שלח	demonstr. part.
before me	way	make clear	my messenger	3 send
				behold

אשר-אתם	האנין	אל-היכלו	יבוא	ופתאם
pron. 2 m. pl.	n.m.	n.m. prep. w/ 3 m.s. suffix	qal imp't 3 m.s. from בוא	subst. adv. acc. w/ w.c.
you	with whom	Lord	his temple in	he come
				and suddenly

הנה-כא	תפצים	אשר-אתם	הברית	ומלאכי	מבקשים
qal per. 3 m.s. from כא	adj. verb pl.		n.f. w/ def. art.	p. m. w/ w.c. and def. art.	pi'el pl. part. from שׁק
be- hold comes	delighting in	you	with whom	the covenant	the messenger
					seek

צבאותו	יהוה	אמר
hosts	Yahweh	says

"Behold I send my messenger to make clear the way before me; and suddenly he will come into his temple, the Lord whom you are seeking, and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight. Behold he comes," says Yahweh of hosts.

וּמִי	בּוֹאֵו	אֶתְיוֹם	מִכְלִיל	יּוֹמִי
	qal inf. absol. from בּוֹא w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	n.m.	piel part. from כָּלַל	w.c. and pron. interrog.

and who his coming day contain but who

וּכְבֹּד	מְצַרְףִּי	כְּאֵשׁ	כִּי־הוּאִי	כִּהְרָאוֹתָו	הֶעֱמַד
rep., n.f. w.c.	pi'el part. from צָרַף	prep. and n.f.	pron. of 3rd ps. sing.	niph. inf. constr. from הֵרָאָה w/ prep. and interr. part.	qal act. part. from עָמַד w/ interrog. part.
and like soap	refiner	like fire	he for	to his appearing	make a stand

מְכַבְּסִים

pi'el part. pl.
from כָּבַס

fuller

But who can contain the day of his coming and who can stand up to his appearing; for he is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap.

וְטָהַרְתִּי	כֶּסֶף	וּמְטַהֵר	מִצָּרָף	וַיֵּשֶׁב
pi'el per. 3 m.s. from טָהַר w/ w.c.	n.m.	pi'el part. from טָהַר w/ w.c.		qal per. 3 m.s. from יָשַׁב w/ w.c.

and he purify silver and a purifier refiner and he sit

וְהָיוּ	וּכְכֶסֶף	כְּזָהָב	אֲהֵם	וַיִּנְקֵן	אֶת־בְּנֵי־לֵוִי
qal per. 3 m.p. from הָיָה		prep. w/ n.m.	pron. 2 m. pl.	pi'el per. 3 m.s. from נָקַן	n. m. pl.

they shall be and like silver like gold them he will refine Levi (of) sons

בְּצִדְקָה:	מִנְחָה	מִגִּישֵׁי	לִיהוָה
n.f.	n.f.	Hiph. part. from נָגַשׁ	
righteousness	offering	present	to Yahweh

and he will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver and he will purify the sons of Levi; and he will refine them like gold and silver. They shall be to Yahweh as ones bringing near offerings of righteousness.

וירושלם	יהודה	מנחת	ליהוה	ואתרה
n. pr. loc. w/ w.c.		n.f.		pal per. 3 f.n. from יר

and Jerusalem	Judah	offering	to Yahweh	and be pleasing
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קדמניות:	וקשנים	עולם	יבמי
fem. pl. adj.	n.m. pl. w/ w.c.	n.m.	prep. n.m. pl. w/ suffix

former	and years	old	(of)	as in days
--------	-----------	-----	------	------------

and then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to Yahweh as in days of old and as in former years.

ועד	והנתי	למשפט	אליכם	יגיד דתי
n.m.	qal per. 1 c.s. from ה'ה w/ w.c.	prep. and n.m.		qal per. 1 c.s. from י'פ w/ w.c.

witness and I will be for judgment unto you and I will come near

לשקר	ובנשבעים	ובמנאפים	במכשפים	קמהרי
prep. and n.m.	prep. and Niph. m. pl. part. from ש'ש w/ w.c.	prep. and pi'el m. pl. part. from א'א w/ w.c.	prep. and pi'el m. pl. part. from פ'פ	pi'el part. from מ'מ

in falsehood and against swearers and against adulterers against sorcerers swift

ולא	ומטיי-גר	ותום	אלמנה	שכרי-שכיר	ובעשני
	n.m. Niph. part. from ט'ט w/ w.c.	n.m. and w.c.	n.f.	adj. n.m.	qal active part. from ע'ע w/ w.c.

and not and thrust and orphan widow hireling (of) wages and against those who oppress
sojourner
aside

צְבָאוֹתוֹ

יְהוָה

אָמַר

יְרֵאוֹנִי

qal active part.,
const. from יָרָא'
w/ 1 c.ס. verb
suffix

hosts

Yahweh

says

the ones fearing me

"and I will come near to you for judgement; and I will be a swift witness against sorcerers and against adulterers and against those who swear falsely and against those who oppress the wages of hirelings, the widow and the orphan, those who thrust aside the sojourner and those who do not fear me," says Yahweh of hosts.

שְׁנִיתִי לֹא יִהְיֶה אֲנִי בְּכִי

qal per. 1 c.s.
from שְׁנִיתִי

pron. 1 c.s.

change not Yāhweh I for

בְּלִיתֵם...! לֹא בְּנֵי-יַעֲקֹב וְאַתֶּם

qal per. 2
m. pl. from
כִּלְיֵם

n. pr. n.m. pl.
m. et
gent

pron. 2 m. pl.
w/ w.c.

he destroyed not Jacob (of) sons and you

For I Yāhweh do not change and you, sons of Jacob, will not be destroyed.

ולא

מחוקי

סדקתם

אבותיכם

ילמי

prep., n.m.pl. w/
1 c.p. pron.
suffix

qal per. 2 m.p.
from 710

n.m. pl w/ 2
m.p. pron. suffix

n. pl. w/ prep.
and def. art.

and not from my statutes you turned aside your fathers (of) from the days

אמר

אליכם

ואשובה

אלי

שובו

שמרתם

qal imp't 1
c.s. from
710 w/ w.c.
and fem. ending

prep. w/
1 c.p. pron.
suffix

qal impu. 2
m.p. from
710

qal per. 2 m.p.
from 710

says

unto you and I will return

to me

you return

you kept

נשובו

כמה

ואמרתם

צבאות

יהוה

qal imp't
1 c.p. from
710

adv. interr.
and indef.

qal per. 2 m.p.
from 710
w/ w.c.

we return

wherein

but you say

hosts

Yahweh

"Since from the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me and I will return to you," says Yahweh of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?"

קָבַעַם	אַתָּם	כִּי	אֱלֹהִים	אָדָם	הֲיִקָּבַעַי .
n. pl. active art. from קָבַעַ				n.m.	qal imp't 3 m.s. from יָבַעַ w/ interrog. part.

robbed	you	for	God	man	he rob
--------	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------

וְהִתְרוּמָה:	יִקְמַעַשֶׁר	קִבַּעַנוּדָּה	בְּמַה	וְאָמַרְתֶּם	אֲתִי
n.f. w/ def. art. and w.c.	n.m. w/ def. art.	qal per. 1 c.p. from יָבַעַ w/ 2 m.s. pron. suffix		qal per. 2 m.p. from יָבַעַ w/ w.c.	

and the offering	the tithe	we robbed you	wherein	but you say	me
------------------	-----------	---------------	---------	-------------	----

Will man rob God? For you are robbing me. But you say, "How are we robbing you?"
By the tithe and offering

קִבְעִים־

אַתֶּם

וְאֵתִי

נִאָרִים

אַתֶּם

בְּמִאֲרָה

qal pl. active
part. from
קִבַּעַ

w.c. w/ 1
c.s. pron.
suffix

Niph. part.
from אָרַח

n.f. w/ prep.

rob.

you

and me

curse

you

with a curse

בְּקִלּוֹ

הַגּוֹי

n.m. w/ prep.
and 3 m.s.
pron. suffix

n.m.

his whale

nation

You are cursed with a curse; for you have robbed me, the whale of your nation

קְבָעִים

אַתָּם

וְאִתִּי

נִאָרִים

אַתָּם

בְּמִאֲרָה

qal pl. active
part. from
קָבַע

w.c. w/ 1
c.s. pron.
suffix

Niph. part.
from אָרַר

n.f. w/ prep.

rob.

you

and me

curse

you

with a curse

בְּכֹל

הַגּוֹי

n.m. w/ prep.
and 3 m.s.
pron. suffix

n.m.

his whole

nation

You are cursed with a curse; for you have robbed me, the whole of your nation

וַיְהִי	הָאוֹצֵר	אֶל-בַּיִת	אֶת-כָּל-הַמַּעֲשֵׂי	וַיְהִי־אֵי
qal jussive from ה'ה	n.m. w/ def. art.	n.m.	n.m. w/ def. art.	n.m.
				High. impu. 2 m.p. from י(י)ב

he	the store- house	house	to	the things	all	bring
----	---------------------	-------	----	------------	-----	-------

בְּזֹאת	נָא	וּבְהִנּוּנֵי	בְּבֵיתִי	טֶרֶף
dem. pron. fem. w/ prep.	part. of entreaty	qal impu. 2 m.p. from ח w/ w.c. and verbal ending י'	n.m. w/ prep. and 1 c.s. pron. suffix	n.m.
in this	I pray	test me	in my house	food

לָכֶם	אֶפְתָּח	אִם-לֹא	אֶבְרָא	יְהוָה	אָמַר
	qal imp't 1 c.s. from פתח	interrog. part.			
for you	I open	not if	hostis	Yahweh	says

בְּרָכָה	לְכֶם	וַהֲרִיקְתִּי	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֶרְבּוֹת	אֶת
n.f.		High. per. 1 c.s. from ר'ק w/ w.c.	n.m. pl.	n. f. pl.	D.O.

blessing for you pour down heavens (nf) windows

עַד־כְּלִי־רֵי:

subst. conj.

until there is not sufficiency

"Bring all the fishes into the house, the storehouse. Let there be food in my house; and now eat me," says Yahweh of hosts, "and see if I will not open up the windows of heavens for you and pour down a blessing for you until my abundance is exhausted."

לְכֶם

וְלֹא־יִשְׁחָת

בְּאֵכֶל

לְכֶם

וְיִגְעַרְתִּי

Hiph. imp'f
3 m.s. from
שחח

qal active part.
from אכל

qal per. 1 c.s.
from גער w/
w/c/

for you

ruin

and not

devour

for you

and I will rebuke

לְכֶם

וְלֹא־תִשְׁבֵּל

הָאֲדָמָה

אֶת־פְּרִי

pi'el imp'f 3
f.s. from שבל

n.f. w/ def.
art.

n.m.

for you

cause barren- and not
ness

the ground (of)

fruit

צְבָאוֹתֵי:

יְהוָה

יֹאמֵר

בְּשָׂדֵה

הַגֶּפֶן

n.m. w/ prep.
and def. art.

n.f. w/
def. art.

hosts

Yahweh

says

in the field

the vine

"and I will rebuke the one who devours for you so that he will not ruin the fruit of the ground; and the vine in the field will not cause barrenness," says Yahweh of hosts.

אַתֶּם

כִּי־תִהְיֶה

כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם

אַתֶּכֶם

וְאִשְׁרֵי

qal imp't 2
m.p. from ה'ה

n.m. n.m.
pl.

pi'el per. 3
c.p. from
w/ m.c. שָׁרָא

you

be for

nations all

you

and call blessed

צְבָאוֹתַי:

יְהוָה

יֹאמֵר

חִפְצִי

אֶרֶץ

n.f. m/ 1
c.s. pron.
suffix

n.f.

ḥoṣṭa

Yahweh

says

my delightsome

land

"and all the nations will call you blessed. For you will be a land of delight,"
says Yahweh of ḥoṣṭa.

יְהוָה

אָמַר

דְּבַרְכֶם

עָלַי

וְהִזְקוּ

n.m.pl. w/ 2 m.p.
pron. suffix

prep. w/ 1
c.p. pron.
suffix

qal per. 3 c.p.
from חָלַק

Yahweh

says

your words

against me

they grow stout

עָלֶיךָ:

מִהַנִּזְכָּרְנוּ

וְאָמַרְתֶּם

prep. w/
2 m.s. pron.
suffix

Niph. per.
1 c.p. from
דָּבַר

qal per. 2 m.p.
from אָמַר w/
w.c.

against thee

we speak

how

yet you will say

"Your words have grown stout against me," says Yahweh. Yet you will say, "How have we spoken against thee?"

טִי	וּמַה־פֶּצַע	אֱלֹהִים	עֲבַד	שָׁוְיָ	וַיֵּאמְרוּתָם
	n.m.		qal inf. constr. from עָבַד	n.m.	qal per. 2 m.p. from אָמַר

for profit and what God serve vanity you have said

קַרְנֵי	הִלְכֵנוּ	וְכִי	מִשְׁמְרָתוֹ	שְׁמֵרָנוּ
n.m. pl.	qal per. 1 c.p. from הָלַךְ		n.f. w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	qal per. 1 c.p. from שָׁמַר

as mourners we have walked before and that his commandment we keep

צְבָאוֹתַי:

יְהוָה

יִמְפְּנֵי

prep.

hoasib

Yahweh

from before

You have said, "It is vanity to serve God; and what profit that we have kept his commandment and that we have walked before as mourners before Yahweh of hoasib?"

גַּם-יִבְנֶנּוּ

וְנִים

מְאַשְׁרִים

אֲנַחְנוּ

וְעַתָּה

Niph. per. adu.
3 c.p. from בָּנָה

adj. pl.

pi'el pl. part.
from אָשַׁר

pron. 1 pl. adu. of time w/
w.c.

they are yea
established

insolent

call blessed

we

and now

אֱלֹהִים

פָּחַנּוּ

גַּם

רָשָׁעָה

עֹשֵׂי

qal per. 3
c.p. from
בָּחַן

n.f.

qal active part.
from עָשָׂה

God

they test

yea

wickedness

doing

וַיִּמָּלְטוּ

Niph. imp't
3 c.p. from
מָלַט w/w.c.

they escape

"And now we call the insolent blessed; yea, they are established, that is, the ones doing wicked. Yea, they test God and yet they escape.

איש	יהנה	ירא	נדברו	ואז
n.m.		qal active part. from ירא	Niph. per. 3 c.p. from נדבר	adv.

one man	Yahweh	fear	they spoke	then
-----------------	--------	------	------------	------

ויכתב	וישמע	יהרה	ויקשב	אתדעהו
Niph. imp't. 3 m.s. from כתב w/ w.c.	qal imp't 3 m.s. from שמע w/ w.c.		Hiph. imp't 3 m.s. from קשב w/ w.c.	n.m.

he written	listen	Yahweh	give attention ... to another (to) his friend
------------	--------	--------	--

יהיה	לירא	לפניו	וזכרון	ספר
	qal active part. from ירא	prep. w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	n.m.	n.m.

Yahweh	for those who fear	before him	remembrance	book
--------	--------------------	------------	-------------	------

שמיו	יקחושבי
------	---------

n.m. w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	qal part. from חשב w/ w.c.
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his name	for those who think
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Then they who feared Yahweh spake to one another. Yahweh shall give attention and he shall hear; and a book of remembrance shall be written before him for those who feared Yahweh and for those who thought on his name.

ליום	צבאות	יהנה	אמר	לי	ויהיו
n.m. w/ prep.				1 c.s. pron. suffix	qal per. 3 c.p. from יה'ה w/ w.c.

in regard to day	hosts	Yahweh	says	mine	they shall be
---------------------	-------	--------	------	------	---------------

והטלתי	סגלה	עשה	אני	אשר
qal per. 1 c.s. from חטל w/ w.c.	n.f.	qal active part. from עשה		
and I spare	possessionian	act	I	that which

על-בני	איש	יחמל	כאשר	עליהם
n.m. w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix	n.m.	qal imp't 3 m.s. from חמל	prep. and connecting link	prep. w/ 3 m.p. pron. suffix
his son upon	man	spare	as one whom	on behalf of them

אתו:	העבר
mark of the accusative and 3 m.s. pron. suffix	qal active part. from עבר w/ interrog. part.
him	serve

"They shall be mine," says Jehovah of hosts, "my possession on the day in which I act; and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him."

בין	לְשֵׁעִי	יְבִין צְדִיק	וּרְאִיָּהֶם	וְיִשְׁבְּתֶם ⁸
	adj. w/ prep.	adj. with prep.	qal per. 2 m.p. from רָאָה w/ w.c.	qal per. 2 m.p. from שָׁבַע w/ w.c.

between in regard to wicked between righteous and distinguish and you shall return

עֲבָדוּ:	לֹא	לְאֲשֶׁר	אֱלֹהִים	עֲבָד
qal. inf. constr. from עָבַד w/ 3 m.s. pron. suffix		connecting link w/ prep.		qal active part. from עָבַד

serve him not that which God those who serve

and you shall return and distinguish between the righteous and the wicked
and between those who serve God and those who do not serve him

וְהָיוּ	כְּתִנְיֹתֵי	בָּעֵר	בָּא	הַיּוֹם	יִבְרָחֵנָּה
qal per. 3 c.p. from וְהָיוּ w/ m.c.	n.m. w/ prep.	qal active part. from בָּעֵר	qal act. part. from בָּא	n.m. w/ def. art.	dem. part.
they will be like	fire-pot	burn	comes	the day	behold for

אֲהֵם	וְלֹהֵט	קִשׁ	רָשָׁעָה	וְכָל־עֹשֵׂהָ	כָּל־זָרוִים
pron. 3 c.p.	pi'el per. 3 m.s. from וְלֹהֵט w/ m.c.	n.m.	n.f.	qal act. part. from עָשָׂה	m. pl. adj. n.m.
them	he burn up	stubble	wickedness	those who do	and all insolent all

צָבָאוֹחַ	יְהוָה	אָמַר	הָבָא	הַיּוֹם
			qal per. 3 m.s. from וָבֹא w/ inferring. part.	n.m. w/ def. art.
habia	Yahweh	says	comes	the day

וְעֵנְקָהּ:

שָׂרֵשׁ

לָהֶם

לֹא-יֵעֻבֵּי

יֵאֱשֶׁר

n.m. w/
w.c.

n.m.

pron. 3 pl.
w/ prep.

neg imp't 3 m.s.
from עָלָה

and branch

root

for them

leave over

not

that which

"For behold the day comes, burning like a firepot, when all the haughty and all the wicked will be stubble. The day comes when he will burn them up," says Yahweh of hosts, "leaving them neither root nor branch."

שָׁמַשׁ

n.f.

sun

שְׁמִי

n.m. w/ 1
c.s. pron.
suffix

my name

יִרְאֵי

qal act.
part. from
יִרָא

fear

לְכֶם

prep. w/
2 m.p. pron.
suffix

for you

וַיִּזְרַח²⁰

qal per. 3 f.s.
from זָרַח w/ w.c.

she rise

וּפְּשָׁתֶם

qal per.
2 m.p. from
פָּשַׁת w/ w.c.

you shall
spring about

וַיֵּצְאוּ

qal per. 2
m.p. from יָצַא
w/ w.c.

you shall
go forth

בְּכַנְפֶיהָ

n.f. pl. w/
prep. and 3 f.p.
pron. suffix

in her wings

וּמְרַפָּא

n.m. w/ w.c.

and healing

צְדִיקָה

n.f.

righteousness (of)

מִרְבָּקָיו

n.m.

stall

כַּעֲגֻלֵי

n.m. pl. w/ prep.

(of)

like calves

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in her wings. You shall go forth and spring about like calves of a stall.

אָפֶר

n.m.

ashes

קִרְיָהֶ֜נּוּ

qal imp't 3
m.p. from
הִ'ה

they shall be for

רָשָׁעִים

adj. pl.

wicked

וַיַּעֲסוּתָם

qal per. 2 m.p. from
עָסָה w/ w.c.

you shall tread down

אֲשֶׁר

n.m. w/ prep.

that which

בַּיּוֹם

in day

רַגְלֵיכֶם

n.f. w/ 2 m.p.
pron. suffix

your feet

כַּפּוֹת

n.f. pl.

soles

תַּחַת

prep.

underneath

צְבָאוֹת:

hosts

יְהוָה

Yahweh

אָמַר

says

עָשָׂה

qal active part.
from עָשָׂה

act

אֲנִי

pron. 1 c.s.

3

"and you shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I act," says Yahweh of hosts.

אשר	עבדִי	משה	חוקת	זָכַרְתָּ
	n.m. w/ 1 c.s. pron. suffix	n. pr. m.	n.f.	qal impu. 2 m.p. from זָכַר

which	my servant	Moses	law	you shall remember
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חֲקִים	עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּחָרֵב	אוֹתוֹ	צוֹתִי
n.m. pl.		n. pr. loc. w/ prep.	3 m.s. pron. suffix	pi'el per. 1 c.s. from צָנַח

statutes	Israel	all for	in Hareh	him	charge
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וּמִשְׁפָּטִים:

n.m. pl. w/
w.c.

and judgements

You shall remember the law of my servant Moses whom I charged with the statutes and judgements in Horeb for all Israel.

את	לְכֶם	שִׁלַּח	אֲנֹכִי	הִנֵּה ²³
	prep. w/ 2 m.p. pron. suffix	qal act. part. from שִׁלַּח	pron. 1 c.s.	dem. part.
	to you	send	I	behold

יּוֹם	בּוֹא	לִפְנֵי	הַנָּבִיא	אֵלֶיךָ
n.m.	qal inf. abs. from בּוֹא	adv. of time	n.m. w/ def. art.	n. pr. m.
day	come	before	the prophet	Elijah

	וְהַנּוֹרָאִי	הַגָּדוֹל	יְהוָה
	Niph. part. from נִרְאָה w/ def. art.	adj. w/ def art.	
	the terrible	the great	Yahweh

Behold I will send to you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Yahweh comes.

בָּנִים	וְלֵב	עַל-בָּנִים	לִב-אָבוֹת	יִיָּהוּשִׁיב
		n.m. pl.	n.m. pl. n.m.	Hiph. per. 3 m.s. from יָשַׁב w/ w.c.

sons (of) and the heart sons in fathers (of) heart he shall turn

חָרֵם	אֶת-הָאָרֶץ	וְהִבִּיתִי	פֶּן-אָבוֹא	עַל-אָבוֹתָם
n.m.	n.f. w/ def. art.	Hiph. per. 1 c.s. from כָּרַח w/ w.c.	qal imp't conj. 1 c.s. from אָבָא	

a ban the land and cause in I come lest fathers in
smite

and he shall turn back the heart of fathers in their sons and the hearts of sons in their fathers lest I come and smite the land with a ban.

At the conclusion of this paper, several points readily come to mind. First, a major Biblical exegesis is an extremely complex process which requires skills that the beginner finds difficult to master. Secondly, doing an exegesis enabled my seeing the various interpretations open to the reader. One who states that he has found the one intended meaning, and that any other meanings must therefore be misguided, has failed to grasp the true intent of scriptural interpretation. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, this exegesis has strengthened my personal faith, and it has enabled me to appreciate the integrity of the scripture rather than being restricted to the views of well-intending but often misinformed people.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Leo Trepp, Judaism: Development and Life, third edition, (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1982), p. 188.
- ²Ibid., p. 13.
- ³"The Prophets and Their Writings," in The Prophets, ed. by Julius Bewer, (London: Eyre and Spotteswood Limited, 1950), p. 4.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 5.
- ⁵"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, ed. by Arthur Buttrick, vol. 6, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 1119.
- ⁶Albert Knudson, The Prophetic Movement in Israel, (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1921), p. 70.
- ⁷Ibid., p. 70.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 71.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 72.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 75.
- ¹¹"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible vol. 6, p. 1120.
- ¹²"Malachi," by W. Neil in Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, ed. by George Buttrick, vol.3, (New York: Abingdon, 1962), p. 229.
- ¹³Ibid., p. 229.
- ¹⁴"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1112.
- ¹⁵"Malachi," by L.H. Brockington in Peakes Commentary on the Bible, ed. by Matthew Black, (London: Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962), p. 656.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 657.
- ¹⁷"The Book of Malachi," in The Layman's Bible Commentary, ed. by Balmer Kelley, v. 15, (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1962), p. 131.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. 132.
- ¹⁹"Malachi," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, v. 3, p. 279.
- ²⁰Ibid., p. 229.
- ²¹"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, v. 6, p. 1118
- ²²Ibid., p. 1119

- ²³Ibid., p. 1119.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 1120.
- ²⁵"Malachi," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 3, p. 230.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 230.
- ²⁷"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, v. 6, p. 1118.
- ²⁸"Malachi," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 3,
p. 230
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 231.
- ³⁰"Malachi," in Peakes Commentary on the Bible, p. 657.
- ³¹"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, v. 6, p. 1134.
- ³²Ibid., p. 1134.
- ³³Ibid., p. 1134.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 1134.
- ³⁵Ibid., p. 1136.
- ³⁶Ibid., p. 1137.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 1137.
- ³⁸"Malachi," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, v. 3, p. 231.
- ³⁹"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, v. 6, p. 1138.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1139.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 1139.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 1141.
- ⁴³Ibid., p. 1144.
- ⁴⁴"Malachi," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 3,
p. 231.
- ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 231.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 230.
- ⁴⁷"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1122.
- ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 1122.
- ⁴⁹Ibid., p. 1122.

- ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 1121.
- ⁵¹Ibid., p. 1121.
- ⁵²Ibid., p. 1121.
- ⁵³"Malachi," in Peakes Commentary on the Bible, p. 657.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., p. 657.
- ⁵⁵"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1127.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., p. 1129.
- ⁵⁷"Malachi," in Peakes Commentary on the Bible, p. 657
- ⁵⁸"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1129.
- ⁵⁹Alan Richardson, A Theological Word Book of the Bible, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 55.
- ⁶⁰Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, ed. by Johannes Botterick and Helmer Renggren, vol. III, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 255.
- ⁶¹"Malachi," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1130.
- ⁶²Ibid., p. 1132.
- ⁶³Richardson, p. 189.
- ⁶⁴"Malachi," The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1136.
- ⁶⁵Richardson, p. 119.
- ⁶⁶"Malachi," The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 6, p. 1140.
- ⁶⁷Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, vol. III, p. 427.
- ⁶⁸Richardson, p. 81.
- ⁶⁹Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, vol. II, p. 257.

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