



Major Lessons from Minor Prophets Lesson 13 2Q 2013

Lest We Forget (Malachai)

SABBATH

11 My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty. Mal. 1:11.

Why did [does] God want “His name” great among the nations? According to the Greeks, their “gods” actually needed the prayers and admiration of mortal humans to derive their immortality. Does God need our praises? Is He so insecure that He needs His name “great among the nations” to feed His ego? Who does this actually sound like? [see Isa. 14: 13].

“The central message of Malachi is that while God revealed His love for His people throughout their history, that love also made His people accountable to Him. The Lord expected the chosen nation and its leaders to obey His commands.” WHY did God expect the “chosen nation & its leaders” to obey His commands?? Which Law lens are we looking through?

SUNDAY – Great is the Lord

Did God really hate Esau?? or was it the other way around? Why was God turning the Edomites territory in to a wasteland? Was it out of perverse pleasure? Was He trying to teach Israel something? Was He trying to reach a wayward child [Edom] with the only means left that might wake them up??

Why were “blemished sacrifices” such a problem? God tells Israel that He would prefer them to shut the temple doors instead of bringing diseased animals for sacrifice [v.10]. What does it mean when God says “**Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,**” says the Lord Almighty” in verse 14? Did God act to curse these men/women or did something occur naturally? Which Law lens are we looking through??

The lesson states, “The animals were to be without blemish because Jesus had to be without blemish in order to be our perfect sacrifice.” Any thoughts??



MONDAY – Loving & Respecting Others

7 “For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth. 8 But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,” says the Lord Almighty. 9 “So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law.” Mal. 2: 7-9.

Which law is God speaking of here? Shouldn't our “imposed” laws here on Earth be reflections of God's “natural” Law? If so, why should decisions be impartial?? What would showing partiality to the wealthy, the Jews, our friends/families say about God and His Law??

In the 2nd paragraph of Monday's lesson we read:

“God had intended that marriage should be a commitment for life. In Malachi's time, however, many men were breaking the vows that they had made early in life with, as the prophet said, the “wife of your youth.” Seeing their wives grow older, the husbands would divorce them and marry younger and more attractive women. *For this reason, God says, He hates divorce (Mal. 2:16).* This strong statement reveals how serious God is about marriage commitments, which so often people take very lightly. *The strict rules in the Bible about divorce show just how sacred marriage is.*”

Is the reason “God hates divorce”, men leaving their wives for younger women? Really?? Perhaps “God hates divorce” because it hurts/damages his loved children. Perhaps He hates divorce because it misrepresents His relationship with his loved children. Perhaps it goes much deeper, even. Any thoughts??

15 Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth. Mal. 2:15.

Might “Godly offspring” be more likely to be produced from a divorce, as opposed to being raised under the umbrella of a poisonous marriage??

TUESDAY – Tithe in the Storehouse.

3 “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty. 2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, 4 and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years. Mal 3: 1-4.



We have been over this passage many times in our class. For me, it never gets old. The Lord's messenger will purify His Church [The Levites, A Priesthood of Believers, etc] with fire [see Mal 4: 2 & Thursday's lesson]. Note that the purification [healing/transformation] occurs BEFORE the acceptable offerings are given. Character transformation changes behaviors.

8 *“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the Lord Almighty. 12 “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the Lord Almighty. Mal. 3: 8-12.*

Without going in to details, I can speak from personal experience that this passage is trustworthy. Scripture, Science, & Experience in harmony with one another.

Have you ever asked why God wants us to give back 10%?? Does this have relationship to 2 Peter 1: 4? Partaking of the “divine nature”? What is God's nature? Is it not Love, Forgiveness, giving of one's self for the uplifting of others??

WEDNESDAY – A Scroll of Remembrance.

14 *“You have said, ‘It is futile to serve God. What do we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the Lord Almighty? 15 But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly evildoers prosper, and even when they put God to the test, they get away with it.’” Mal. 3: 14-15.*

Apparently, the Jews had similar concepts of imposed law that we struggle with. Do “evildoers” really ever “get away with it”? We have learned that sin, not God, damages the sinner. There is **NEVER** a “getting away with it.”

17 *“On the day when I act,” says the Lord Almighty, “they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him. 18 And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not. Mal 3: 17-18.*

Why will God “spare” a certain group, and not others? What will be the distinction between “the righteous, and the wicked?”

Imposed Law = Decision [possibly arbitrary] based on accepting a blood payment stamped next to our names in a book in heaven, and a punishment according to the measure of wrath stored up against us.



Natural Law = An accurate diagnosis of our condition, correctly documented in the medical records, and a loving giving over to our choices.

THURSDAY – The Sun of Righteousness.

The 1st paragraph of Thursday's lesson is a very uplifting passage. OK, maybe not. Which Law lens is being used here?? The lesson references John 3: 16 as a support text.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God. John 3: 16-21.

I think the verses 17-21 provide a better support. v. 20: "everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for FEAR that their deeds will be exposed." Take this in context with "the Sun of Righteousness is rising with healing in His wings [rays]." If we come in to the light [of healing], while under the umbrella of God's limitless grace, we will be healed. If we persist in evil, our characters will become so warped that we will run and hide from the light [beg for rocks and trees to bury us].

Tim uses the comparison of coming out of a cave at 2 AM vs 2 PM. Which is more tolerable? Gradual sunrise or abrupt?

The lesson suggests this healing is some time in the future. I respectfully disagree. I think it has been happening since mankind fell. God, through Christ, has been trying to heal mankind since the beginning, and it's only under the protection of His grace that the healing can take place. Once the "Sun" has fully risen, time is up.

The lesson also mentions the "Elijah message" to be delivered before Christ's 2nd advent. Which message is this, and how can we play a role in delivering it?