

## Malachi: Introduction

### Author

The final prophetic material in the scroll of The Twelve, or Minor Prophets, was recorded by a man who was given the title Malachi, meaning My Messenger. Although there is no direct biblical evidence as to the identity of the prophet, Jewish tradition holds that it was Ezra.

It seems this book was titled My Messenger to draw attention to five specific messengers of Yahuwah found within its content. The author of the book mentioned in 1:1 was Yahuwah's messenger to the people of Yahuwah: not only to those who were living during his lifetime (apparently within the latter years covered in the scroll of Ezra-Nehemiah), but also to others who would follow in the centuries after his death. This first messenger of Yahuwah was to relay Yahuwah's rebuke to the Levitical priesthood, who was another messenger of Yahuwah (2:7), for their failure to fulfill the responsibilities Yahuwah had appointed them. The third messenger of Yahuwah (3:1) was prophesied to come and prepare the way for the fourth messenger—the Messenger of the New Covenant (3:1). The third messenger would be John the Baptist; and the fourth messenger would be Ha'Mashyach Himself. The fifth messenger is named as Eliyah the prophet (4:5).

### Timeframe

According to tradition, Ezra lived for 120 years, in which case he could very well have recorded this message from Yahuwah several decades after the conclusion of the scroll of Ezra-Nehemiah. Therefore, the most probable period for the composition of this material would be between 480 and 450 B.C.

Although some of the problems described in this book are the very same problems Ezra the priest and the governor Nehemiah had encountered among the Yahuwdim during the early fifth century B.C., the sacrifice of defective animals had not previously been mentioned. It is probable therefore that portions of this material were prophetic of the decadence that would affect the priesthood at the time the temple would be destroyed and the sacrificial system terminated in A.D. 70.

## Malachi: Chapter 1

**1:1 A pronouncement:** [NKJ: The burden of] **the word of Yahuwah to Yisra'el through Malachi** [MOF: brought by His messenger]. (TNK)

### Focus & Audience

From the outset, Yahuwah makes it clear that the message He is about to deliver will be reproof and rebuke. In view of the topics addressed, it **seems** most likely that Yisra'el refers only to the descendants of the Southern Kingdom of Yahuwdah (2CH 21:2).

**1:2-3 I have shown you love, said Yahuwah. But you ask, How have You shown us love? After all declares Yahuwah Esau is Ya'aqob's brother, yet I have accepted [NKJ: loved] Ya'aqob and have rejected [NKJ: hated] Esau...** (TNK)

This is the first of seven occurrences where Yahuwah cites the words or feelings of the descendants of Yahuwdah and Levi. In each case Yahuwah includes their thoughts in creating a dialogue to reprove them for their incorrect conclusions and subsequent actions.

### Shown You Love

Yahuwah prefaces this final prophetic message in the Old Testament canon of scripture by asserting the special concern He has extended toward the descendants of Ya'aqob. In response to their cynicism,

Yahuwah reminds them that He was the one who determined to reject Ya'aqob's older twin brother and select him instead to be the descendant that received the promises Yahuwah made to Abraham. Had Yahuwah selected Yitshaq's firstborn son, the descendants of Ya'aqob would have received what Esau inherited rather than the Land of Promise and the privilege of being the family through which Ha'Mashyach would come.

*ROM 9:4-5, 15 ...Yisra'elites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of Yahuwah, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Amanuwal came, who is over all, the eternally blessed Aluhym. Aman...For He says to Mosheh, I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.*

**1:3 (cont.)-4 ...I have made his hills a desolation, his territory a home for beasts of the desert. If Edom thinks, Though crushed, we can build the ruins again, thus said Yahuwah of Hosts: They may build, but I will tear down. And so they shall be known as the region of wickedness, the people damned forever [NIV: always under the wrath] of Yahuwah. (TNK)**

Yahuwah continues the comparison of His treatment of Ya'aqob and Esau by describing the bleakness of the territory that was then inhabited by Esau's descendants. The blessing Yitshaq granted to Esau could not diminish the true blessings of Yahuwah that had already been conferred on Ya'aqob, so Esau's blessing was in essence a prophecy of his being denied what his brother would be given.

*GEN 27:39-40 Then Yitshaq his father answered and said to him, Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, and away from the dew of heaven from above. And by your sword you shall live, and your brother you shall serve; but it shall come about when you become restless, that you shall break his yoke from your neck. (NAS)*

Due to the hatred spawned by Ya'aqob's deceit in gaining the blessing which Esau's descendants perpetuated generation after generation, resulting in violent attacks on and murder of Ya'aqob's descendants, Yahuwah had placed a curse on them. Esau's descendants will never be allowed to accomplish their desire of eradicating the descendants of Yisra'el (PSA 83:4). Ultimately, they will lose all national identity and their territory will be absorbed by the descendants of Ya'aqob (OBA 18-21). All nations will come to understand that the two reasons why Yahuwah takes this action are Esau's refusal to fear Yahuwah (DEU 25:18), and the perpetuation of his murderous hatred of Ya'aqob (AMO 1:11; EZE 35:5).

**1:5 Your eyes shall behold it, and you shall declare, Great is Yahuwah beyond the borders of Yisra'el! (TNK)**

The descendants of Ya'aqob who survive the events of the Day of Yahuwah will witness the final fate of Esau's territory and descendants and will finally understand the magnitude of Yahuwah's love for Yisra'el as well as for all nations.

**1:6 A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due Me? If I am a master, where is the respect [NKJ: reverence; KJV: fear] due Me? says Yahuwah Almighty... (NIV)**

Having established the depth of His love for Ya'aqob, Yahuwah now addresses the topic of the honor He deserves for the concern He has exhibited toward the descendants of the patriarch.

**1:6 (cont.) ...It is you, O priests, who show contempt for [NAS: despise] My name. But you ask, How have we shown contempt for Your name? (NIV)**

Yahuwah blames the ingratitude of the people on the example of irreverence toward Yahuwah that they observed in the religious leadership. The response of the priests depicts an insensitive, self-satisfied attitude. They believed they were fulfilling all of the responsibilities of their office, and that Yahuwah should be grateful to them for their efforts. Amanuwal warns those who claim to be shepherds appointed by Him to divert their focus away from their own ideas of what should satisfy Yahuwah and concentrate on doing exactly what Yahuwah tells them to do from His Word.

*MAT 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to Me, Master, Master, ' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? ' And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!*

Some have even blasphemed his name. Vainly and selfishly used it! They call on him for their own filthy gain. Because of their selfishness, they cause others to turn from his true name.

**1:7 By offering polluted food on My altar. And you say, How have we polluted it? By thinking [NKJ: saying] that Yahuwah's table may be despised [NLT: deserves no respect]. (NRS)**

Yahuwah's table was the altar for animal sacrifice (EZE 41:22). The priests showed contempt and disrespect toward Yahuwah and all that His name entails by going through the motions of giving Him offerings, but not according to Yahuwah's will as explicitly stated in His Word. Yahuwah warned Yisra'el that He was to be worshipped exactly in the manner He instructed—nothing was to be added or diminished (DEU 12:29-32).

**1:8 When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong [NKJ: evil]? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong?... (NIV)**

Yahuwah required all sacrificial animals to be without blemish. He made clear the prohibition against offering any defective animal: blind, lame, maimed, sickly, etc. (LEV 22:18-24; DEU 15:21).

**1:8 (cont.) ...Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you? says Yahuwah Almighty. (NIV)**

Since they would be afraid to use defective animals to satisfy tax obligations to a physical ruler, why were they not fearful to use them in their obligations to the supreme Ruler in heaven?

**1:9 Go ahead, beg Yahuwah to be merciful to you! But when you bring that kind of offering, why should He show you any favor at all? asks Yahuwah Almighty. (NLT)**

Because of the contempt they displayed toward Yahuwah by attempting to fulfill their obligations to Him by going against His will, any hope of gaining His favor and receiving His blessing was futile.

**1:10 I wish that someone among you would shut the Temple doors so that these worthless sacrifices could not be offered! I am not at all pleased with you, says Yahuwah Almighty, and I will not accept your offerings. (NLT)**

The insincerity of the priests and their failure to carefully follow Yahuwah's instructions in the temple service disgusted Yahuwah. In view of their attitudes and actions, He would have preferred to see the

temple closed and sacrifices terminated. These were the same sentiments that Yahuwah had expressed over two centuries earlier (ISA 1:11-15).

**1:11 My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought [NKJ: offered] to My name, because My name will be great among the nations, says Yahuwah Almighty. (NIV)**

After the establishment of Yahuwah's Kingdom over all nations, the survivors of the calamities of the Day of Yahuwah will have their minds opened to the truth and will show their gratitude by diligently worshipping Yahuwah.

*ZEP 2:11 Yahuwah will be awesome to them when He destroys all the idols of the land. The nations on every shore will worship Him, everyone in its own land. (NIV)*

*ISA 19:21 Then Yahuwah will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahuwah in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to Yahuwah and perform it*

The ultimate fulfillment of the purpose of the incense and offerings given to Yahuwah by the nations will be spiritual: daily prayers and lives surrendered to fulfilling Yahuwah's will (PSA 141:2; ROM 12:1).

*JOH 4:23-24 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. Yahuwah is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*

**1:12 But you dishonor [NKJ: profane] My name [NKJ: it] with your actions. By bringing contemptible food, you are saying it's all right to defile Yahuwah's table. (NLT)**

#### A Textual Alteration

This verse contains the fourth major textual alteration made by the Hebrew scribes in the scroll of The Twelve. They felt the original text (you dishonor Me) in this verse was overly irreverent, so they changed the Hebrew for **Me** to **it**; among the various renderings the NLT's choice of My name adequately gives the correct meaning.

#### Dishonor

After revealing how the nations of the world will react when they at last have their minds opened to His truth, Yahuwah chastises the people who have been given the truth in the Set-Apart Scriptures and have had access to Him, yet have treated that privilege with irreverence and disrespect. The Word, later to come in the flesh as Amanuwal, would castigate the descendants of Yahuwah on the same point.

*MAT 11:20-23 Then He began to upbraid the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.*

**1:13 You also say, Oh, what a weariness! and you sneer [NLT: turn up your noses] at it, says Yahuwah of hosts. And you bring the stolen [REB: mutilated], the lame, and the sick; thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand? says Yahuwah.**

What was being sacrificed on the altar to Yahuwah was a reflection of the attitude of the priests toward Yahuwah. They were satisfied with themselves and felt they were doing all they needed to do in their service to Yahuwah. They were a type of the final stage of the spiritual nation of priests that Yahuwah is now creating. That end-time group is identified as individuals who believe themselves to be in need of nothing, yet are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked spiritually (REV 3:17). They are a people who are failing in their responsibility to present themselves as living sacrifices, Set-Apart and acceptable to Yahuwah; failing to avoid being conformed to this world; failing to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, by which they should be proving and implementing what is the perfect will of Yahuwah in their way of life (ROM 12:1-2).

**1:14 Cursed is the cheat [NKJ: deceiver] who has an acceptable [TNK: unblemished] male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to Yahuwah. (NIV)**

To give Yahuwah anything other than the best one has is treating Yahuwah with disdain. To make a promise or vow to Yahuwah and not fulfill it is dishonoring Him. It is better to make no vow than to make one and not fulfill it (ECC 5:5). This also applies to the vow made at immersion (LUK 14:26-33); that vow required total surrender to Yahuwah, esteeming Him above all things. Those who give Yahuwah anything less and who refuse to repent of their lack of diligence toward that vow will ultimately face the curse of being permanently cut off from Yahuwah (HEB 6:4-6).

**1:14 (cont.) ...For I am a great king, says Yahuwah Almighty, and My name is to be feared [TNK: revered; CJB: respected] among the nations. (NIV)**

Since the time is coming when Yahuwah's name will indeed be feared among all nations (verse 11), His name should not presently be disrespected and taken lightly by those to whom He has already made Himself known.

## **Malachi: Chapter 2**

**2:1-2 And now this admonition is for you, O priests. If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor My name, says Yahuwah Almighty, I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings [TNK: turn your blessings into curses]. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor Me. (NIV)**

Yahuwah stresses that the message of rebuke He is delivering is directed to those in positions of religious leadership. Since the priests were the ones responsible for teaching the people, they were more accountable for knowing what actions would result in their being cursed. Yahuwah had already begun to remove His blessings from the priests to whom this prophecy was originally given.

**2:3 I will rebuke your descendants [JPS: the seed] (NLT)**

This phrase can be understood two ways: the seed of the produce of the land, and the descendants of the priests. Since the priests ultimately relied on the tithe of the increase of the land for their income, all Yahuwah needed to do to curse them was to prevent good harvests. Owing to the failure of the house of Levi as a whole in properly directing the people to Yahuwah, Yahuwah had already determined to use the descendants of only one family from Aaron to act as the millennial priesthood, the descendants of Zadok (EZE 44:10-16), who was descended from Phinehas (1CH 6).

**2:3 (cont.) ...and splatter your faces with the dung of your festival sacrifices, and I will add you to the dung heap. (NLT)**

The dung within the bodies of the animals that were to be sacrificed was considered a defilement and was taken outside the camp of Yisra'el after the animals were slaughtered. Like the dung, the priests were unfit to be found among Yahuwah's people, much less serving at His altar. The only position they deserved to hold among His people was a place in the dung pile.

**2:4 Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant with Levi may continue, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

After the prophesied destruction of the temple in A.D. 70, the physical priesthood would cease functioning. Not until the closing days of the age will the priesthood be briefly restored in order to begin again to offer the continual burnt offering until it is stopped by the armies of the Beast. Only after the priesthood of the descendants of Zadok begins serving at the millennial temple when Yahuwah's covenant with the tribe of Levi continues will the descendants of the tribe of Levi understand why Yahuwah took the action He did almost 2000 years earlier.

**2:5 My covenant with him was one of life and peace [TNK: well-being], and I gave him these things. It was also one of fear, and he feared Me; he was in awe of My name. (CJB)**

The covenant Yahuwah made with the tribe of Levi consisted of substituting that tribe for all of the firstborn of the other tribes (NUM 3:45) and recompensing the Levites for their service to Him by giving them one-tenth of all the increase realized by the other tribes (NUM 18:21). This provision of living expenses for Levi fulfilled the first part of the covenant Yahuwah made with the tribe. The second part came later at the time when Phinehas was zealous for Yahuwah; the promise Yahuwah made was the security of knowing that the priesthood would be retained within the tribe of Levi in the family of Phinehas for as long as the physical nation existed.

*NUM 25:12-13 Therefore say, Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his god, and made atonement for the children of Yisra'el.*

One reason Yahuwah had chosen the tribe of Levi was the reverence and fear of Yahuwah the Levites had exhibited at the incident when the tribes worshipped the golden calf.

*EXO 32:26 then Mosheh stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, Whoever is on Yahuwah's side, let him come to me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.*

**2:6 The law of truth [TNK: Proper rulings; NIV: True instruction] was in his mouth, and injustice [NAS: unrighteousness] was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity [TNK: served Me with complete loyalty], and turned many away from iniquity.**

This condition existed during much of the forty years of wandering and continued until the generation that knew Yahuwshuwa/Hosea son of Nun had died out. This ideal situation was revived during the days of Samuel, with occasional short recurrences throughout the period of the kingdom of Yahuwah.

**2:7 For the lips of a priest should keep [NAS: preserve; TNK: guard] knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of Yahuwah of hosts.**

Among the tribe of Levi was the house of Aaron, from whom all priests descended. It was the responsibility of the priests to be the teachers in the application of Yahuwah's law (DEU 17:8-11). That role will be continued in the Millennium by the descendants of Zadok.

*EZE 44:23 And they shall teach My people the difference between the Set-Apart and the not Set-Apart, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.*

**2:8 But you have departed from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law [TNK: through your rulings]. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

Yahuwah now contrasts these latter priests with the ones of the time of Aaron and Phinehas, when Yahuwah had established His covenant with the Levites. Rather than putting Yahuwah first like Phinehas and keeping the people focused on obeying Him, the priests had put themselves first, and taught things and made rulings that would benefit them. This was to become very evident during the time of Ha'Mashyach's first coming, when keeping the traditions of the elders would have become more important to the priesthood than obeying Yahuwah's law (MAR 7:9).

**2:9 And I, in turn, have made [REB: shall make] you despicable and vile in the eyes of all the people, because you disregard My ways and show partiality in your rulings [NKJ: in the law; REB: in your interpretation of the law]. (TNK)**

The people observed how the priests were preoccupied with pursuing selfish interests and promoting their own agendas. Although many of the people continued yielding to the requirements imposed by the priests, they lost all respect for them.

**2:10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one Yahuwah created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another by profaning [REB: violating] the covenant of the fathers?**

Yahuwah now gives an example of the repercussions that stem from the failure of the priests to keep the people directed toward reverencing and obeying Him.

#### One Father

Since all of Ya'aqob's descendants have a common origin both a physical father and Yahuwah Himself (EXO 4:22) they should express the same mutual concern and loyalty of members of a family toward each other. Yet their transgression of the covenant that Yahuwah had made with their ancestors at Sinai revealed otherwise.

**2:11 Yahuwah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Yisra'el and in Yerushalayim, for Yahuwah has profaned Yahuwah's Set-Apart institution which He loves: he has married the daughter of [MOF: women belonging to] a foreign god.**

The treachery being committed against fellow members of the family and the detestable action against Yahuwah involved the defilement of the institution of marriage by unjustified divorce and by intermarriage with idolaters from other nations. Yahuwah had stipulated at the time of making the covenant with Yisra'el at Sinai that they were not to intermarry with other nations (EXO 34:16). Before entering the Land of Promise Mosheh had reminded them of that covenantal obligation and the reason for it.

*DEU 7:3-4 Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of Yahuwah will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.*

Ezra and Nehemiah had discovered this problem to be rampant among the Yahuwdim when they arrived in Yerushalayim (EZR 9; NEH 13).

**2:12 May Yahuwah banish from the dwellings of Ya'aqob any who do this, whether nomads or settlers [CJB: initiator or follower], Although they bring offerings to Yahuwah of Hosts. (REB)**

Nehemiah took this action on behalf of Yahuwah by severing a grandson of the high priest from the temple. The grandson had married a pagan wife (NEH 13:28). Yahuwah shows no partiality to unrepentant sinners; they cannot buy or inherit license to disobey Him. No amount of physical generosity can procure Yahuwah's approval for sinning against another one of His children.

**2:13 And this you do as well: You cover Yahuwah's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor at your hand. (NRS)**

**2:14 Yet you say, For what reason?...**

Yahuwah was also angry that they were flippant, seemingly oblivious to the magnitude of the sins they were committing by divorce and intermarriage. They came crying to Him because He was not providing the blessings they believed they deserved for calling Him their god. This they did rather than examining themselves and repenting of the sins that caused them to be separated from Him (ISA 59:2) in the first place.

**2:14 (cont.) ...because Yahuwah has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously [NRS: been faithless; NLT: been disloyal]; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.**

Being eternal, Yahuwah has witnessed every marital vow ever made. He was there when each marriage began the couples being young in most cases. Having vowed to be faithful to the marriage covenant until death, to sever a marriage by divorce after years of being together is the most egregious act of disloyalty and faithlessness that can be committed between two people.

**2:15 Did not the one Aluhym make her, both flesh and spirit? And what does the one Aluhym require but righteous children?... (REB)**

**2:15 Didn't Yahuwah make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are His. And what does He want? Righteous children from your union.... (NLT)**

This is the most difficult verse in this book. As the various translations reveal, there are several valid ways it can be understood. The point of the REB is that woman's composition is identical to that of the man; therefore the wife should be treated with the same respect and honor that is due to the husband. The NLT brings out the point that Yahuwah created the institution of marriage so that a man and woman could unite to become a new entity.

*GEN 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Since Yahuwah is the one who joins together a man and woman to create the new body (1CO 6:18), He becomes the owner of the new entity and expects it to function according to the faithfulness required by the marital vow. It is within such a union, where loyalty and faithfulness are clearly observed, that the ideal environment exists for producing children who will be better prepared to yield themselves in faithfulness to Yahuwah. Yahuwah's command to humanity, beginning with Adam and Eve, was to reproduce themselves (GEN 1:28); the purpose for that reproduction was to multiply greatly so as to provide billions of potential members for the family of Yahuwah.

**2:15 (cont.) ...Therefore take heed to [NIV: guard yourself in] your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with [NRS: be faithless to] the wife of his youth.**

This was a warning to all who had not so far followed the example of the Yahuwdim who were guilty of this widespread sin. When the purpose of the marriage union is understood in the light of Yahuwah's will for creating the institution, the Yahuwdim who divorced their wives stood completely condemned. Their motivation for divorce was based on selfish desires for physical gratification without regard for the welfare of others; they exhibited a total lack of outgoing concern for the women they had vowed to be joined to for the remainder of their physical lives.

**2:16 For Yahuwah Aluhym of Yisra'el says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence, says Yahuwah of hosts...**

**2:16 for I detest divorce and cruelty to a wife, Yahuwah of hosts, the Aluhym of Yisra'el, declares... (MOF)**

Yahuwah's will and purpose was to create the institution of marriage so as to establish a relationship in which a man and woman could learn how to develop the love of Yahuwah toward each other and thereby create an environment suitable for producing children for Him for the increase of His divine Family. Yahuwah therefore hates divorce because it is in direct opposition to His will and purpose.

The NKJ renders the Hebrew by alluding to the ancient custom whereby a potential husband would spread his garment over a woman, symbolically offering to provide for and protect her in the marriage union.

*RTH 3:9 Who are you? he asked. I am your servant Ruth, she said. Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer. (NIV)*

*EZE 16:8 Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of My garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you My solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign Yahuwah, and you became Mine. (NIV)*

Once the woman became the wife of the husband, she was considered to be permanently under his garment or protection and, in this verse, she is even alluded to as if she were the husband's garment. Husbands who divorced their wives without cause were unmercifully battering those women with emotional anguish and mental pain; divorce transformed what had been protective garments for their wives into targets of violence and torture.

**2:16 (cont.) ...So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless [NKJ: deal treacherously]. (NRS)**

Those who truly comprehend the intensity with which Yahuwah hates divorce should tremble at the thought of ever entertaining the idea to be faithless to their marriage vows.

**2:17 You have wearied Yahuwah with your words; yet you say, In what way have we wearied Him? In that you say, Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of Yahuwah, and He delights in them, or, Where is the Aluhym of justice?**

Yahuwah now addresses a separate issue that partially explains why so many had divorced their Israelite wives and married pagan ones. From their observations, it seemed that those who disobeyed Yahuwah

were never punished, so what was the benefit in following His way of life; why deny fleshly pulls if gratifying them brought no repercussions?

What wears Yahuwah the most is the all-consuming selfishness of those who reach these conclusions. The whole focus of their lives can be summed up by the question: What's in it for me? There is no inherent desire to live their lives according to Yahuwah's way so as not to hurt others. Basing their conclusions on their observations of others who went unpunished for conduct contrary to Yahuwah's law, these hardened skeptics challenged the promises Yahuwah had made through the prophets concerning the coming of Ha'Mashyach, who would be an enforcer of justice. The apostle Peter tells us of other scoffers who would make the same challenges in the time of the end.

*2PE 3:1-4 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Set-Apart prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of Yahuwah and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?...*

#### Where is the Aluhym of Justice?

The question posed in 2:17 is addressed in the remainder of this book.

## **Malachi: Chapter 3**

### **3:1 Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me...**

#### My Messenger

The role of this messenger was to establish himself as one sent from Yahuwah and then point all who accepted him to the next Messenger, who would shortly appear. Amanuwal clearly identified this messenger of Yahuwah—this Malachi—as John the Baptist.

*MAT 11:7, 10 ...Amanuwal began to say to the multitudes concerning John: ...For this is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.*

#### Prepare the Way

The process of preparing the way alludes to the ancient practice of sending crews of men in advance of heads of state to clear all obstacles from the path that they would later travel. John the Baptist understood that he was the one sent in advance to prepare the way for Ha'Mashyach by teaching the need for those who came to him to be washed, and to prepare their minds for what the next Messenger of Yahuwah would teach them.

*JOH 1:23 He said: I am The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of Yahuwah as the prophet Isaiah said.*

The first part of verse 1 clearly shows Yahuwah stating that He will send His messenger to prepare the way before He, Himself, appears. This is another proof that prior to becoming flesh, Amanuwal was the Word of Yahuwah.

**3:1 (cont.) ...And Yahuwah, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight [NIV: whom you desire]. Behold, He is coming, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

### Whom You Seek; in Whom You Delight

The term whom you seek is interjected in reaction to the question derisively posed by the skeptics in 2:17, “Where is the Yahuwah of justice?” In like manner, the phrase in whom **you** delight can be understood as a sarcastic response to the implication made by the same scoffers, that Yahuwah delights in everyone who does evil. Yahuwah sarcastically suggests that those who believe He delights in the disobedient will be delighted when the obedient, righteous Messenger of the Covenant does finally arrive and promote justice. In reality, they will be terrified.

However, this phrase can also have the same focus as was made in HAG 2:7—the coming of Ha’Mashyach is what the nations truly desire (Although they do not realize it) because He will deliver them from the suffering they are experiencing while held captive by the chains of the devil.

### Suddenly

Coming suddenly means arriving unexpectedly. This could be related to both occasions when Ha’Mashyach would come to His people. Although, due to a variety of prophecies, many were watching for the arrival of Ha’Mashyach at the time Amanuwal was born and lived among men in the flesh, the manner of His first appearance was unexpected because the descendants of the Southern Kingdom were looking for Ha’Mashyach to be a king and warrior that would deliver them from Roman dominion. They overlooked the fact that the primary role of Ha’Mashyach—to pay the penalty for sin so that man could be reconciled to Yahuwah—was required to be fulfilled prior to His eventual coming as Yahuwah of armies and King of kings. Ha’Mashyach had to provide the way for spiritual deliverance before performing the physical deliverance that would occur at His Second Coming.

During His First Coming, Amanuwal came unexpectedly to the temple of Yahuwah in Yerushalayim several times: at forty days old, when Simeon recognized Him (LUK 2:25-32); at age twelve, when He amazed the teachers (LUK 2:46-47); and on the two occasions when He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and drove the animals out of the courtyard (JOH 2:13-16; MAT 21:12-13).

### Come to His Temple

His Second Coming will also be to His temple—the temple of much greater glory than the physical temple (HAG 2:7-9)—the spiritual temple, which is the Assembly (1PE 2:5). The beginning of the sequence of events that leads to that coming will also happen unexpectedly.

*MAT 24:36, 42 —But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only...Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Sovereign is coming.*

### Messenger of the Covenant

Amanuwal came the first time to bring a covenant that was different from the one Mosheh brought down from Mt. Sinai to the tribes of Yisra’el. Mosheh was the messenger who brought that first covenant from Yahuwah to Yisra’el (DEU 5:23-28). Before his death, Mosheh revealed that there would be another Prophet, like him, that Yahuwah would raise up out of Yisra’el; that Prophet would supersede Mosheh (DEU 18:15). Amanuwal was that Prophet, and the better covenant (HEB 8:6) He brought from the Father transcended the one made at Sinai (MAT 5-7). The New Covenant that He revealed contained promises not found in the one at Sinai: the gift of Yahuwah’s spirit, forgiveness of all sin, permanent reconciliation with Yahuwah, and eternal life.

### **3:2 But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears?...**

In context with the next three verses, these questions must apply to the time of His Second Coming.

*REV 6:17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*

**3:2 (cont.) ...For He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's [NIV: launderer's] soap.**

Amanuwal is compared to the fire used by the refiner to purge all of the impurities from precious metals picturing the erasure of all character flaws. He is also likened to the soap that removes all the stains from clothes picturing the removal of all the blemishes of sin.

**3:3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to Yahuwah an offering in righteousness.**

Yahuwah refers specifically to the tribe of Levi's future purification. He has also included the other tribes in prophecies of the plagues of the Day of Yahuwah in particular the time of the Bowl Plagues.

*ZEC 13:9 I will bring the one third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, This is My people; and each one will say, Yahuwah is my Sovereign.*

**3:4 Then the offering of Yahuwah and Yerushalayim will be pleasant to Yahuwah, as in the days of old, as in former years.**

Once the millennial temple is constructed, the purified Levites will once again conduct animal sacrifices before Yahuwah (EZE 44:15-16). Just as the sacrifices reminded Yisra'el that they needed Ha'Mashyach to come and permanently remove the penalty for sin, the millennial sacrifices will be memorials of what Ha'Mashyach did when He first came.

**3:5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, against adulterers, against perjurers [NAS: those who swear falsely], against those who exploit wage earners and widows and the fatherless, and against those who turn away an alien because they do not fear Me, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

The people had derisively questioned where the Sovereign of justice was; there will be no mistaking His presence when the time He has appointed to take action against the wicked finally arrives. The root cause of every injustice and transgression listed is the absence of the fear of Yahuwah. The Day of Yahuwah will be the time when the fear of Yahuwah will be instilled in all of humanity (REV 14:6-7).

**3:6 For I am Yahuwah, I do not change;...**

Yahuwah stresses that He is the One who was, is and will be—eternally the same. It was by the name Yahuwah that He entered into the covenant at Sinai with the tribes descended from Ya'aqob (EXO 6:6-8). He loved them at that point in the past; He continued to love them despite their waywardness at the time Malachi wrote this; and He would persist in His love for them in the future. Yahuwah has not changed in His love for Ya'aqob (1:2)—He does not regret His decision to show mercy to Ya'aqob and select him rather than allow the blessings to go by right of birth to his older twin brother, Esau.

**3:6 (cont.) ...therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Ya'aqob [TNK: and you are the children of Ya'aqob—you have not ceased to be; MOF: but you are the sons of Ya'aqob the cheater still].**

This phrase can be understood two ways; the NKJ rendering suggests only the first; TNK could be taken either way, but MOF strongly suggests only the second way to understand this statement:

1. As the consequence of the first part of the verse that is, if Yahuwah was not eternally the same consistently merciful and true to His promises, when He does finally take action against the wicked (verse 5), the descendants of Ya'aqob would be completely destroyed.

2. As a comparison with the first part of the verse. Yahuwah's constancy is a reflection of His name Yahuwah and of His righteous character. The descendants of Ya'aqob have however continually reflected the character of unconverted Ya'aqob a devious deceiver and supplanter, rather than that of converted Yisra'el—prevailer with Yahuwah. They haven't changed either!

**3:7 Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from My statutes [TNK: laws] and have not kept them... (NRS)**

This statement continues to reflect on the fact that Ya'aqob's descendants from the time of their ancestors who accompanied Mosheh during the forty years wandering until this was written had retained the deviousness that Ya'aqob had displayed before Yahuwah began dealing openly with him.

**3:7 (cont.) ...Return to Me, and I will return to you, says Yahuwah of hosts. But you say, How shall we return? (NRS)**

Yahuwah has just stated that He does not change. Once again, as He had done many times throughout Yisra'el's history, Yahuwah called on the descendants of Ya'aqob to repent of their disobedience and turn back to Him. Yet their response denotes surprise; they believed they were doing all they needed to do and were shocked that Yahuwah found fault with them.

**3:8 Will a man rob Yahuwah? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, In what way have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings.**

They had held back the portion of their increase that Yahuwah claimed as His and had failed to present all of the offerings of the firstlings of their animals and firstfruits of their produce, which Yahuwah required to be given to the Levites (NUM 18:12-15, 21). Nehemiah had found this sin was being committed by the Yahuwdim when he arrived in Yerushalayim (NEH 13:10).

**3:9 You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.**

#### Another Textual Alteration

This is the fifth and final major alteration to the original text made by the Hebrew scribes in the scroll of the Minor Prophets. The original text is translated: You have cursed Me with a curse. The thrust of the original text is that the people expressed evil intent toward Yahuwah by refusing to give Him what belonged to Him.

**3:10 Bring the full tithe [CJB: whole tenth] into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and thus put Me to the test, says Yahuwah of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. (NRS)**

#### Full Tithe

The storehouse was a chamber in the court of the temple where the Levites stored the produce collected from the other tribes (NEH 10:38). Apparently, the people were bringing some of their increase to the Levites, to give the impression to men that they were tithing, but were actually withholding part of what was Yahuwah's due portion. In so doing, they were dishonoring Yahuwah.

*PRO 3:9-10 Honor Yahuwah with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.*

#### Put Me to the Test

Yahuwah's challenge of putting Him to the test is another way of saying that He will bless them for their obedience.

**3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer [TNK: locusts; NIV: pests] for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field, says Yahuwah of hosts;**

Yahuwah's blessing entails supplying all needs and removing everything that would hinder success.

**3:12 And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

Yahuwah's blessing will be so great that all observers will be impressed by its magnitude. Since this condition will not occur until after Mashyach's Second Coming, this verse establishes that this entire passage beginning with verse 1 is primarily millennial in its fulfillment (ISA 62:1-4).

**3:13 Your words have been harsh against Me, says Yahuwah, Yet you say, What have we spoken against You?**

Now that Yahuwah has established when Yahuwah of justice will appear and bring all things into conformity with His law that defines righteous conduct, He returns to discussing the selfish, abrasive attitude that wearies Him (2:17). That attitude was not only disheartening to Yahuwah, but it also showed dishonor for the plan that He is in the process of completing.

**3:14 You have said, To serve Yahuwah is futile. What do we gain from Yahuwah of Hosts by observing His rules and behaving with humble submission [NIV: going about like mourners]? (REB)**

They reached this conclusion because their motivation in fulfilling Yahuwah's instructions was totally selfish. The only reason they denied themselves by refusing to give in to their lusts was in order to get something from Yahuwah. Their focus was on physical acquisition not on spiritual improvement.

**3:15 And so, we account the arrogant happy: they have indeed done evil and endured; they have indeed dared Yahuwah and escaped. (TNK)**

By observing the material wealth that the disobedient had accumulated, those who spoke against Yahuwah who lived only for the present, intent on physical acquisition and gratification reached wrong conclusions. They failed to understand that Yahuwah's plan allows humanity to pursue the way of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil for 6000 years, during which time many of the wicked do prosper by taking advantage of others (PSA 73). However, when that time expires, they will face the penalty of eternal death, and they will escape that penalty only if they acknowledge their wickedness and repent of it.

**3:16 Then those who feared Yahuwah spoke to one another,...**

Those who comprehend Yahuwah's greatness and stand in awe of the perfect plan He is accomplishing on the earth have an entirely different approach from that of the shortsighted who live only for the present. They know Yahuwah is faithful to His word that the wicked will be brought to judgment and the righteous rewarded for their obedience when the seventh day of Yahuwah's plan finally arrives. They

understand the need to hold fast to the truth and work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (PHI 2:12), while encouraging their companions in the faith to do the same.

*HEB 10:23-25 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

**3:16 (cont.) ...and Yahuwah listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear Yahuwah and who meditate on His name.**

Despite the notion of the shortsighted that Yahuwah pays no heed to what people do, He does carefully observe those whom He has selected to know Him who are always mindful of His presence in their lives and recognize His authority over them. Yahuwah knows all things, yet He does have records kept to memorialize the lives and righteous actions of His chosen ones.

*PSA 56:8 You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?*

**3:17 —They shall be Mine, says Yahuwah of hosts, on the day that I make them My jewels [TNK: treasured possession]...**

Yahuwah claims as His own those who fear and obey Him. On the day of the First Resurrection, they will become His special treasure: a kingdom of priests. This position was originally offered to the tribes of Yisra'el at Mt. Sinai, but has since been transferred to the spiritual nation of Yahuwah's elect.

*EXO 19:5-6 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a Set-Apart nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Yisra'el.*

*IPE 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a Set-Apart nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

**3:17 (cont.) ...And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.**

From among all who still have physical life at the day of the coming of the Messenger of the Covenant (verses 1-2), Yahuwah promises to spare those who have carefully obeyed His instructions.

*MAT 24:13 —But he who endures to the end shall be saved.*

*REV 3:10 —Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

**3:18 And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him who has served Yahuwah and him who has not served Him. (TNK)**

When the Messenger of the Covenant arrives, it will become abundantly clear that a great chasm exists between the temporary prosperity of the wicked in this life and the eternal prosperity of the righteous in the life they will then receive the life for which they have been preparing by serving Yahuwah during this one.

## Malachi: Chapter 4

**4:1 For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up, says Yahuwah of hosts, that will leave them neither root nor branch.**

### Burning the Stubble

Not only are the wicked allowed to relish their material acquisitions for a very temporary period only; they are also destined to be destroyed forever if they remain unrepentant when raised up in a day of salvation (HEB 10:27).

*PSA 37:18-20 Yahuwah knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of Yahuwah, like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away.*

### The Day

Here the day that is coming refers to the final day of the physical realm, when the harvest of the final day of salvation has been completed.

*PSA 102:25-27 Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, all of them will grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end.*

*ISA 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished.*

*2PE 3:10 But the day of Yahuwah will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

### Neither Root nor Branch

Leaving the wicked neither root nor branch means there will be no further continuance no hope of another resurrection to life because the spirit essence that makes the restoration of life possible will be destroyed (MAT 10:28) when the physical creation reverts back to the spirit from which it has been composed (HEB 11:3) and by which it consists under Mashyach's supervision (COL 1:17).

**4:2 But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings;...**

### Sun of Righteousness

Unlike the wicked, who will cease to be, those who fear Yahuwah and stand in awe of His perfect plan will be showered in the light of Yahuwah's glory. Ha'Mashyach is represented as the pinnacle of righteousness (JER 33:15-16). He is also symbolized by the sun the morning star that brings the light of day to the world.

*PSA 84:11 For Sovereign Yahuwah is a sun and shield; Yahuwah will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.*

*REV 22:16 I, Amanuwal...I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.*

*Amanuwal, the Messenger of the Covenant, proclaimed at His first coming that He was the Light of the world (JOH 8:12). When He comes the second time, His light will reveal all that needs to be repaired and healed.*

*ACT 3:19-21 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of Yahuwah, and that He may send Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which Yahuwah has spoken by the mouth of all His Set-Apart prophets since the world began.*

#### With Healing in His Wings

The term in His wings implies great speed how suddenly and quickly He appears and begins to restore all things (3:1).

#### **4:2 (cont.) ...and you will break out leaping, like calves released from the stall. (CJB)**

This describes the excitement and emotion that the righteous will experience at the time of their resurrection, when the Sun of Righteousness appears. We all understand that our physical bodies are only temporary dwellings and, like the apostle Paul, we look forward to the day when we will be released from physical confinement and clothed with the body Yahuwah has for us when we become spirit (2CO 5:1-4; 1JO 3:2).

#### **4:3 You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this, says Yahuwah of hosts.**

#### Timeframe

The term on the day that I do this can refer to either or both of the following:

1. The time of the First Resurrection (verse 2), as their composition being ashes means that the wicked would be those destroyed during the early stages of the Day of Yahuwah.
2. The time when the physical heavens and earth will vanish (verse 1), at which time any who could still be classified as wicked will cease to exist, forever.

Whether both times or only one time is meant, both events will occur on the Day of Yahuwah, which will begin with the Trumpet Plagues and will continue forever, once the Light of the Sun of Righteousness comes to dwell among humanity.

#### **4:4 Remember the Law of Mosheh, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Yisra'el, with the statutes and judgments.**

This admonition serves at least two important purposes:

1. Since Malachi is the last book in the Prophets Division of the Set-Apart Scriptures, it reminds those who study the prophets that all of the messages recorded by the prophets are founded on the Law that Mosheh brought down from Yahuwah at Mount Sinai.
2. It draws attention to the role of the Messenger of the Covenant (3:1) who was to come, like Mosheh, as a lawgiver (DEU 18:15).

#### **4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Yahuwah.**

Amanuwal identified the role of John the Baptist as one fulfillment of this Elijah prophecy:

*MAT 17:11-13 Then Amanuwal answered and said to them, Eliyah truly is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Eliyah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands. Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.*

*MAT 11:14 And if you are willing to receive it, he is Eliyah who is to come.*

A grave error that many have made with this verse is to think that an Eliyah can be sent only shortly before the beginning of the Day of Yahuwah. The clear statement is that Eliyah would be sent at some unspecified time between the recording of this prophecy and the coming of that Day. Amanuwal confirmed not only that (an) Eliyah had been sent prior to the beginning of His ministry, but also that (an) Eliyah would yet come first and would restore all things. It may therefore be a further error to suppose that the prophecy is limited to that single fulfillment by John the Baptist.

**4:6 And he will turn the hearts [Hebrew, KJV: heart] of the fathers to the children, and the hearts [Hebrew, KJV: heart] of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse [CJB: complete destruction].**

In order to understand this verse correctly, it is important to examine how the works of both Eliyah and John the Baptist are related to its predictions. The primary accomplishment achieved when Eliyah confronted the prophets of Baal was that of turning the hearts of the children of Yisra'el back to Yahuwah, their Father (EXO 4:22).

*IKI 18:36-37 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Eliyah the prophet came near and said, Sovereign Yahuwah of Abraham, Yitshaq, and Yisra'el, let it be known this day that You are Sovereign in Yisra'el, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, Yahuwah, hear me, that this people may know that You are Sovereign Yahuwah, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.*

When the angel Gabriel came to the priest Zechariyah to tell him that his wife Elizabeth would give birth to John the Baptist, Gabriel connected what Yahuwah had accomplished through Eliyah to what Yahuwah would do through John.

*LUK 1:16-17 And he will turn many of the children of Yisra'el to Yahuwah their Sovereign. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Eliyah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for Yahuwah.*

### The Fathers

Clearly, the works of both Elyjah and John included turning the hearts of the children of Yisra'el to Yahuwah. How then, are we to understand the plural fathers in the context of these verses in Malachi and Luke? There are two valid explanations.

1. In ancient Hebrew, a plural can be understood either quantitatively (in numbers) or qualitatively (in magnitude), depending on the context. Although the Hebrew word for father is plural in MAL 4:6, its use is connected to the work of Eliyah, which was turning the hearts of the children of Yisra'el back to Yahuwah, who was their Father. The plural should therefore be understood qualitatively here that is, as a Father figure of much greater eminence, wisdom, authority, power, glory and repute than an ordinary human father.

2. Both members of the Yahuwah Family have positions as Fathers. The Word in the Old Testament who became Amanuwal Ha'Mashyach is referred to as the everlasting Father (ISA 9:6), He being the founder of the nation of Yisra'el (DEU 32:6), as well as being the first man to be born again from the dead into eternal life making Him the forefather of all who will follow Him in later resurrections (ROM 8:29). The Most High Yahuwah (GEN 14:18) was designated by Amanuwal as the Father to whom we pray (MAT 6:9).

### Turn the Heart

The term found in the KJV, turn the heart of the Father(s) to the children, refers to Yahuwah's showing favor to a group of individuals by offering them salvation. Turning the hearts of the children to their Father(s) points to the response of those who are shown Yahuwah's special favor. In Luke, Gabriel refers to this as turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. The wisdom of the just is the acknowledgment of the need for repentance and conviction to follow the truth.

### John the Baptist

John the Baptist fulfilled every major aspect of this specific prophecy. He prepared the people who would compose the leadership of the initial Assembly of Yahuwah. Once it was begun on Pentecost Amanuwal declared that the Assembly would never die out (MAT 16:18). It is because of the Assembly that Yahuwah will not strike the earth with complete destruction, destroying all life during the Day of Yahuwah. This was confirmed by Amanuwal's words of comfort to His elect in the Olivet Prophecy.

*MAT 24:21-22 For there will be trouble then worse than there has ever been from the beginning of the world until now, and there will be nothing like it again! Indeed, if the length of this time had not been limited, no one would survive; but for the sake of those who have been chosen, its length will be limited.(CJB)*

However, although John the Baptist has clearly fulfilled the prophecy of verses 5-6, it is possible that another fulfillment can yet occur that Yahuwah will yet send Eliyah the prophet. Bearing in mind the account of the transfiguration (MAT 17:3), and how some of the actions of the two witnesses (REV 11:3-6) will parallel those of Mosheh and Eliyah, it would seem that Yahuwah may have always intended to resurrect those two men to fulfill those roles (see ZEC 4:14).

## **Malachi: Conclusion**

The Scroll of The Twelve, or Minor Prophets, concludes the second division of the Set-Apart Scriptures, known as The Prophets (LUK 24:44). Malachi concludes both The Twelve and The Prophets by establishing the fact that the next major event in the fulfillment of Yahuwah's promise of sending a Mashyach would be the arrival of a man from Yahuwah who would prepare people to receive Ha'Mashyach, followed by the arrival of Ha'Mashyach, Himself—Yahuwah in the flesh. The next Yahuwah-breathed scriptures written after Malachi would be Matthew, where many prophecies relevant to the first coming of Ha'Mashyach are linked together (MAT 1-2), including the one that identifies Ha'Mashyach as Amanuwal, Yahuwah with us (MAT 1:23). Then, prior to Amanuwal's identity as the Messenger of the New Covenant becoming established by His ministry, John the Baptist is identified as the messenger who prepared the way before Him (MAT 3). The book of Malachi is therefore the perfect transition between the Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek scriptures inspired by Yahuwah.