

DISPUTE

An exegetical study of the book of Malachi

The book of Malachi is structured around six theological disputes between God and a spiritually complacent post-exilic Israel.

Date: 450–430 BC, during the Persian period after the second temple was rebuilt (516 BC), aligning closely with the pre-Reformation era of Nehemiah.

Genre: Prophetic: disputational or forensic dialogue; God makes an assertion, Israel cynically/defensively objects, and God delivers a decisive rebuttal.

Author: Malachi was an Old Testament prophet and the last of the writing prophets. He wrote the book of Malachi probably between 440 and 400 BC. Very little is known about Malachi the man except what can be inferred from his public messages, recorded in his book. Malachi's name means "my messenger"; he wrote to the remnant of Israelites who had returned after 70 years in Babylonian captivity. He ministered during the time of Nehemiah and after the time of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah.

DISPUTE One: Divine Love 1:2-5

What's was God's assertion? _____

What was Israel's objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

DISPUTE Two: Defiled Worship 1:6–2:9

What was God's assertion? _____

What was Israel's objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

DISPUTE Three: Faithless Marriages and Divorce 2:10–16

What was God's assertion? _____

What was Israel's objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

DISPUTE Four: Divine Justice 2:17–3:5

What was God’s assertion? _____

What was Israel’s objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

DISPUTE Five: Robbing God 3:6–12

What was God’s assertion? _____

What was Israel’s objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

DISPUTE Six: Serving God in Vain 3:13–4:3

What was God’s assertion? _____

What was Israel’s objection? _____

What was the Divine resolve? _____

How does this dispute speak to you? _____

EPILOGUE: The Call to Remember 4:4–6

What was God’s final command? _____

What was the prophetic promise? _____

How does this final word speak to you? _____
