
God raised up Malachi about the same time of Nehemiah. But Malachi was the last of the writing prophets.

MALACHI

Malachi, *my messenger*; it is uncertain whether this is a proper name, or a title of honour given to an unidentified prophet. The prophecy of Malachi was spoken most likely in the second half of the 5th century B.C. The first part, Malachi 1:1-2:9, is spoken to the priesthood, blaming them for their abandonment of the service of God. The second part, Malachi 2:10-4:6, is addressed to the people, disapproving heathen marriages, and also the widespread spirit of discontentment. The faithful are encouraged by the assurance that the Lord's coming is near; He will send His messenger, one is John the Baptist (Malachi 3:1 cross references Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 1:17; 7:27) who is like the Elijah of old, at His first coming to prepare the way; and then Elijah, to prepare the way for His second coming, Malachi 4:5,6 ; they must prepare to receive Him at His coming, Malachi 2:17-3:12.

FIFTH STUDY

NEW SPIRIT WITHIN

A NEW HEART / A HEART OF FLESH (Ezekiel 11:19,20; 18:31,32; 36:26,27; 37:14; 39:29)

These references to the Spirit deal with the time of Israel's future restoration. Through Ezekiel, God promises to take out of them their stony heart and replace it with a new heart; a heart of flesh. We could call this the first "heart transplant." Earlier, in Deuteronomy 30:6, God made a similar promise to His people.

1. (a) What Did God promise His people in Deuteronomy 30:6?

(b) What would be the purpose of their hearts being "circumcised"?

At various times in Israel's history such promises were fulfilled in degrees, but not in the fullest measure until the fullness of times had come. Jeremiah proclaims a similar prophecy at about the same time as Ezekiel (Ezekiel 36:26-27), and makes it quite clear that it's highest fulfillment will not be completed until the redemptive age to come.

Jeremiah 31:31-33 - *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*

Not according to the covenant I have made with their

fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people.

This completed fulfillment is the Pentecostal baptism of believers with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; etc.) in the upper room following Christ's death and Resurrection; which was also prophesied in Hosea 6:3 as the "latter rain".

This is the parallel to the Old Testament promises of the pouring out of His Spirit (Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Ezekiel 39:29; Joel 2:28; Zechariah 12:10).¹
THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD (Proverbs 1:23; II Samuel 23:2; Micah 3:8)

One of the most important themes brought out in the Old Testament is the close relationship between the Spirit and the Word. The prophets who spoke God's Word were regarded as His chief agents. As Amos says (3:7), *...Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but [except] He revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets.* It is true there were false prophets who claimed inspiration (I Kings 22:24; II Chronicles 18:23; Jeremiah 28:1-4).

But they followed their own spirits (Ezekiel 13:3) and the Lord had not sent them. Events as well as the judgment of God showed they were false. But the Word of God continued to burn in the hearts of the true prophets even in the face of severe opposition and indifference (Jeremiah 20:9).¹

Other Old Testament prophets as men of the Spirit who were also chief writers of the Scriptures were:

1. Moses (wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy)
2. David (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:42-43; Acts 1:16)
3. Isaiah (Isaiah 59:21; Acts 28:25, referring to Isaiah 6:9,10)

Nehemiah, near the end of the Old Testament period, gives more attention to the reading and teaching of the Word, as does Ezra (Nehemiah 8:1,8,9; Ezra 7:10). Nehemiah, in his prayer, recognized that God gave His good Spirit to *instruct the Israelites* in the wilderness (Nehemiah 9:20). He also mentions the Spirit in the prophets as warning the later Israelites, but implies that later on generations can learn from this (Nehemiah 9:30).

1. In Nehemiah 9:30, after the warning was given, did the Israelites adhere to the warning? ____
2. What was their punishment? (Nehemiah 9:30)

1- Book, What The Bible Says About The Holy Spirit, p. 76.

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