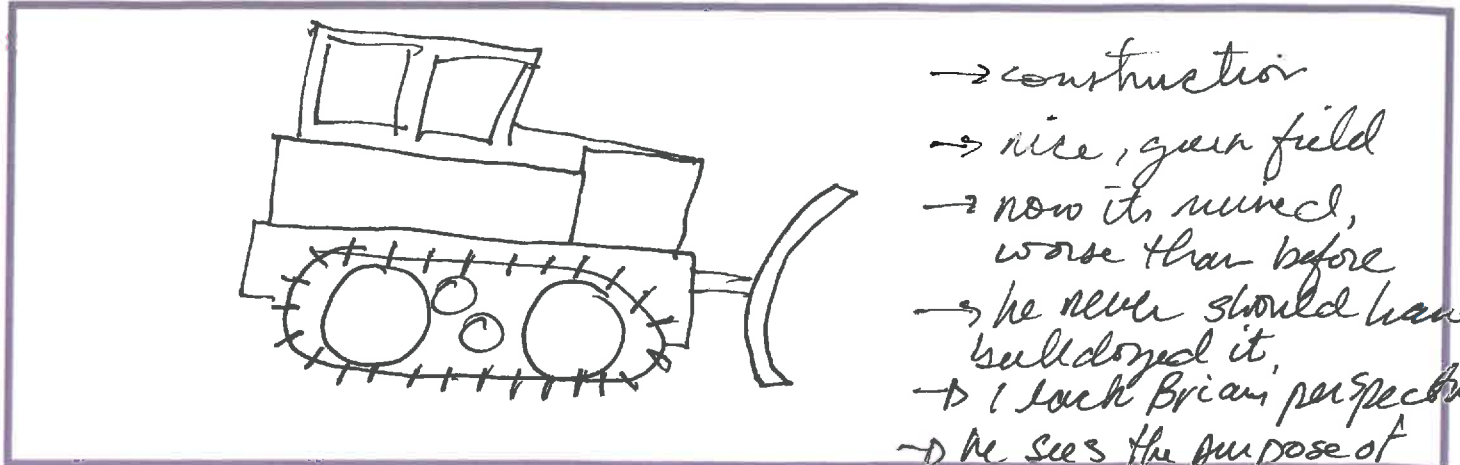


Dead Orthodoxy

Disputing God's Covenant



Malachi 3:13:4-3 ESV

[13] "Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have we spoken against you?' [14] You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? [15] And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.'"

[16] Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. [17] "They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. [18] Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

[1] "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. [2] But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. [3] And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

Context – the truth of the situation

THE TRUTH: God's people question the covenant

[13] "Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have we spoken against you?' [14] You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? [15] And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.'"

SPEAKING HARD WORDS = STRONG, ARROGANT, HARSH

"It is vain to serve God"

Vain = effort without results

↳ Not strong in faith but strong in words

Their perspective

THE FAITHFUL GO UNREWARDED

"What is the profit of our keeping his charge [obeying the covenant commands] or of walking as in mourning [being sorry for sin, repenting]"

Their perspective

THE WICKED GO UNPUNISHED

They prosper and do not fall under judgment

God's people see no tangible benefit in serving God and therefore call the covenant into question!

⇒ **ROUND UP**

Content – the truth for Malachi’s audience

THE TRUTH: God will demonstrate the benefits of his covenant

Through contrasts & distinctions

PEOPLE WHO

1) **SPEAKING AGAINST GOD VS SPEAKING WITH ONE ANOTHER**

SPEAKING AGAINST GOD – “YOUR WORDS HAVE BEEN HARD AGAINST ME, SAYS THE LORD”

The speaking of the unfaithful was against God and this caused him to contend and dispute with them

VS

SPEAKING WITH ONE ANOTHER – “THEN THOSE WHO FEARED THE LORD SPOKE WITH ONE ANOTHER. THE LORD PAID ATTENTION AND HEARD THEM”

The speaking of the faithful respected and esteemed God caused God to “take note” of them – “Yahweh’s book of remembrance contains the names and an ongoing account of the words and deeds of the God fearers.”

PEOPLE WHO ARE...

2) **TREASURED POSSESSION VS SCORNE D STUBBLE**

TREASURED POSSESSION – “THEY SHALL BE MINE, SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, IN THE DAY WHEN I MAKE UP MY TREASURED POSSESSION”

Exodus 19:3-5 ESV [3] while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: [4] You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. [5] Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;

Same word as the personal treasures of King David

Something that is cherished and protected

⇒ Filthy, chewed up, worn out stuffed animal

VS

SCORNE D STUBBLE - “ALL THE ARROGANT AND ALL EVILDOERS WILL BE STUBBLE”

3 things: stubble, straw, chaff – very flammable and not worth anything

Good for destruction only

PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE

3) BURNING OVEN VS SHINING SUN

BURNING OVEN – “FOR BEHOLD, THE DAY IS COMING, BURNING LIKE AN OVEN, WHEN ALL THE ARROGANT AND ALL EVILDOERS WILL BE STUBBLE. THE DAY THAT IS COMING SHALL SET THEM ABLAZE, SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS, SO THAT IT WILL LEAVE THEM NEITHER ROOT NOR BRANCH.”

The judgment of the arrogant and the evil doers would be like a furnace burning stubble and setting things ablaze - **SO EVERY BRANCH AND ALL ROOTS ARE GONE**

Neither Root nor Branch - Job 18:16-21 ESV

- [16] His roots dry up beneath,
and his branches wither above.
- [17] His memory perishes from the earth,
and he has no name in the street.
- [18] He is thrust from light into darkness,
and driven out of the world.
- [19] He has no posterity or progeny among his people,
and no survivor where he used to live.
- [20] They of the west are appalled at his day,
and horror seizes them of the east.
- [21] Surely such are the dwellings of the unrighteous,
such is the place of him who knows not God.”

VS

SHINING SUN – “BUT FOR YOU WHO FEAR MY NAME, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL RISE WITH HEALING IN ITS WINGS.”

"The righteousness of God for his ones will cause their "healing" in the most comprehensive sense of the word. The thousand wounds that were inflicted upon them by the evildoers will be covered by new flesh; the "disaster" and "trouble" that were caused and their sins will be removed, and they will be reconciled; their whole existence will be radically changed and will be characterized by "abundant peace" and real "life."

"On one hand his judgment will burn like a furnace, but on the other hand his righteousness [justice] will shine forth like the sun."

4) LEAPING LIKE CALVES VS TRAMPLED LIKE ASHES

LEAPING LIKE CALVES – “YOU SHALL GO OUT LEAPING LIKE CALVES FROM THE STALL.”

A Leaping cow = a happy cow

Calves released into a pasture after an extended stay in a stall

- jump
- play
- frolic

VS

TRAMPLED LIKE ASHES – “AND YOU SHALL TREAD DOWN THE WICKED, FOR THEY WILL BE ASHES UNDER THE SOLES OF YOUR FEET,”

The victor putting his foot on the neck of the loser

Herman Smith vs me – foot on my chest - humbling

The evil and arrogant unfaithful ones who have been burned like stubble are now further degraded as their very ashes are under foot

WE TOO MAY
FIND OURSELVES
QUESTIONING

Consider – the truth to act on

THE TRUTH: We need to acquire God’s perspective on the situation = the situation being our lives

[18] Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

God is making a distinction so that we can adopt his perspective on our lives.

[17] “They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.



TO THE ONE WHO SERVES GOD, HE DEMONSTRATES:

Determined Devotion – zealously loyal and affectionate

Zephaniah 3:17 ESV The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Zephaniah 3:17 NIV The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

In spite of your circumstances in life, and how you perceive them, this is God's posture towards you.

THE ONE WHO SERVES GOD WILL ULTIMATELY RECEIVE:

Joyful Justice -

[2] But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. [3] And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

The day of the Lord for the faithful is associated with healing, peace, joy, salvation, and justice.

In spite of your circumstances in life, and how you perceive them, this is God's plan for you.

DO WE TRUST GOD IN THIS?

Christ – the truth for us

THE TRUTH: We see God's dedicated devotion and joyful justice for us in Jesus Christ

Dedicated Devotion

Philippians 2:3-8 ESV [3] Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4] Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. [5] Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, [6] who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

ESVSB – “It is remarkable enough that God the Son would take on human form and thus enter into all the vicissitudes of a broken world. But Jesus went much farther, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Crucifixion was not simply a convenient way of executing prisoners. It was the ultimate indignity, a public statement by Rome that the crucified one was beyond contempt. The excruciating physical pain was magnified by the degradation and humiliation. No other form of death, no matter how prolonged or physically agonizing, could match crucifixion as an absolute destruction of the person. It was the ultimate counterpoint to the divine majesty of the preexistent Christ, and thus was the ultimate expression of Christ’s obedience to the Father.” And the ultimate expression of God’s dedicated devotion to his people.

Joyful Justice

Isaiah 35 ESV [These chapters describe God’s final judgment of the world (ch. 34) and vindication of his people (ch. 35), with their everlasting happiness.]

[3] Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

[4] Say to those who have an anxious heart,
“Be strong; fear not!

Behold, your God
will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you.”

[10] And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

GOSPEL

put your
faith in
God who demonst
his devotion to
you in the deat
+ his plans for
you in the
future

Those with dead orthodoxy live in the shadow of their unfaithfulness, disloyalty, and lack of love to God. They also live in the light of the burning oven of God’s judgment that awaits them.

Those with living faith live in the shadow of the cross where God demonstrated his determined devotion in His Son, Jesus Christ. They also live in the light of the sun of righteousness which shines forth God’s justice making joyful his people.