

MALACHI: CONFRONTATIONAL QUESTIONS

In Scripture, God is generally the One who asks the questions. The book of Malachi has it reversed. Israel asks questions to God. However, their questions are based in unbelief. Malachi uses a conversational technique. (1) God's statement of a charge; (2) the people's denial in the form of a question; (3) God's evidence to support the charge. Because Israel questions God's claim, she is betraying a trust with God. In fact, Israel has become hostile toward Him. If Israel remembered what God told them in Deuteronomy they would know that misfortunes were the result, not the cause, of disobedience (Du.28, blessings/cursings) . The nation as a whole needed to repent from her sin of unbelief. The constant theme of Malachi is that Israel is ignorant of her sin. As is the Biblical pattern, there was a righteous remnant that did fear God (MI.3:16-18).

<p>? 1 "I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob," (MI.1:2)</p>	<p>How Have You Loved Us? (1:2-5) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loved Jacob from whom they were descendants. • Everyone will see God's judgment upon Edom. • Misfortunes are the result of disobedience, not the cause. 	<p>Respond to God's Love</p>
<p>? 2 "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?" (MI.1:6)</p>	<p>How Have We Despised Your Name? (1:6) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A son should honor his father, but Israel does not. • A servant should honor his master, but Israel does not. • It is sad when we dishonor God, and are completely unaware of it. 	<p>Honor God</p>
<p>? 3 "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible." (MI.1:7)</p>	<p>How Have We Polluted the Altar? (1:7-2:16) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They offered blind and lame sacrifices to God. They would not do this to their governor. • They should repent to avoid God's wrath (1:9). • The sacrifices are so unacceptable to God that the doors of the temple should be shut (1:10). • God will curse those that bring their blemished odds and ends. 	<p>As God's Covenant People, Be Faithful</p>
<p>? 4 "Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?" (MI.2:17)</p>	<p>How Have We Wearied the Lord? (2:17-3:6) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel wearied the Lord by saying He did not care about everyone's evil behavior. • Israel hypocritically challenged God to intervene saying, "Where is the God of judgment?" 	<p>Hope in God</p>
<p>? 5 "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?" (MI.3:7)</p>	<p>How Shall We Return? (3:7) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God asks Israel to return, but they deny having gone away. • Israel disobeys God's decrees throughout her history (Ex.32:7-9). • In order to return they must be able to retrace their steps. 	<p>Obey God</p>
<p>? 6 "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." (MI.3:8)</p>	<p>How Are We Robbing God? (3:8-12) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is accusing Israel of being a thief by not bringing their tithes. • Giving is not for God's benefit, He already owns it all. It is for the benefit of the giver. 	<p>Obey God</p>
<p>? 7 "Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?" (MI.3:13)</p> <p>• 3:16—18 - Response of the believing remnant • 4:1—6 - The Great Day of the Lord</p>	<p>How Are We Spoken Against You? (3:13-15) God's Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In contrast with the blessings the Lord has extended to Israel, the people speak harsh things against Him (MI.3:10-12). 	<p>Fear God</p>