

As the book of Malachi continues, this section illuminates the fifth disputation between Israel and the Lord. Here the Lord addresses again the disobedience of Israel and their inability to follow God's commandments, specifically in the area of tithing. Hidden in His call to repentance is the Lord's appeal to His character, setting up Israel, and us, for the coming promise that will be the redemptive solution for all.

Malachi 3:15

God keeps His Promises

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

As much as we'd prefer to not admit it, we've all broken a promise at some time in our lives, on some level.

Promises, even those communicated with good intentions, when they seize to come to fruition, have the power to break fellowship and cause severe dissonance.

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

HOW does saying you will do something versus marking something with a promise differ?

WHY do we often feel compelled to "mark" certain decisions with a promise?

HOW does promising something put weightiness to a commitment? **SHOULD** it?

WHAT are the promises God has given you?

ARE there specific promises from the Lord you hold close and long to see come to fruition more than others?

Malachi 3:6-15

God Keeps His Promises

Malachi 3:6-15

OBSERVATION

What claim does vs. 6 make about God's character?

According to vs. 7, what is the accusation brought against Israel, and what is the solution that follows?

In vs. 7 Israel responds with a questions to God's solution.

What is their question, and how does the Lord reply?

In vs. 8, what is the specific sin Israel is guilty of committing?

According to vs. 10, what solution does the Lord give to make the sin right?

What is God's promise to their right response in vs. 10-11?

In vs. 13-15, how have the Israelites spoken against the Lord?

INTERPRETATION

How does the fact that the Lord does not change prevent the children of Jacob from being consumed?

What are the "days of your fathers" mentioned in vs. 7, and how has Israel not kept the Lord's statutes from this time?

How were the Israelites *robbing* God (vs. 8)? What does this look like today?

Where was the tithe supposed to go, and what was God's promise to His people if they obeyed him? See Leviticus 26:3-6, Deuteronomy 28:12 for insight.

What is the solution to this sin according to vs. 7 and 10? How does this relate to how we ought to respond to sin? Consider 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.

How is the people's lack of generosity towards God merely a symptom of their unbelief in God and His promises? How do you see this playing out in your life?

How does knowing God's promises still stand bring you encouragement in the midst of the sin reality in which we live?

APPLICATION

Are there specific promises of God on your mind you're struggling to believe? Are there ways you need to *return* to God and make a situation right? What would it look like to begin either process today?