

"God's Answer to Evil" Malachi 2:17-3:5

Fourth Dispute

God's complaint 2:17a) . . . problem

Is it surprising God is getting "worn out" from complaining? Isa. 1:14, 43:24
More counter-complaint denials (" . . .but / yet you say. . ." as in 2:2, 6, 14).

People's complaint (2:17b) . . . problem

The vexing problem of evil (why wickedness is so prevalent if God is all-good and all-powerful) is not new. Atheism sees this problem as insurmountable. See the following questioning souls in the Bible.

Job. 21:7-11

Ecc. 8:14

Jer. 12:1-4

Hab. 1:1-4

Ps. 73:3-16

Rev. 6:10

Mtt. 27:46

Why are the above people not reprimanded as were the folks in Malachi are?
In effect, Malachi's audience is told, *Oh, quit you're whining!* Do they seem to have a different attitude? See 3:14,15. Are only some allowed to question?

God's answer (3:1-5) . . . promise

Note whether the attitude for is proper or not, the ultimate answer is the same. What is not offered as a response to this question?

What is God's answer. . . which you might not like—one which the atheist hates but is better than his? See Job. 24: 24, Ps. 73:16-20, 2 Pt. 3:4-9, Rev. 6:11.

Messiah (*Lord / messenger of cov*) is "coming" (3x). The Messiah's coming is described as sought for, sudden, and full of refining judgment. The sloppy offerings / Levites will be fixed, which were a problem (recall 1:6-2:9) and also the evil doers (3:5). Note "My messenger" of 3:1 (precedes Messiah) is John the Baptist (Is. 40:3, Jn. 1:23), but the coming Messiah is described as coming in fierce judgment, which is more indicative of Christ's second coming.