

Finishing Well

Lesson #25

Warfare in the OT after the Flood - Malachi

June 28, 2023

Recall: Lucifer rebelled against God before the fall. One-third of angels rebelled with him.

The serpent, Satan, entered the Garden and tempted Eve.

Adam & Eve rebelled and disobeyed God. Spiritual death; Sin entered the world.

Gen. 3:14-15 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The Protoevangelium—the first gospel: It introduces elements previously unknown in the Garden of Eden, elements that are the basis of Christianity:

The curse on mankind because of Adam's sin

Satan will bruise the heel of the seed of the woman.

God's provision for a Savior from sin who would take the curse upon Himself.

➤ The Redeemer, a descendant of Eve, would crush the head of the serpent.

The Seed of the Woman will bring humanity back to its intended position in Eden with full access to the tree of life and direct fellowship with God.

Satan's early attempts to thwart God's plan & purpose: Cut off Jesus' lineage:

Gen. 4:8 Cain killed Abel.

Gen. 4:25 Seth is born; appointed by God; Redeemer will come through his line.

Gen. 6 Corruption of mankind; Nephilim; God sends the flood.

Job 1:9-11 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

¹⁰ Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

¹¹ But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

God granted Satan the authority to afflict Job, but always within strict limits.

Job's adversities came first from Satan, but ultimately from God, whose sovereign control over the events of His servant's life never wavered.

The suffering of Job, which appeared to be of very natural causes, was of satanic origins.

When did Job live? We know he came after Adam.

➤ Job 1:5; 42:7-8 Offered sacrifices himself for his family instead of relying on a priest

➤ Job 1:3 Wealth was measured in livestock, not gold.

Most scholars think Job lived between the flood and the time of Moses; probably around the time of Abraham.

- Seems clear he lived prior to the giving of the law.
- Job makes no mention of a tabernacle, temple, priests or the law given to Israel.

Conclusion: He probably lived around 2200 BC > contemporary of Abraham, Lot & Isaac.

- Job: 42:15 Job gave his daughters an inheritance among their brothers.

Under Mosaic Law, a father passed his inheritance to sons only, unless he had no sons.

Num. 27:1-11; 36:1-13

Consider: Job, being a righteous man, would have followed that law in obedience to God.

Nation of Israel: 4000 years ago, God gave Abram several promises which stated:
the descendants of Abraham would exist forever.

Gen. 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curses thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 15:13-14, 16 "Then God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years. ¹⁴ But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Acts 14:17 God was, in fact, longsuffering and endured the idolatry and sins of the nations for centuries, giving them "rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying [their] hearts with food and gladness" Until it was right to invade, God's people must wait and endure, even if it cost them centuries of hardship.

Gen. 16:1-4 Abraham had Ishmael with Hagar. a pseudo son of promise in Ishmael

Gen. 16:5-16 Ishmael ridiculed Isaac; attempted to usurp Isaac's position.

Gen. 27 Esau attempted to usurp Jacob's blessing from Isaac.

Exodus 1 Satan through Pharaoh tried to integrate Israel into Egypt by killing all the male children. This would have forced Israel to become Egypt.

- Pharaoh was the agent of the serpent.
- Pharaoh's purpose was political, but Satan's purpose was theological.

Exodus 1:16-17 and he said, "When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth and see them upon the birthstool, if it is a son, then you shall put him to death; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live." ¹⁷But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live.

Ex. 2 Moses hidden by his mother in a reed boat.
Daughter of Pharaoh finds and raises Moses.

E. Lutzer: See that little cradle of reeds rocking on the bosom of the Nile. The Egyptian princess sees the helpless babe. A tear glistens on her cheek. What a trifle! Yet the destiny of the people of God and the promised seed of the woman hangs upon that falling tear.

Exodus 10 Pharaoh attempted to destroy Israel backed up against the Red Sea.

Ex. 14:13 Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.

Ex. 19 At Mt. Sinai, God reveals His purpose for the nation of Israel.

Israel was to be a holy nation among fallen humanity, God's special treasure, kingdom of priests.

Satan specifically targeted the Nation of Israel:

Accounts of wars and battles in the pages of the Old Testament

Israel struggled with sin and idolatry.

Satan knew the promised Messiah was destined to end his evil dominion. Crush his head.

The promised Messiah would save the very people Satan was trying to destroy.

For thousands of years Satan has demonstrated an intense and insatiable drive to eliminate the Jewish people. The entire Bible can be mapped as a drama in which Satan's stratagems are repeatedly foiled.

Consider: If the nation that came from Abraham's descendants, Israel, were ever annihilated as a nation, the Word of God would be untrue.

Ex. 32:24 Israel worships the Golden Calf at Mt. Sinai

Num. 13-14 Israel stays in the wilderness rather than go into Canaan.

Num. 22-23 Balak, King of Moab schemes to have Balaam, a person thought to have "divine insight" Invoke God to curse Israel. When Balaam tried to curse Israel, only blessings came out of his mouth.

Joshua 11 Canaanites amassed all their armies to destroy the invading Israelites.

Judges 16 Surrounding nations tried to destroy Israel during the time of the Judges.

It seems two groups of people can be identified.

1. The 1st group thinks and behaves like the serpent. They rebel against the Word of God.

➤ Their attitude towards God's people is one of hostility.

➤ They try to eliminate, persecute, or mistreat people in the 2nd group.

2. The 2nd group is like the "Seed of the Woman."

➤ They are not perfect specimens of humanity. They, too, sin. Yet, they remain as the group through which God would one day bring the ultimate "seed of the woman."

Hostility, envy, jealousy, anger, silent war, backbiting, murder, are all symptomatic of a pattern you can trace through the entire Bible. The "seed of the serpent" will persecute the "seed of the woman," and the "seed of the woman" will not retaliate but will ultimately strike the head.

The people who persecute the seed of the woman are depicted in numerous ways in the Bible.

- One pattern involving *the head* clearly reflects a connection to God's Gospel promise of Genesis 3:15: "He will strike your head."
- Notice how "scales" are involved.

Side Note: I & II Samuel are filled with head wounds. Even those who escape beheadings get their hair or beard caught on their way to their demise.

I Samuel 5:3-4 Now the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon, and placed it beside Dagon. ³ When the Ashdodites got up early the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set him back in his place. ⁴ But when they got up early the next morning, behold, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. And the head of Dagon and both palms of his hands were cut off on the threshold; only the torso of Dagon was left.

➤ He will strike your head. Dagon & the Philistines > portrayed as the seed of the serpent. Dagon and the Philistines [perennial enemies & persecutors of Israel] are portrayed as the seed of the serpent. [Scales; head crushed]

Isa. 42:8 I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another,
Nor My praise to idols.

Another like the seed of the serpent is dressed in scales, trespasses into the Promised Land and defies Israel's God and his people. I Samuel 17

- Scale Armor = "clothed in a shirt of scales;" a corselet made of metal scales sewn on cloth so as to overlap one another. It was flexible and protected the back and sides. Goliath faces one as a seed of the woman, David the shepherd boy, who had earlier been anointed as the future king of Israel.
- As a result of a stone slung to his forehead, Goliath fell on his face down to the ground and David proceeded to cut off his head.
- This is an echo to the fate of Dagon and the eventual prophesied fate of the seed of the serpent.

A third like the seed of the serpent in I Samuel 31 is Saul, the first King of Israel. He persecutes David, as the seed of the woman, attempting to kill him on a number of occasions. No David = no Messiah, the son of David Note: David does not retaliate. Saul suffers the same fate as Dagon and Goliath. He also falls forward onto his sword and onto his face [I Samuel 31:4] The Philistines come and cut off the head of his dead body. [31:8-10] Interesting Side Note: Saul of Tarsus started out persecuting Christians with murderous intentions [Acts 9:1]. But due to his miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus, [Acts 9], he was radically transformed.

- "Scales" fell from his blind eyes after his conversion.
- He was unaffected by the serpent's bite in Acts 28 while on the island of Malta.

Deadly Census: II Samuel 24:10-12,14-15 And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly." The word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

¹² Go and tell David, Thus says the LORD:

I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.

¹⁴ Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into human hands."

¹⁵ So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time.

From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died.

I Chronicles 21:1 Satan's opposition to God and to His people.

"Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel."

Unless we had been given the revelation of this verse, no one would ever have attributed David's actions here to anything other than bad judgment. But behind his foolish and sinful decision we find Satan, ever seeking to oppose God through His people. God was angry at David because in those times, a man only had the right to count or number what belonged to him.

- Israel did not belong to David; Israel belonged to God.

Angels & Demons: Seeing The Spirit Realm For What It Truly Is

II Kings 6: The king of Syria was waging war against Israel. God informed Elisha the prophet of all the Syrian king's battle plans in advance. Elisha conveyed them to the king of Israel, so that all of Syria's attacks were nullified. When the king of Syria learned that Elisha was the source of his troubles, he sent his army to seize him.

In the morning, the Syrian troops surrounded the city of Dothan, where Elisha was staying.

II Kings 6:14-15 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night and compassed the city about.¹⁵ And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

He knew that earthly armies were no threat when the host of heaven was on his side.

II Kings 6:16 "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

He prayed that the eyes of his servant might be opened, to SEE the "invisible hosts of God's army" which was on duty to protect the people of God.

- His eyes were opened to see into the spiritual realm.

Things Our Eyes Need To See

God on His Throne	Hab. 2:20; Ps. 119:89, 160
Jesus Reigning as King with all authority	Rev. 19:11-16
Jesus Serving as High Priest	Heb. 7:24-25; 9:24
Jesus holding all things together	Heb. 1:3
Angels ministering to God's people	Heb. 1:14

II Chron.22 Athaliah, daughter of King Ahab & Queen Jezebel of Israel, was queen of Judah from 841-835 BC. She was the only female monarch to sit on David's throne. Married to Jehoram.

Jehoram: A wicked King of Judah, the eldest son of Judah's King Jehoshophat

Ahaziah: Son of Athaliah & Jehoram; Athaliah counseled him in his devilish schemes; Ahaziah served as king less than 1 year, for he was assassinated.

When Athaliah received word that her son, Jehoram, was dead, she seized the opportunity to usurp the throne by murdering Ahaziah's sons - her own grandsons - thus eradicating the entire royal family so she could take the throne.

- Satan certainly did his utmost to keep the promised Messiah from being born in David's family in Bethlehem!
- Queen Athaliah used her influence to further establish Baal worship in Judah, installing priests and building altars for her idol in the very temple of the Lord [II Kings 11:18; II Chron. 24:7]. In this way Athaliah followed the footsteps of her mother, Jezebel.
- As the founder of Baal worship in Judah, she had no desire to see the Davidic dynasty succeed. By killing the royal seed, Athaliah was rebelling against the Lord Jehovah who had promised David that he would have a descendant sitting on his throne in Jerusalem.

II Sam. 7:12-16 When your days are finished and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come from you, and I will establish his kingdom.

¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and with strokes of sons of mankind, ¹⁵ but My favor shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."''

- But God was still on the throne and had His servants prepared to act.

II Kings 11:1-2 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and eliminated all the royal children. ² But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and abducted him from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and put him and his nurse in the bedroom.

So they hid him from Athaliah, and he was not put to death.

Now a little tender babe is the only thing on which hangs the promise of Almighty God in human redemption. All the promises of God's covenant of salvation hangs upon that slender thread.

- In a world controlled by deceit and selfish ambition, there are still people like Jehoiada and Jehosheba who have faith in God's Word and courageously do His will.
- Unbeknownst to Athaliah, a single grandchild escaped the massacre.
- Joash was later smuggled out of the castle and taken to the temple, where he remained hidden for six years while Queen Athaliah reigned over the land [II Kings 11:3].

- That such a godly woman like Jehosheba should come out of that family is a miracle of the grace of God.
- Jehoiada and Jehosheba and the boy's nurse had the patience to wait for God's time, for faith and patience go together [Heb. 6:12].

In His gracious providence, the Lord watched over the child as well as the three people who knew who he was and where he was, for if Queen Athaliah had known what they were doing, she would have killed them along with the prince.

- After Athaliah had reigned 6 years, the high priest Jehoiada set guards around the temple and publicly crowned the young Joash as the rightful king.
- God kept His covenant promise & put one of David's descendants on the throne of Judah.
- Athaliah heard the commotion, realized what was happening, and ran out of the palace shouting, "Treason! Treason!"
- Jehoiada commanded the troops to capture Athaliah and execute her.
- Jehoiada ordered the five military captains who assembled their 500 soldiers to escort her out of the temple area and told the guards to slay anybody who followed her.
- Once they were back on the palace grounds, near the Horse Gate, they killed her with the sword. They killed the queen "where the horses enter the palace grounds."
- Seven-year-old King Joash, under the direction of the faithful high priest, tore down the temple of Baal, smashed the altars and images of Baal, and killed the priest of Baal.
- All the people of the land rejoiced, & the city was calm, because Athaliah had been slain.

Because of Athaliah and her compromising husband Jehoram and their son Ahaziah, the kingdom of Judah had been infected with idolatry for at least fifteen years.

- Now the infection was exposed and removed.

The restoration of the Davidic dynasty: [11:19-21; 23:20-21] Satan's attempt to end the Davidic line had failed, and the messianic promise was still in force.

The people obeyed God's Word. Righteousness and peace reigned in the land.

Athaliah can be compared to King Herod in the New Testament who also tried to kill Jesus by ordering all the baby boys in Israel to be slain. But, Mary and Joseph were warned by God of Herod's wicked plot and journeyed to Egypt and hid Jesus from Herod until it was safe to return to Nazareth. Mary and Joseph can be compared to Jehosheba and Jehoiada. Both events display parents hiding a blessed baby from death ordered by either Athaliah or Herod.

II Kings 17 Assyrian army destroyed Israel and much of Judah.

II Chron. 38 Babylonian army destroyed the Temple & Jerusalem. [Daniel taken to Babylon]

Dramatic Examples of Spiritual Warfare

Daniel 3: Daniel's three companions are thrown into the fiery furnace because they will not bow down before the golden image which king Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were cast into the furnace, the king looked in and was shocked to see not three, but four men inside. They were not writhing in pain or being consumed by the flames; they were walking around inside that furnace. If not our Lord Himself, this fourth person was surely an angelic being, sent there to save the lives of these faithful men.

Daniel 10 provides one of the most dramatic examples of spiritual warfare.

Daniel was a man of God living in a pagan land. One day he received revelation from God about the future. [Daniel 10:1]. He began to fast and pray [Daniel 10:2-3)]. Yet, nothing happened.

Days turned into weeks. Twenty long days passed and still nothing. But then came DAY 21.

Dan. 10:5-6 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶ His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Daniel says only he saw the vision; the men with him did not. It was the angel Gabriel ["God is my warrior"]. He had the message Daniel had been waiting for. What had taken him so long?

Dan. 10:10-14; 20-21 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.

And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*"

²⁰ Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.

²¹ But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

God had responded to Daniel's prayer *the very moment Daniel offered it. But there was war in the heavens that delayed it until DAY 21.* Daniel had no idea of the major spiritual warfare that was being battled. Gabriel had been delayed by the mighty demonic principality over the kingdom of Persia. *But then Michael, one of the chief angel-princes, intervened to help me.* Angels are very much involved in the affairs of men and of nations. The godly angel came in response to Daniel's prayers and the ungodly celestial beings opposed this angel.

Protection by the Michael the Archangel

Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of thy people. [Daniel's people > Israel]

Michael will also fight against the Antichrist in the future to protect Israel from the Gentile nations bent on its annihilation.

Rev. 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Ezra 4 Refugees from Babylon were restoring the Temple. [after 70 yrs. in captivity]

Esther 3 Haman, the Persian empire's powerful advisor, attempted to destroy all the Jews. Queen Esther, a Jew, intercedes for her people.

A decree went out to destroy all the Jews.

Esther 3:12-14 Then were the king's scribes called in the first month, on the thirteenth day thereof; and there was written according to all that Haman commanded unto the king's satraps, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the princes of every people, to every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and it was sealed with the king's ring. And letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

A copy of the writing, that the decree should be given out in every province, was published unto all the peoples, that they should be ready against that day.

God providentially intervened and saved the nation from annihilation.

Haman is hung from the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.

If Satan had been able to destroy the nation Israel, the promises of God would not be true.

Note: Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls & gates [~94 years since Zerubbabel]

Neh. 4:1-3, 7-8 Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry, and he mocked the Jews. ² And he spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy people of Samaria and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore *the temple* for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish *it* in a day? Can they revive the stones from the heaps of rubble, even the burned ones?" ³ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was near him, and he said, "Even what they are building—if a fox were to jump *on it*, it would break their stone wall down!"

⁷Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, and that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. ⁸ So all of them conspired together to come to fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it.

While Nehemiah was back at his post in Shushan [Neh. 13:6-7], things began to fall apart in Jerusalem. When he returned, he had to take some drastic steps to reform the nation.

The conditions described in Nehemiah are the very things Malachi deals with in his book:

- Mal. 3:11 poor crops and a faltering economy
- Mal. 2:11 intermarriage with the heathen
- Mal. 1:6 ff defilement of the priesthood
- Mal. 3:5 oppression of the poor
- Mal. 3:8-10 lack of support for the temple
- Mal. 3:13 ff a general disdain of religion

It was a low time spiritually for Judah, and they needed to hear the Word of God. Malachi was the last prophet Judah heard until John the Baptist came and the prophecy of 3:1 was fulfilled. Mal 3:1 Behold, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear a way before Me. And the Lord, whom you are seeking, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of armies.

Mal. 4:1-3 Once again, Malachi returns to the theme of the coming day of the Lord, when God will punish all evildoers. Sinners will be burned up the way fire eats up the stubble; they will become like ashes under the feet of the saints! But the true believers will see the dawning of a new day as the "Sun of righteousness" rises [Luke 1:78-79]. Then Jesus will reign as King of Kings and His people will frolic like calves let out of their stalls!

The 400 years of silence refers to the time between the Old Testament and New Testament, during which, so far as we know, God did not speak—no Scripture was written.

The 400 years of silence began with the warning that closed the Old Testament:

Mal. 4:5-6 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

The 400 years ended with the coming of John the Baptist, the Messiah's forerunner.

Will the spiritual warfare against God's people let up during the Silent 400 Years?