
Malachi 1:1-14

Topic: Malachi is the last prophet of the Old Testament. God sent Malachi to give a message to Israel and to tell the Israeli people how much He loves them. This is the last message from God to the Israeli people. Malachi has a lot of application to our lives today. We'll see that in our lesson today. The word "Malachi" means "messenger of the Lord". Malachi was a real person who wrote this book. It was written around 430 B.C., approx 100 years after Zechariah. Jerusalem has been rebuilt by now, and Nehemiah has been called back to battle. There is a Persian rule in Jerusalem. This prophet will issue a warning to the people of Israel.

Vs1: the word "burden" means fraught with warning and judgement; the burden of the word through Malachi to Israel from God.

Vs2: The word "Loved" should be present tense here. So God is telling the people that He loves them, and the people of Israel are responding back sarcastically – "where have you loved us?"

Vs3: "and I hated Esau"...this word "hated" in the Hebrew can mean minor displeasure up to intense hatred. Translated in English, "hated" is a venomous meaning. The context this word is used in will tell us the intensity of the hatred. The Lord says He picked Jacob over Esau, so the hatred is not an intense English meaning. God put Esau 2nd even though he was a firstborn, and God destroyed Esau's land ("dragon" here means "wild beasts").

Vs4: Esau's descendents settled into his land, and tried to rebuild, but God kept sending different destruction methods to the land – war mostly. That land is desolate to this very day. Everybody looks at that area and knows God made His judgement.

Vs5: God says that place will always stand as a place to remember what God has done in His wrath.

Vs6: God says "where is My honor and fear that is deserved by father and leader?" We should love and fear Him with reverence. Even priests despise His name.

Vs7: "bread" means "sacrifice". They offer God items that are no good, which are against all the rules, just contemptuous and disrespectful. Today, do we offer ourselves as a sacrifice; do we honor and fear Him?

Vs8: the lame and sick offerings are not acceptable offerings to God. The gift or sacrifice shows what you think of the person getting the gift. Do we offer valuable things to the Lord or just the leftovers?

Vs9: these priests say, if we just talk to God nice, stroke His face and say we love you, will you feel better? God says no. This does not work.

Vs10: the Lord won't have anything to do with these priests. God would rather have nothing from them than listen to their hypocritical services and sacrifices. Their bogus sacrifices are worthless. It would be better to shut the doors and do nothing than continue with this ridiculous farce.

Vs11: Christians will worship God properly.

Vs12: the priests took so much contempt that they didn't care what they were doing.

Vs13: if you can't come with sincerity in your heart, don't waste your time with the Lord. Here, the word "torn" means "road kill". The people were finding road kill on their way to service and bringing

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it in for an offering to God! An offering to God should be the best you have, with no spot, no defect, and no disease. That's a sacrifice. Bringing in road kill and just moving the trash to the church!

Vs14: beware of fooling around with your sacrifices to the Lord. You will be cursed if you have a proper sacrifice among you and you give Him crap. Let's make the Lord first place, give Him the best you got. Give Him your best behavior, your best time, your best attitude.