

Malachi 1-4

What Went Wrong with Judah?

(The Minor Prophets)

The book of Malachi – written around 420 BC

A) Remember 536 BC the Jews had come back from captivity in Babylon

B) And they returned with such zeal to rebuild the temple and the walls of Jerusalem

C) But after realizing what a task it really was they got sidetracked and started working on their own houses. – **neglected God's house**

1) But after 16 years of that 520 BC God raised up Haggai older prophet and Zechariah, a younger one,
2) both used by God to encourage the people to get back to work

D) We will be looking at the Major Point of Zechariah this Sunday

1) God used these two guys to get the people back on track

However after 100 years of this, they do what many believers seem to do – especially when things are going well – **THEY CRUISE – COMPROMISE**

A) So 100 years later God raised up Malachi to address 7 separate issues in their lives

B) And that will serve as the outline of our book

- Denying God's Love – Malachi 1:1-5
- Defiling God's Name – Malachi 1:6-14
- Devaluing God's Word – Malachi 2:1-9
- Deserting Their Wives – Malachi 2:10-16
- Distorting God's Word – Malachi 2:17-3:6
- Depriving God's House – Malachi 3:7-12
- Degrading God's Work – Malachi 3:13-4:6

The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.

² "I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?'"

GOD Begins to spell out how special they were to Him!

Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved;

³ But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness."

⁴ Even though Edom has said, "We have been impoverished,
But we will return and build the desolate places,"

Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness,

And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever.

⁵ Your eyes shall see, And you shall say, 'The LORD is magnified beyond the border of Israel.'

#1 – They were Denying God's Love – Malachi 1:1-5

A) The first problem Malachi is addressing is this attitude that the people of God were having at this time and that was – **"You just don't love us"**

B) There is something sinful in all of us that accuses God when Things are not going RIGHT in our lives –

PITY PARTY: God you don't love me!

C) NOW I love how God's responds to this question

1) He tells them to look at their history- Two Brothers Jacob and Esau

D) God said: Jacob- I have loved – Esau....hated.

Now this verse creates quite a stir among believers How could God say that ? Playing Favorites?

A) But you have to understand the concept – what God is saying is His love for Jacob was so strong **that what He felt toward Esau seemed like hate in comparison**

B) Jesus makes this clear in Luke 14:26 Jesus says no one who doesn't hate mother or father can be His disciple.

C) So is Jesus telling us to hate our Moms – no way – 1) but that our love for Him makes our love for anyone or anything else pale in comparison

The other problem people have is - does this mean, that God chooses some people to go to heaven and some to hell????

A) Is that what that verse says???

B) It says He choose to love Jacob and pour His plan out through him

1) In other words it is saying, God choose to go with Jacob, to fulfill His plan through Jacob's life-

SAVE THE WORLD

Now wouldn't you have to admit that God made a pretty good choice

A) Esau spent the rest of his life not caring about the things of God, or God's plan

B) That wasn't God's fault, God just knew that is what would happen/ so He choose to go with Jacob

➤ You know if you were a betting man and you went to **the race track Del Mar**, and you had inside information that Old Faithful had a sprained leg and wasn't going to finish the race, **would you bet on old faithful? No!**

C) And God being smart, knows the end from the beginning,

1) He sees the choices Jacob would make, sees the choices Esau would make and says, I will go with Jacob

D) The Apostle Peter touches on this in 1 Peter 1:2 **He calls us the elect according to the foreknowledge of God.**

1) Doesn't mean that God chose us – Because – he knew we would choose Him

E) But He chose us – Knowing we would choose him

1) Not a cause and effect – but a Fact – God knew

Too be honest – I have no problem with God NOT CHOOSING ESAU

A) What amazes me is that God choose Jacob – Jacob was no saint. – He was a deceiver – liar – con artist

B) And it amazes me that God chose Me – Chose you!

1) It is amazing that the one who loves you the most, knows you the most- And loves you anyway

C) The point of this is – God wants them to see – Look how I loved you – what has become of you.

D) Look what became of Edom the descendants of Esau- turned from God – wiped out

1) There are no more Edomites

Application for us: You know when we start to think “woe is me, I don't know if the Lord really loves me

A) I think that word of the Lord would be the same for us

B) Get your eyes off ourselves and look around

1) Look what I have done for you – Look at the cross – you are forgiven – you are going to heaven

C) Look at the past Blessings: - Look at what God has done – What He is doing –

1) Instead of what He is not!

D) So the first issue Malachi addresses is their denying of God's love, and then

➤ #2 – They were Despising God's Name – **Malachi 1:6-14**

A son honors *his* father, And a servant *his* master.

If then I am the Father, Where *is* My honor?

And if I *am* a Master, Where *is* My reverence?

Says the LORD of hosts

To you priests who despise My name.

Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'

Ok – I will tell you.

7 “You offer defiled food on My altar, But say, ‘In what way have we defiled You?’ By saying, ‘The table of the LORD is contemptible.’

8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, *Is it* not evil?

And when you offer the lame and sick, *Is it* not evil?

The Jews were suppose to bring the first fruits, the first of the cows and the grain – the best

A) But They were giving God the left overs

B) You are offering to God that which is sick and dying and God is saying that is an offensive to me

C) I want the best - not the lame and one eyed cow with two heads –

1) And the Lord says – “I see this” – and it is an offensive to me

This attitude carries over sometimes in our day-donating Old Couch – Old Shoes

A) God responds – See how your Governor likes that.

Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you?
Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts.

B) See if he wants your leftovers

C) Your wife- Good will – or that box from the attic – anniversary

1) My Mom has been able to recycle birthday cards

⁹ "But now entreat God's favor, That He may be gracious to us.
While this is being *done* by your hands, Will He accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts

Are you thinking that God in His grace is going to just overlook this – "at least they are bringing something! THINK AGAIN!

¹⁰ "Who *is there* even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire *on* My altar in vain?
I have no pleasure in you," Says the LORD of hosts,
"Nor will I accept an offering from your hands.

¹¹ For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down,
My name ***shall be great among the Gentiles***;
In every place incense *shall be* offered to My name,

And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the LORD of hosts.

¹² "But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; And its fruit, its food, *is* contemptible.'

¹³ You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness! 'And you sneer at it,"
Says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" Says the LORD.

¹⁴ "But cursed *be* the deceiver Who has in his flock a male,
And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished—
For I *am* a great King," Says the LORD of hosts,
"And My name *is to be* feared among the nations.

**MY GREATNESS DESERVES YOUR VERY BEST! – It is an Acknowledgement of His greatness!
So They were denying God's love**

A) They were despising God's name by bringing God the sick and the lame

#3 – They were Devaluing God's Word – Malachi 2:1-9

"And now, O priests, this commandment is for you.
² If you will not hear, And if you will not take *it* to heart,
To give glory to My name," Says the LORD of hosts,
"I will send a curse upon you, And I will curse your blessings.
Yes, I have cursed them already, Because you do not take *it* to heart.

The Next warning is for the Priest

A) God is always harder on leadership

B) James 3 – let not many of youstricter judgment

³ "Behold, I will rebuke your descendants
And spread **refuse on your faces**,
The refuse of your solemn feasts;
And *one* will take you away with it.

C) Refuse on the face – idea of being Shamed – 1) Seen this happen. – People in ministry get off track – brings shame to them and the Lord.

**D) Denise and I talk a lot about -finishing well
1) Stay on point – don't compromise**

E) Fear of God – Fear of shame – stumble- Serious

⁴ Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, That My covenant with Levi may continue,"
Says the LORD of hosts.

Levi had Humble ministry beginnings

⁵ "My covenant was with him, *one* of life and peace,
And I gave them to him *that he might fear Me*;
So he feared Me And was reverent before My name.

⁶ The law of truth was in his mouth,
And injustice was not found on his lips.
He walked with Me in peace and equity,
And turned many away from iniquity.

Where did Levi go wrong?

- 7 “For the lips of a priest **should keep knowledge**,
And *people* should seek the law from his mouth;
For he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.
- 8 **But you have departed from the way**;
You have caused many to stumble at the law.
You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
- 9 “Therefore I also have made you contemptible
and base
Before all the people, Because you have not kept
My ways
But have shown partiality in the law.”

Where did they go wrong?

A) They got away from the word – teaching it and living it!

B) God had called them V.7 to have the law always on their lips, so the people could come and learn and inquire

1) And what happened we know historically is instead of focusing on being bible students,

The priests had focused on all types of religiosity, all types of tradition - rules and regulations

A) They added to God’s word – God’s word is not enough – added all these rules and Regulations

B) Malachi indicts them for Devaluing the word of God

C) Anytime we ignore God’s word – add to God’s word – we are doing the same!

D) Think: This is God’s word – Deserves our honor allegiance and respect.

So They were denying God’s love

- They were despising God’s name by bringing God the sick and the lame
- They were devaluing God’s word

#4 They were Deserting their wives – Malachi 2:10-16

- 10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?
Why do we **deal treacherously** with one another
By profaning the covenant of the fathers?
- 11 Judah has dealt treacherously, And an

abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, For Judah has profaned The LORD’s holy *institution* which He loves:

He has married the daughter of a foreign god.
12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob
The man who does this, being awake and aware,
Yet who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!

13 And this is the second thing you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears, With weeping and crying; So He does not regard the offering anymore,

Nor receive *it* with goodwill from your hands.

14 Yet you say, “For what reason?” Because the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth,
With whom you have dealt treacherously;
Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant.

15 But did He not make *them* one, Having a remnant of the Spirit?

And why one? He seeks godly offspring.

“Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

16 “For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce,

For it covers one’s garment with violence,”

Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit,

That you do not deal treacherously.”

The next thing God rebukes them for is deserting their wives

A) Another thing that comes along with compromise is we start to forget the seriousness of the covenants we make with the Lord and others

B) And the Jews were doing this with the covenant they had made with the wives of their youth

C) They would see a younger foreigner and decide it was time to trade in for a newer model

➤ You know it was Agatha Christy who said to women, you should really try to marry an **archeologist girls** – and her reason – the older you get the more interesting you become to him

One of the things that God implies here – for the men to consider –

A) That woman before – she is your wife – God’s daughter – that man God’s son!

B) Dating that will keep you pure:

1) Married – that will keep you pursuing – Thrive vs Survive.

C) You are married to someone that is precious to God! Treat them right!

1) 4 times God uses the phrase – dealing treacherously

D) Dangerous – Fraud – deceitful and cannot be trusted.

And in verse 11 God reminds them that marriage is an institution that God loves

A) Jesus did His first miracle at a wedding, saying, I am into this, I am into marriage

B) V.14 Marriage is a Covenant – Binding – we need to take it seriously

1) You – Your spouse- God!

C) Ephesians 5:21 **Submitting to one another in the fear of the Lord**

1) Two people submitted to God / Submitted to His word

D) Parable of the builders: Sand Vs Rock

One of the biggest problems in the Church today is we think the primary purpose of marriage is to make me happy!

A) People get married thinking – This is about my happiness – person completes me – soulmate

B) Then when that person stops making them happy or not as happy – maybe I was wrong!

C) Your personal happiness is but a small part of the plan of God for marriage

1) Marriage is an instrument – Romans 8:29

D) **Marriage is a Mirror** – Reflect Jesus and Church

1) Marriage is about a Mission. Love and take care what is in your hands

When we break the Covenant !

A) It destroys the instrument – it ruins the picture

B) God hates Divorce (not people who get divorced)

1) V.15 – God says I made you one! Nails in two boards – leaves HOLES

C) Often the kids are the ones who get wrecked!

1) It takes away the opportunity to fulfill the mission

D) Divorce is not the unpardonable sin – but like any sin there are consequences

1) God can forgive and restore – new start – people in their day like today – Way too casual - **Stop it!**

This group was carnal

- They were denying God's love
- They were despising God's name by bringing God the sick and the lame
- They were devaluing God's word
- They were deserting their wives

#5 They were Distorting God's Word – Malachi 2:17-3:6

¹⁷ You have wearied the LORD with your words; “Yet you say, “In what way have we wearied Him?”

Well let me tell you:

In that you say, “Everyone who does evil- Is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them,” Or, “Where is the God of justice?”

Basically they were saying God doesn't care how we act – It is all good!–

A) Advocating those who are living in sin are fine –

B) He is a God of Love – not justice!

C) So they were distorting God's word – by suggesting that God condones sin

We are seeing this distortion today!

A) Problem in the Church today is we over react in the extreme to things

B) Take for instance the subject of Homosexuality

C) I will be the first to admit that some of the church – has done a horrible job of displaying God's heart on this!

1) God hates the Homosexual – lesbian

C) Listen God does hate sin – just saw – Hates Divorce – but he loves the sinner!

D) But some of the evangelical community has made God come across like he is angry and mad at people – hates them and just wants to fry them

1) Never God's heart – Even in the tribulation

E) When God is finally pouring out his wrath on a Christ rejecting world – he goes to great lengths to save – 2 Witnesses – 144,000 – Angels

But here is the other side of the problem: Some people in the evangelical community have reacted to the haters – with extreme love.

A) God loves you accepts you just the way you are!

B) Your sin is ok – we all need to be like Jesus and be the friend of sinners and prostitutes. – We just need to be accepting

C) It is true that Jesus was called the friend of sinners and tax collectors – **that is an awesome example to follow.**

C) But you will never find in the gospels a place where Jesus is condoning of Sin!

D) He came to set people free from sin – all sin – the Bible calls Homosexuality – not a lifestyle choice but a sin.

Jesus never condones sinful lifestyles:

A) He didn't simply say to the women caught in adultery – **I don't condemn you – You are ok – just be a good adulterer – Just have one partner –**

B) He said: Look I am not condemning you – Go and sin no more – be free – I have come so you could live differently

C) He said that because He knew – Going to the cross to pay the price for her sin

1) He was going to be condemned for her – so she could be free – no longer enslaved to her sin.

And then to accentuate the fact that He doesn't just look the other way at sin –

A) Malachi gives a prophecy of the coming judgment and then 2nd coming of Christ –

B) Jesus is going to come and clean up this mess

“Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. **{John the Baptist}** And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight.

Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.² “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears?”

For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderers' soap.

3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.

4 “Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years.

5 **And I will come near you for judgment;** I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien—

Because they do not fear Me,”

V.6 Says the LORD of hosts. “For *I am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob

C) This is the idea: God made a covenant with Israel that He is going to keep {not consume them/destroy

1) But He is going to do what He has to in order to make His people clean!

D) Not going to break my covenant with you

So They were living carnally

- They were denying God's love
- They were despising God's name by bringing God the sick and the lame
- They were devaluing God's word
- They were deserting their wives
- They were distorting God's word

#6 – They were Depriving God's House – Malachi 3:7-12 - Looked at this on Sunday!

Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you,”

Says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, **In what way shall we return?**”

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

9 You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation.

10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.

11 “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the Lord of hosts;

12 And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land,” Says the Lord of hosts.

A)God says - You are robbing me! –

B)God required the tithe: 10% of their increase – was the be brought into the storehouse – the temple –

C)The place of congregational meeting!

D)The tithe is Holy – it is set apart for the Lord Means the tithe is not ours to give – It belongs to Him – but it is ours to steal

A)Robbing God!

B)This past weekend we looked at the Principle of tithing in Scripture –

1)Principle seen before the Law – Abraham

2)IN the law with Moses

3)Commended by both Jesus and Paul in the NT

C)The heart behind it – Cheerful giver –

We talked about the Reasons for tithing:

- #1 Tithing is part of how God raises His Kids
- #2 Tithing Builds Trust – Widows mite
- #3 Tithing gives us the opportunity to partner with God

Finally we talked about

The Blessings of Tithing :

- #1There is a reward

Reap what you sow – Sow Bountifully – Reap bountifully

- #2 It helps us become more like Jesus
- #3 It protects us from the enemy

Missed it – Go online – or to the App – listen Important message!

They in Malachi’s day were living carnally

- They were denying God’s love
- They were despising God’s name by bringing God the sick and the lame
- They were devaluing God’s word
- They were deserting their wives
- They were distorting God’s word
- They were depriving God’s house, and finally

#7 – They were Degrading God’s work – Malachi 3:13-4:6

¹³ “Your words have been harsh against Me,”Says the LORD, Yet you say, ‘What have we spoken against You?’

Well let me tell you!

¹⁴ You have said, ‘It is useless to serve God; What profit *is it* that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts?’

The reason they were saying that it was useless to serve God, is it seemed like the wicked around them were prospering

¹⁵ So now we call the **proud blessed**, For those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free.’ ”

Maybe you have felt that way:

A)I am doing everything right – everything by the book

– I don’t cut corners - seems like I am always behind

B)That guy is a liar and a cheat – and he is proud – and he seems to be getting all the breaks

C)I think of Asaph who in Psalm 73 said –

1) I almost stumbled – the wicked seem to be so blessed, why is that, they seem to have no problems, they seem to get every break

D)And me – I follow God and all I get is suffering!

➤ Asaph was stumbled – he says until I went into the sanctuary, **then I understood their end**

E)Simply put: This life is as good as it is going to get for the unbeliever

1) And by the way – they suffer to – don't let the enemy fool you – they suffer, and then one day, it will get worse

V.16 Signals a break in the conversation

¹⁶ Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.

A) God knows those who are His

B) Book of remembrance - he remembers the good things done in the right motives -

1) But he forgets our sins- How awesome is that!

17 "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

18 Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.

God says even though right now – things might not seem like they are making sense to You –

A) Hang in there – the day is coming when it will make perfect sense.

B) You will understand – My ways – You are struggling now – {I see that }

1) You are faithful now { I see that –

C) Know this – YOU WILL BE REWARDED!

For you God is going to break out His book of remembrance – and blow your mind – he saw

A) What He logged down.

B) And it will not be like – Mom – broke out the baby pics – when you had a date come over to meet her

C) It will be sweet!

D) Live to fill up that book – God does not forget your labor of love – kindness done in His name

E) YOU WILL BE REWARDED!

1) **THE wicked will be judged.**

Chapter 4 – One final warning – the wicked

"For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven,

And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the Lord of hosts,

"That will leave them neither root nor branch.

2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.

3 You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do this," Says the Lord of hosts.

4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments.

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

In verse 5 of chapter 4 we have this prophecy that Elijah was going to come before the Messiah comes

A) Jesus' disciples asked Him about this in Matthew 17:10 –

B) why do the scholars say Elijah must come first - Jesus said, Elijah is coming and has already come

- just as there are two comings of Jesus, so Elijah has two comings
- one in the Spirit and power of – that was John the Baptist
- and before Jesus comes again 2nd coming

C) I believe one of the two witnesses in the book of Revelation Ch. 11 is Elijah, back on the scene before the second coming of the Messiah

The Messiah coming which I believe is right around the corner – so let's learn from this book

They were living carnally

- They were denying God's love
- They were despising God's name by bringing God the sick and the lame
- They were devaluing God's word
- They were deserting their wives
- They were distorting God's word
- They were depriving God's house
- They were degrading God's work

But not you, don't you do that – you serve the Lord with all you are in these last days!!!!