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Malachi 1

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Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Malachi 1.

Topics.

- Jacob, I loved, but Esau I hated.
- The LORD speaks to the priests.
- God's disappointment with the priests.
- The priests consider the LORD'S work a burden.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Malachi means, messenger of Jehovah or my messenger. It is clearly after the Babylon exile. The Temple had been completed and sacrifices were being offered (Mal. 1:7-10) (Mal. 3:8). A Persian governor (the word for governor in (Malachi 1:8) is a borrowed word, used for the Persian governors in Palestine during the time after the Babylonian exile) was ruling in Jerusalem. This indicates a date later than that of Haggai and Zechariah. Although the urging of Haggai and Zechariah had brought the completion of the Temple (515 B.C.), this had not produced the Messianic age many expected. Zechariah's call to repentance had gone unheeded, and God apparently had not restored the covenant Blessings. Malachi, writing a short time later, called the people to repentance because:

- The priesthood had become corrupt.
- Worship, had become routine.
- Social justice was being ignored.
- Tithing was neglected (the Tax System for the nation Israel).

Malachi predicted the coming of both John the Baptist and Jesus, referring to each as a "messenger" of God (Malachi 3:1).

MALACHI 1:1

The Oracle of the Word of the LORD.

- **Malachi 1:1:** The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

The entire letter of Malachi's is addressed to the nation Israel.

MALACHI 1:2-5

I have loved Jacob but Esau I have Hated.

- **Malachi 1:2-5:** "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob³ but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert."
⁴If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says,

"They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.' " ⁵Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!"

Esau (Edom): the LORD promised Rebekah two nations and Isaac and Rebekah gave birth to Esau the firstborn and Jacob his brother. (Gen. 25:21-26). The name Edom refers to Esau it comes from the Hebrew word ('Edom) which means red it became the nickname of Esau. This is because Jacob offered Esau a bowl of red stew (red pottage) in exchange for Esau's birthright (the right to be recognized as firstborn with authority over the family). The region occupied by Esau was called Edom so his descendants were naturally called Edomites. (Gen. 25:27-34). For further information concerning Esau see the title: "Esau, Idumea, Edom and the Edomites in, Articles (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated: the LORD says in (Malachi 1:2-5), He has hated Jacob's brother Esau, laid waste his hill country, left Edom's heritage to jackals of the desert and if they try to rebuild it He will tear it down. The LORD goes on to say, Edom will be called 'the wicked country, and he will be angry with them forever. Esau despised (loathed, hated, detested) his birthright. He did not consider it to be of any value nor did he want the responsibility of it. It should be noted here that the words, "The older shall serve the younger," in God's mind carry the idea that the older shall protect and care for the younger. In a natural family (secular or Christian) it is the big brothers' responsibility to protect and care for his little brothers and sisters. Esau didn't want this responsibility so he gave it away for a bowl of red stew. Paul picks up the theme Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated in the following verses of Romans:

- Though they (Esau and Jacob) were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call— ¹²she (Rebecca) was told, "The older (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob)." ¹³As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Rom. 9:11-12)

Election: comes from the Greek word (ekloge) and means select and to choose out (one that is chosen).

Call: comes from the Greek word (kaleo) and means to call forth, bid or urge.

Jesus said, "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14). The best example I can think of to explain these words of Jesus comes from the movie called, "The Right Stuff." Five hundred men were called to be the first astronauts to fly to the moon. At the end of years of rigorous physical training and mental and emotional testing five of the men marched down the aisle of Parliament House before the President of America and as they walked in their astronaut uniforms the President cited the words of Jesus, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Esau was called, but because of his denial of God and his corrupt lifestyle he was not chosen. Prior to the birth of Esau and Jacob Sarah was told that Esau the firstborn will serve Jacob, but it was long after Esau's death that the words, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I have hated were written (Mal 1:2-5).

God did not hate Esau before he was even born, but in his eternal foreknowledge He would certainly have known that Esau would choose the wicked path he did. Esau sold his birthright, meaning he placed no value on his rightful and godly inheritance and privileges that came with being the firstborn and he took Hittite women for wives' contrary to the will of his parents Sarah and Isaac and contrary to the will of God. Added to this he did not have the same passion for God as Jacob did, but despised God's name and did not fear or show him honour. In Romans 9:11-13 (above) Paul is citing (Malachi 1:2-3). In Malachi God loved the priests because they were descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but at the time of Malachi the priest like Esau despised God's name and did not fear or show him honour (Mal 1:6). God is comparing the priests of Israel to Jacob and Esau. Esau was Jacob's older brother (the firstborn)

and had the right to the inheritance and the promises, yet God rejected Esau and chose Jacob. God is saying to the priests, just because they are born of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob does not guarantee God's favour. He is warning them that just as He rejected Esau who had the rights to the inheritance, He will also reject them if they do not give God the honour He is due. In Romans Paul is applying the same principle to the unbelieving Jews (especially the priests), he is telling them that being descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, does not guarantee God's favour, if they do not accept Jesus, God will reject them as he did Esau and the priest of Malachi's day. The same principal applies today, just because a person is born into a Christian family, a church or religious organisation does not guarantee them salvation.

MALACHI 1:6-9

The LORD speaks to the Priests (the religious leaders of Malachi's day).

- **Malachi 1:6-9:** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, *O priests*, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'
⁷By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD'S table may be despised. ⁸When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. ⁹And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

God is rebuking the priest's because they are offering polluted food, they were meant to offer the best of their herd or their flock. Some religious teachers today use these verses to support the idea that we should all wear our best clothing to church, suits, ties, white shirts etc.; because God requires the best, but that is reading into the verses far more than is intended. Most of these animal offerings became food for Aaron and his sons and their families, people ate these offerings that, is why God required them to be the best. The best clothing, we can put on for God is faithfulness, honesty, integrity, kindness, mercy, grace, forgive and show justice to all and treat all people (Christian and secular) with respect and decency. If we want to give God our best these are the garments, we should endeavour to dress ourselves in and the garments that truly please God.

MALACHI 1:10

God's Disappointment with the Priests.

- **Malachi 1:10:** Oh that there were one among you (the priests) (v6) who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

Sense the disappointment in God, Israel is doing the outward religious acts, but the LORD says they are doing them in vain, it means nothing to God, simply because they are giving polluted food to others and keeping the best for themselves.

MALACHI 1:11

My Name will be Great among the Nations.

- **Malachi 1:11:** For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

This verse carries with it an echo of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MALACHI 1:12-13

The Priests consider the LORD'S work a Burden.

- **Malachi 1:12-13:** But you (priests) (v6) profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. ¹³But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD. You bring what has been taken by violence, or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD.

The priest's (the religious leaders of Malachi's day) even considered doing the work and service of the LORD as a burden.

Cursed be the Cheat who Sacrifices to the Lord what is Blemished.

- **Malachi 1:14:** Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

The priests are promising to give God the best, but then they offer Him what is no good to them anyway, because it is lame, sick or blemished.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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