

# Malachi 1:1-14

## Leftovers

Image Church // Exposing the Heart: wk. 1

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### Introduction

#### Background...

- Creation: relationship with God...
- **Gen 3**- the fall... sin severs the relationship between God/man
- The Promise in **Gen 3:15**- *God will send a deliverer...*
- God chooses Abraham in **Gen. 12:3**... makes Him a promise that *all people on earth will be blessed through Him...*
  - Abraham has **Issac**, Issac has **Jacob...**
  - God affirms His promise to Jacob in **Gen 28...**
  - Then God changes Jacob's name in **Gen. 32** to **Israel**, that would become the name of God's people...

#### **God chose the people of Israel as a means by which to reveal Himself to the world...**

God would set them apart by giving them a specific way of living in light of who He is... A way of living that put on display the Holiness of God and man's desperate need for God's promised deliverer....

- *And then ultimately, the way that God would display Himself through the line of Israel would be through Jesus, the promised deliverer...*

As you journey through the OT what you will see is that Israel struggles to worship God and God alone, and to trust in His faithfulness and His promises...

- This led to Israel being in and out of troubling situations in light of their disobedience...

The **OT** is a story of God's faithful love for wicked and rebellious people, that Gives us a picture of who we are and who God is...

**The beauty of the gospel is that its revelation came through the line of Israel, but the salvation that's offered is to all people...**

It's through Jesus that those in the past, and those in the present, and those in the future can become the people of God...

- Ultimately, what God is doing is restoring that which had been broken at the fall...

#### **So how does the book of Malachi fit into all of this??**

Well, it's what is referred to as **A Book of the 12** (aka, the minor prophets)...

What God would do in and through His love is send **prophets** to His people to proclaim to them the truth of who God is, who they are not trusting and worshiping Him and they would declare God's judgment and call Israel to turn back...

God's **judgment** is an important theme in the OT... Showing us that it is an extension of God's character...

Because God is perfect and holy, He has to execute perfect justice, meaning, that there must be punishment for transgressions... He cannot leave sin unpunished...

**This theme is so important because it gives us a framework of the reality that we stand guilty and condemned before a perfect and Holy God...**

- *But in this we also get to see the beauty of what God would do for us through the deliverer! Jesus takes on the judgment of God in our place...*

Which is why in the OT there's a consistent call in and through judgment to turn back to God and trust in His promises...

This is how both immediate and eternal salvation happened in the OT by turning to God and trusting in God's promise- worshipping Him as their One True God...

**Malachi** is a prophet called by God to remind His people of this reality...

Up to this point Israel has been through a lot in light of their disobedience and turning from God...

They had been through a hard exile where Babalon had attacked Jerusalem, destroyed the temple and captured the Isrealites...

Well, God, in His love and faithfulness to His promise, sets them free from the Babalonians and some of the Isrealites return to Jerusalem and they rebuild the temple... See **Ezra** and **Nehemiah**...

**And as this happens the people are like we're not going to let that happen again, we're going to trust you and worship your God...**

**Fast forward**... Israel has gone back to their rebellion again and again... And there's been multiple prophets sent to them to confront where they are... And this brings us to **Malachi**...

**Malachi** contains the last word of a generation of prophets through whom God had revealed himself to his people in a unique way. With Malachi these instruments of God's revelation concluded their task and were dismissed from office until the time of the fulfillment not only of the Law but also of the Prophets (Matt. 5:17), in the coming of the great Prophet, Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

**Here's what you're going to see through Malachi, is that Israel is going to give us a glimpse of our own hearts... Malachi is going to expose our hearts...**

God's going to lay out **6 disputes** that He has with Israel and we're going to see the first **2** today... In these disputes, God makes a statement and Israel pushes back...

And here's the question that you're going to come face to face with: **are you offering God the leftovers in your life?**

## Malachi 1:1-14

**1** A pronouncement:

The word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi.

**2** "I have loved you," says the Lord.

Here's the first thing I want you to see, God starts with **love**...

- This is so powerful...
- People think of God in the OT as mean- what we see is a God of love, that everything that He does is out of His love...
  - He's about to come hard here- He's going to confront them, but He confronts them as an act of love...

There's another part to this, God doesn't say **why** He loved them...

- What we see is that **there's no condition by which God chooses to love**...

God's love is **not reactive** or **responsive** to anything that we do, say, or feel...

**IOW:** you can't earn the love of God, you can't work for the love of God... **The love of God is not based on you!**

- You know how incredible that is, how amazing that is?!?
- Do you see how counter cultural that is?!?!
- You understand how freeing that is?!?

I think for many of us though, we miss that- I think for many of us we're a lot like Israel... *Look at how Israel responds to God in **verse 2:*** **Yet you ask, "How have you loved us?"**

<sup>1</sup> Verhoef, 153-154.

I think this is where many of us are *functionally*, maybe not *verbally*, we might not say that... *But what we're going to see is that like Israel our lives might be saying otherwise...*

So here's what God's about to do, He's going to give an actual, literal, historical example of **how** He's loved them...

"Wasn't Esau Jacob's brother?" This is the Lord's declaration. "Even so, I loved Jacob, **3** but I hated Esau. I turned his mountains into a wasteland, and gave his inheritance to the desert jackals."

**4** Though Edom says, "We have been devastated, but we will rebuild the ruins," the Lord of Armies says this: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called a wicked country and the people the Lord has cursed forever. **5** Your own eyes will see this, and you yourselves will say, 'The Lord is great, even beyond the borders of Israel.'

God says you want to question my love, ***you're here because of my love, I chose Jacob when I didn't have to choose anyone...***

I could have hated both Jacob and Esau- neither were righteous, neither were worthy of my love...

But I chose to love anyway, I chose to be faithful in the midst of your faithlessness... I chose to be true to my promises when you were not true in your trust...

I promised a deliverer that would restore all that has been broken by sin, and I chose Jacob as the means by which to be faithful to that promise...

You are here because of my love, what you deserve is what I gave to **Esau and Edom**, but instead I displayed my love through you...

- You say, ***well that doesn't sound fair?!?*** *The thing you need to see here is not that God only chooses to save some, but that God chooses to save anybody...<sup>2</sup>*

God didn't owe us salvation, He didn't have to save anyone... God could have saved 5 people or 1 person...

- There's not a person in this room, and there's not a person on the face of the world that doesn't deserve to be wiped out like ***Esau and Edom...***
- Anything outside of a total wipeout of humanity is an incredible display of the love, grace and mercy of God...

I think for many of us we're a lot like Israel, we've gotten away from the reality of what we ***deserve versus what God's extended to us...***

- I think for many of us down deep, if we're honest, we're asking the question ***God how have you loved me?!?***

***God's saying in my love I've chosen to make a way for sinful, rebellious, undeserving people like you...***

But Israel misses this and so do we, we're going to see why I think that's true here next...

God continues in the case He's making against Israel in **verse 6:**

**6** "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. But if I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is your fear of me? says the Lord of Armies to you priests, who despise my name."

Yet you ask, "How have we despised your name?"

**7** "By presenting defiled food on my altar."

"How have we defiled you?" you ask.

When you say, "The Lord's table is contemptible."

**8** "When you present a blind animal for sacrifice, is it not wrong? And when you present a lame or sick animal, is it not wrong? Bring it to your governor! Would he be pleased with you or show you favor?"

asks the Lord of Armies. **9** "And now plead for God's favor. Will he be gracious to us? Since this has come from your hands, will he show any of you favor?" asks the Lord of Armies.

**10** "I wish one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would no longer kindle a useless fire on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the Lord of Armies, "and I will accept no offering from your hands."

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<sup>2</sup> Derrick Delain

**11** “My name will be great among the nations, from the rising of the sun to its setting. Incense and pure offerings will be presented in my name in every place because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord of Armies.

**12** “But you are profaning it when you say, ‘The Lord’s table is defiled, and its product, its food, is contemptible.’

**13** You also say, ‘Look, what a nuisance!’ And you scorn it,” says the Lord of Armies. “You bring stolen, lame, or sick animals. You bring this as an offering! Am I to accept that from your hands?” asks the Lord.

**14** “The deceiver is cursed who has an acceptable male in his flock and makes a vow but sacrifices a defective animal to the Lord. For I am a great King,” says the Lord of Armies, “and my name will be feared among the nations.

### *Israel was giving God their leftovers...*

They had taken this sacrificial system that God had set up and they had made a mockery of it...

God gave it to them as **an act of worship** that reminded them who they were, and who God is... And to help them see the reality of their sin, the consequences, and ultimately their desperate need for a deliverer...

- This is why the animals had to be unblemished...
- God was ultimately giving them a picture of what Jesus would do...

But Israel was bringing in stolen, lame, and sick animals and offering them up... And the priests we’re like no worries we’re good with it...

Meanwhile, God says in **verse 14**: you’re comin in here bringing a broken-down animal, making a vow as though you gave me your best... Meanwhile you left it at the house... That’s **deceptive**, cursed be the one who does that...

**IOW**: you’re saying one thing and doing another... You’re vowing like you’re giving me your best when the reality is you’re giving the leftovers...

*I wonder for how many of us this is true... That we would say that we’re giving God our best, but the reality is that our lives show something otherwise...*

For Israel their actions, their worship, their commitment to the things of God revealed that they didn’t see or believe God for who He was...

- They didn't see God as a great King, they didn't see Him as the Lord of Armies, they didn't see His love for them...

### *Israel’s commitment to the things of God revealed the reality of their hearts...*

\*Now, we no longer have the **sacrificial system**, we have what it pointed to and it’s **Jesus**... And we no longer have the **temple**... We have the **church**...

- Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice to establish the church... He calls it His bride...
- His body was torn down so that this body could be built up...
- So our commitment is no longer to sacrificing an animal, our commitment is to the local church...
- **In the OT they had the temple and the sacrificial system... In the NT we have the church...**
- Both are designed to direct our eyes toward God and to submit to His Lordship!

### *What does your commitment to the things of God show about the reality of your heart?*

*Israel gave God the leftovers... Is that true for you?*

**Here’s the question that I want you to wrestle through this morning:**  
**Are you giving God the leftovers in your life?**

**Example:** When I was in college we got this idea to do a gift swap between some buddies of mine...

- Well they go out and they buy some nice stuff- cool stuff like a knife and some new clothes...
- And I didn't know I was oblivious to it and got the idea to give them some of my old clothes...
- So I grabbed some and turns out when I gave it to them that one of the shirts had pit stains on it...
  - They've never let me live it down...

*They were like sweet man you really value our relationship!*

**I think for many of us this is how we treat God...** It's hard to bring the best because it costs us...

Israel in a lot of ways is a picture of the ***apathetic Christian today***... and it's scary...

There's so many people who *like Israel* are all around the things of God claiming to be all in, but the reality is that their lives show something completely different when it comes to being committed to the things of God!

***Does God get our best or does God get just what we have leftover??***

I want you to see something that's at the heart of why many of us give God our leftovers...

***Look at verse 13 here's their excuse to God:*** You also say, 'Look, what a nuisance!'

***They're saying what hardship, how troubling and wearisome it is to give God what he is worthy of!***

This exposes the reality of their hearts. The offering is a result of their view of God...

They would rather not be inconvenienced or bothered by God even after all He had done for them. We can be the same way, our offerings and priorities of God expose our hearts towards Him

**We do the same thing when it comes to how we offer God our time, talent and treasure...**

**Time** : one of the hardest things to offer to God...

***What do your commitments to, and prioritization of the things of God reveal about the reality of your heart?***

Israel had deprioritized God... He was an afterthought and it showed... Israel's lack of commitment to the things of God, revealed the reality of their hearts...

What does your commitment to the things of God say about your heart...

God told them to take their animal to the governor ...

Let me ask you this: if you treated your job like you treated the church would you be fired?

You say yeah but it's my job, impacts my life and my family... exactly, how much more then should you prioritize that which impacts the eternity of your life and your family?!?

What happens here on the weekend and what happens during the week during community groups isn't an option... It's

**Talent** : how are you offering your talent to God?

- Does God get the best of your talent through the church, and for the mission?!?

What if your efforts in your job were like your efforts in the church?

- This is how you get a barometer for if you're giving God your best or leftovers...

What if you gave your sales pitch like you share the gospel?

**Treasure:** how are you offering your treasure to God?

- In your financial generosity does God get your best or does God get what's left?

\*Here's the thing you have to understand, your **time, talent, treasure**... Are not things that God wants from you, they are things that God wants **for you**...

*In the same way that God didn't need the sacrifices from the people of Israel, God doesn't need these things from you...*

He wants these things for you because they keep you centered on who He is...

\*\*\*Listen, the sacrifices were not just something for God, but it was something for the people as well... it was a reminder of who God was and what God does- His grace and mercy...

- God designed the sacrificial system not because He needed what they had, but because He wanted them to see who He was...
- They were missing who God was... they didn't understand the love of God... And it was reflected in their sacrifice...

They would have felt it more when they gave their first and best but they experience more by giving their best!!

Your commitment to the things of God ultimately reveal what you see and believe about God...

When God gets the leftovers when He is an afterthought, it minimizes who He is and what He did... You're also saying I don't need the things you've

God would give best- Jesus would put us before Himself as the suffering servant so that we could have access to God when we didn't deserve it!

- How much more then should we respond with our best?!?

Here's the call: **Romans 12:1** Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.

I want to go back to the beginning- I think the gap in this is that we miss **the love of God!**

- *Press hard here...*

**our offering to God is comes as an overflow of how much we understand the love of God**

## Conclusion [VAMP]

Call to believe...

Repent... Reorient...

Pray