

# A Study of the Book of Malachi

Romans 9:6-13

Introduction: Is it possible for God's people to get so wicked that they cannot see their own wickedness? By the time of Malachi, the children of Israel had gotten so disobedient to God that they could not see their own transgressions. In their hearts they questioned God. They questioned God just like people today question Him. Even the questions the Israelites asked seem the same that many Christians ask today.

I. "In what way have You loved us?" [Mal. 1:2a]

A. The Israelites no longer saw God working directly in their lives. This led to the assumption God abandoned them. That He no longer loved them.

B. God's response at first seems unusual. He compares His love for Jacob to His hate for Esau; i.e. the nation of Israel to Edom (Gen. 25:23). The Lord's love has always been with those that act according to His purpose (Rom. 9:6-13). God does not select according to the flesh but according to righteousness. God hates evil from whomever it comes!

C. God turns the issue around by stating that a son shows honor for his father. If the Israelites deserve God's love, where is His honor? [Mal. 1:6] Where is the reverence and respect for God that should accompany a relationship built on the love that God has demonstrated many times before?

D. But instead of honor, the priests despised His name.

II. "In what way have we despised Your name?"

A. By offering defiled food (bread) on the altars (Mal. 1:7). When a priest does not have enough respect for God to make offerings in accordance with God's command, he obviously has contempt for God.

B. If you were to have the State governor over for dinner, would you present him spoiled food? Try it and see how its received (Mal. 1:8). Why would anyone treat God any less?

C. Are we offering God defiled food in our worship today? By that I mean, are we content to worship God as He has directed us? Many churches would rather present God with instrumental music, women preachers, hand clapping and arm waiving then they would do what the Lord does command.

D. More specifically, many churches are encouraging members to take communion at home by themselves whether they have a video connection to the service or not (1 Cor. 11:17, 18, 20, 33). "*Or do you despise the church of God...*" (1 Cor. 11:22).

E. God does not have to accept worship to Him if the worship is not done on His terms (Mal. 1:10).

III. “Oh, what a weariness!”

A. The function of the altar had become a burden to the priests. Instead of offering sacrifices properly, they offered blemished sacrifices (Mal. 1:13). They offered stolen, sick and lame animals. The sacrifices were suppose to be of the best (Lev. 22:19-24).

B. What do we offer God on the Lord’s Day? Do we give God our best? Or is it weariness to go to church! Perhaps when the collection plate is passed we are too weary to give back generously to the Lord.

C. The Lord says such people are dishonest. They make a commitment to God and then they don’t keep their commitment (Mal. 1:14).

D. God curses the priests for this. Why?

1. Because they had not laid to heart God’s honor and their responsibilities (Mal. 2:1-2).

2. Because they used dung in their sacrifices that should have been burned outside the camp (Ex. 29:14). God will shove their faces in it. Meaning the priests will lose their function (Mal. 2:3).

3. Because they did not perform their job (Mal. 2:8). They manifested a spirit of disregard and disrespect toward God (Mal. 2:9).

E. I can’t help but wonder how similar many Christians today are like these priests.

IV. “In what way have we wearied Him?”

A. By advocating evil as good and by denying the existence of a just God (Mal. 2:17). By advocating “all have sinned” as an excuse (Rom. 6:1-2)

B. The Lord just rebuked Israel for divorcing their wives without cause so they may marry foreign women (Mal. 2:11). Lest they think this was good, God makes it clear how He views divorce (Mal. 2:16).

C. They ask, “Where is God’s justice?” He will show them His justice (Mal. 3:2-3)!

1. He’ll come like a refiner’s fire.

2. He’ll come like launderers’ soap.

3. He’ll come like a purifier of silver and gold.

D. Because they no longer fear God nor keep His commands, judgment will come upon them unless they repent (Mal. 3:5-7). Unfortunately, there attitude is one which refuses to see their error. “In what way shall we return?” As though to say, “We have nothing to repent of... We’ve done nothing wrong.”

V. “In what way have we robbed You?”

A. In tithes and offerings (Mal. 3:8). To rob a man is one thing, but to rob God is unthinkable! Yet, the people weren’t contributing as required nor were they offering sacrifices as commanded.

B. God tells them to fulfill their obligations. Bring their tithes and not just part of them (Mal. 3:10).

C. How often do we rob God in our lack of support for the work or in our lack of contributions? Obviously, God takes note of our giving. Will God accuse us of stealing from Him at the judgment?

VI. “What have we spoken against you?”

A. The Israelites thought it vain to serve God. They saw no benefits in it. The wicked seemed to prosper (Mal. 3:13-15).

B. It is as though they served God for hire and God was indebted to them for their service.

C. How many of us feel as though God owes us something? “I’ve been a Christian all my life and if I want to slow down and miss a few services, God will just have to understand. Besides, I don’t get much out of the services and Bible studies anyway.”

Conclusion: Despite the Israelites’ wickedness and refusal to acknowledge their sins, God said He would be mindful of those who fear Him (Mal. 3:16-18). Don’t make any mistake in understanding; God will punish wicked people (Mal. 4:1-3). The question is, have you kept the law? Have you been obedient to God in your service? If you need to repent, please come before it is eternally too late.