

Malachi: God's People Need to Give Him Their Best

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. What happened between Malachi and Matthew? God's people experienced 400 years of silence. No new prophets appeared in Israel; no new Scriptures were being written; and no new revelation was being heard. Malachi was the last minor prophet and the last prophetic voice to share God's message to Israel.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were written after the people of Israel returned from Babylonian captivity. The name Malachi means "_____" A direct tie exists between Malachi and Matthew. Malachi 3:1a reads, "*Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me.*" That messenger was _____. John came to prepare the way of the Lord. Malachi 3:1b states, "*And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.*" The second messenger identified was _____, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

The book of Malachi is a series of responses from God to His people. The people failed to understand God's _____ and _____. Malachi 1:2 states, "*I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, 'How have you loved us?'*" God's people said "how" _____ times. What is the meaning behind the Jacob and Esau statement? Esau sold his birthright and was indifferent to spiritual matters. Jacob had a heart for the deeper things of life.

God revealed His _____ with the people, and the people continued to ask "how." God addressed the priests and said, "*O priests, who despise my name*" (Mal. 1:6a). How did the priests respond? Malachi 1:6b states, "*But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'*" If you and I ask God a question, He'll give us an answer. It's heartbreaking to see the behavior of many ministry leaders at times.

What do we see in our day?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What did Malachi see in his day?

- People kept the best _____ for themselves.
- People appeared to be _____ with worship.
- People lost the wonder of God's _____ and _____.
- People _____ other people to relate with God casually.
- People ignored God's _____ standards.

- People were _____ to speak and _____ to listen.

God invited the people to _____ to Him. Malachi 3:7 reads, "Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts." However, the people were _____ to their true spiritual condition. The people said, "How shall we return" (Mal. 3:7)? God called His people to repent, leading to renewal and revival. Is the message of repentance still needed in our day? Who needs to repent?

- _____
- _____
- _____/_____
- _____
- _____
- _____

God spoke a challenging word to His people. God said, "Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me" (Mal. 3:8)? People couldn't understand how they'd robbed God. God revealed the exact way His people rebelled against Him. God said that His people robbed Him "in tithes and contributions" (Mal. 3:8). God wanted His people to be _____, _____, and _____ givers. If that wasn't enough, people declared that serving God was in vain (Mal. 3:13). People were robbing God with their _____ and _____. How do you and I rebel against (and rob) God?

- Fail to _____ as God says
- Neglect to _____ time with God
- Refuse to _____ God

The book of Malachi does have a word of hope. Malachi 3:16 reads, "Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name." The remnant of God's people _____ with one another. People talked, confessed, shared, and prayed with one another. God's remnant also _____ the Lord's name. God's church is in a good place when members speak with one another and call upon God's name. May the church never believe that effectiveness is about programs, facilities, electronics, and personalities! It's all about _____!

- Are you living _____ to God?
- Is God _____?
- Is _____ a relevant principle today?
- Should a leader's _____ and _____ life be consistent?
- Is God _____ our nation and His church to return to Him?
- Do you find _____ in serving Jesus?
- Are we _____, _____, and _____, _____?
- How do you and I respond to God's _____?

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Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were written after the people of Israel returned from Babylonian captivity. The name Malachi means "**my messenger**." A direct tie exists between Malachi and Matthew. Malachi 3:1a reads, "*Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me.*" That messenger was **John the Baptist**. John came to prepare the way of the Lord. Malachi 3:1b states, "*And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.*" The second messenger identified was **Jesus Christ**, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

The book of Malachi is a series of responses from God to His people. The people failed to understand God's **voice** and **heart**. Malachi 1:2 states, "*I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, 'How have you loved us?'*" God's people said "how" **seven** times. What is the meaning behind the Jacob and Esau statement? Esau sold his birthright and was indifferent to spiritual matters. Jacob had a heart for the deeper things of life.

God revealed His **displeasure** with the people, and the people continued to ask "how." God addressed the priests and said, "*O priests, who despise my name*" (Mal. 1:6a). How did the priests respond? Malachi 1:6b states, "*But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'*" If you and I ask God a question, He'll give us an answer. It's heartbreaking to see the behavior of many ministry leaders at times.

What do we see in our day?

- **Immorality**
- **Slothfulness**
- **Greed**
- **Theft**
- **Arrogance**

What did Malachi see in his day?

- People kept the best **offerings** for themselves.
- People appeared to be **bored** with worship.
- People lost the wonder of God's **grace** and **love**.
- People **influenced** other people to relate with God casually.
- People ignored God's **moral** standards.

- People were **quick** to speak and **slow** to listen.

God invited the people to **return** to Him. Malachi 3:7 reads, “Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.” However, the people were **blind** to their true spiritual condition. The people said, “How shall we return” (Mal. 3:7)? God called His people to repent, leading to renewal and revival. Is the message of repentance still needed in our day? Who needs to repent?

- **Non-believers**
- **Christians**
- **Marriages/Families**
- **Churches**
- **Ministry Leaders**
- **Nations**

God spoke a challenging word to His people. God said, “Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me” (Mal. 3:8)? People couldn’t understand how they’d robbed God. God revealed the exact way His people rebelled against Him. God said that His people robbed Him “in tithes and contributions” (Mal. 3:8). God wanted His people to be **faithful, consistent,** and **generous** givers. If that wasn’t enough, people declared that serving God was in vain (Mal. 3:13). People were robbing God with their **treasures** and **time**. How do you and I rebel against (and rob) God?

- Fail to **give** as God says
- Neglect to **spend** time with God
- Refuse to **serve** God

The book of Malachi does have a word of hope. Malachi 3:16 reads, “Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.” The remnant of God’s people **spoke** with one another. People talked, confessed, shared, and prayed with one another. God’s remnant also **esteemed** the Lord’s name. God’s church is in a good place when members speak with one another and call upon God’s name. May the church never believe that effectiveness is about programs, facilities, electronics, and personalities! It’s all about **Jesus!**

- Are you living **close** to God?
- Is God **faithful**?
- Is **tithing** a relevant principle today?
- Should a leader’s **private** and **public** life be consistent?
- Is God **calling** our nation and His church to return to Him?
- Do you find **joy** in serving Jesus?
- Are we **worshiping, loving, sharing,** and **making**?
- How do you and I respond to God’s **silence**?