

MALACHI – GIVING GOD YOUR BEST #1

“Where’s the Love?”

Malachi 1:1-5

In times of discouragement people can lose sight of God’s love. Such was the case with the Israelites as the prophet Malachi was sent by God to encourage the people. His opening message is very simple but profoundly important: God loves you! God chose the nation of Israel to be his people and covenanted with them. As believers in the New Covenant era we must be mindful that God’s love continues to be extended to his people through Jesus Christ.

#1. MALACHI’S HISTORICAL SETTING, v. 1

- A. Malachi means “My Messenger”
- B. Malachi is the last OT prophet
- C. Malachi was about 450 years before John the Baptist
- D. Malachi was a contemporary of Ezra & Nehemiah
- E. Malachi prophesied after the Babylonian exile
- F. Malachi prophesied under the Persian Empire
- G. Malachi addressed their unfulfilled expectations, Micah 4:1-3

#2. MALACHI’S BURDEN: GOD LOVES YOU!, v. 2

- A. God is the origin of love, 1 John 4:8
- B. God’s love is a constant, v. 2, 3:6
- C. God’s love is not based on our circumstances

#3. THE PEOPLE’S RESPONSE: HOW HAVE YOU LOVED US?, vv. 2-4

- A. God chose Jacob over Esau – The doctrine of election, v. 2
- B. God chose Jacob to found Israel & Esau to found Edom, v. 2
- C. God loved Jacob, but hated Esau – What does this mean? (Luke 14:26)
- D. God disciplined Esau for despising his birthright, Gen 25:21-34
- E. God’s choice of Jacob is sovereign, vv. 2-3, Ro 9:11,13
- F. God punished Edom for persecuting Israel, Oba 15, Ps 137:7, Heb 12:16
- G. God chose us in Christ, Eph 1:4, 1 Thess 1:4-5, 1 Peter 1:1-2
- H. God sent Jesus to die for our sins, 1 Jn 4:9-10, 19

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#4. GOD’S LOVE IS COVENENTAL

- A. God entered a covenant with Abraham, Gen 12:1-3
- B. God entered a covenant with Isaac, Gen 17:21
- C. God entered a covenant with Jacob, Gen 35:10-12
- D. God entered a covenant with Israel after the Exodus, Exo 6:7-8
- E. God has always been faithful to the covenant, Deu 7:8
- F. God initiated the New Covenant through Jesus, Luke 22:20

#5. DIMENSIONS OF GOD’S LOVE

- A. God’s love is unconditional: Deu 7:7-8, Eph 2:8-9
 - B. God’s love requires responsibility, Mal 1:7f, Eph 2:10
 - C. God desires all people to believe in Jesus, 2 Peter 3:9
 - D. God’s love is judicial (disciplinary), Heb 12:5-11
 - E. God’s love is universal, v. 5, John 3:16, Mat 28, Acts 1:8
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TODAY’S SCRIPTURE

Malachi 1:1-5

An oracle: The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi. ²"I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?' "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD says. "Yet I have loved Jacob, ³but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." ⁴Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins." But this is what the LORD Almighty says: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD. ⁵You will see it with your own eyes and say, 'Great is the LORD—even beyond the borders of Israel!'

Genesis 25:21-26 Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²²The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." ²⁴When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. ²⁵The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. ²⁶After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was

sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them. ²⁷The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents. ²⁸Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau but Rebekah loved Jacob. ²Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.) ³¹Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." ³²"Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?" ³³But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.

Obadiah 1:15 "The day of the LORD is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head.

Psalms 137:7 Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!"

Hebrews 12:16 See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. ⁷The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

1 John 4:9-10 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

Exodus 6:7-8 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. ⁸And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD."

Deuteronomy 9:4-6 After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you. ⁵It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ⁶Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- #1. Why were the Israelites so discouraged at this time in their history?
- #2. Why is it important not to base God's love for us on our circumstances?
- #3. What is the doctrine of election?
- #4. In what sense is God's love covenantal?
- #5. What task(s) or mission did God choose Israel to accomplish? What about the church?
- #6. Discuss the meaning of "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated," and reference that to Luke 14:26.
- #7. What conclusions can you make about Esau's character in selling his birthright?
- #8. For what reason(s) did God punish the Edomites?

#9. In what way(s) is God's love given to us in grace? (Eph 2:8-9, Deu 9:4-6)

#10. In what sense is God's love unconditional?

#10. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE ARE BACK TO OUR NORMAL SCHEDULE

Tuesday night Bible Study at 6:30

Wednesday night prayer meeting at 6:30. Access by clicking the zoom link on the home page of the website.

WE ARE MAKING GREAT PROGRESS

We have made some breakthroughs in the quality of the sound you are hearing as we do the music, thanks to DJ and Tyle. It is our goal to provide you with the best possible service that we can. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for financially supporting the ministry of Hillcrest Church. You can give online at the church website or mail your check to the church.

- Give to the general fund (our operating expenses)
- Give to the elder's fund (to assist those in financial need)
- Give to the Great Commission fund (for the missionaries of the CMA)