

1:1-2:16

“Most of you do not honour me!”

God explains why he has withdrawn his presence and blessing

2:17-4:6

“A day is coming when the difference will be clear!”

God promises a day of final refining and judgement

Malachi 1:1-2:16 (NIVUK)

1 A prophecy: the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.^a

² ‘I have loved you,’ says the LORD.

‘But you ask, “How have you loved us?”

‘Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ declares the LORD. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob, ³ but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his hill country into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals.’

⁴ Edom 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. ⁵ You will see it with your own eyes and say, “Great is the LORD – even beyond the borders of Israel!”

⁶ ‘A son honours his father, and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honour due to me? If I am a master, where is the respect due to me?’ says the LORD Almighty.

‘It is you priests who show contempt for my name.

‘But you ask, “How have we shown contempt for your name?”

⁷ ‘By offering defiled food on my altar.

‘But you ask, “How have we defiled you?”

‘By saying that the LORD’s table is contemptible. ⁸ When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice lame or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?’ says the LORD Almighty.

⁹ ‘Now plead with God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?’ – says the LORD Almighty. ¹⁰ ‘Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will accept no offering from your hands.

¹¹ My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations,’ says the LORD Almighty.

¹² ‘But you profane it by saying, “The LORD’s table is defiled,” and, “Its food is contemptible.” ¹³ And you say, “What a burden!” and you sniff at it contemptuously,’ says the LORD Almighty. ‘When you bring injured, lame or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?’ says the LORD.

¹⁴ ‘Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the LORD. For I am a great king,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and my name is to be feared among the nations.

^a *Malachi* means *my messenger*

Sunday 29 June 2025

God’s message to Israel: (1:1)

“I have loved you...” (1:2-5)

“look beyond your borders at Edom!”

“...but you do not honour me!” (1:6-2:16)

Their priests show contempt for God (1:6)

a. through pretend sacrifices (1:7-2:4)

cf. 3:16-18 ¹⁶ Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honoured his name. ¹⁷ ‘On the day when I act,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him. ¹⁸ And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.



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² ‘And now, you priests, this warning is for you. ² If you do not listen, and if you do not resolve to honour my name,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘I will send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not resolved to honour me.

³ ‘Because of you I will rebuke your descendants^b; I will smear on your faces the dung from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it. ⁴ And you will know that I have sent you this warning so that my covenant with Levi may continue,’ says the LORD Almighty.

⁵ ‘My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. ⁶ True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin. ⁷ For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty and people seek instruction from his mouth.

⁸ ‘But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,’ says the LORD Almighty. ⁹ ‘So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law.’

¹⁰ Do we not all have one Father?^c Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another? ¹¹ Judah has been unfaithful. A detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem: Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the LORD loves by marrying women who worship a foreign god. ¹² As for the man who does this, whoever he may be, may the LORD remove him from the tents of Jacob^d – even though he brings an offering to the LORD Almighty.

¹³ Another thing you do: you flood the LORD’s altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favour on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. ¹⁴ You ask, ‘Why?’

It is because the LORD is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

¹⁵ Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring.^e So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

¹⁶ ‘The man who hates and divorces his wife,’ says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘does violence to the one he should protect,’^f says the LORD Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.

b. by teaching unfaithfulness in marriage (2:5-16)

For reflection

1. To what extent do you honour God?
How do your decisions show this?
2. How does reading Malachi help you?
Any particular parts resonate with you?

^b Or *will blight your corn*

^c Or *father*

^d Or ¹² *May the LORD remove from the tents of Jacob anyone who gives testimony on behalf of the man who does this*

^e The meaning of the Hebrew for the first part of this verse is uncertain.

^f Or *‘I hate divorce,’ says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘because the man who divorces his wife covers his garment with violence,’*