

Cheap Worship Malachi 1:6-14

God does not accept cheap worship. He loves us and wants our worship to reflect His character. As a result, He calls us to give the first and best of our time, energy, and resources when we approach Him in worship.

The Book of Malachi

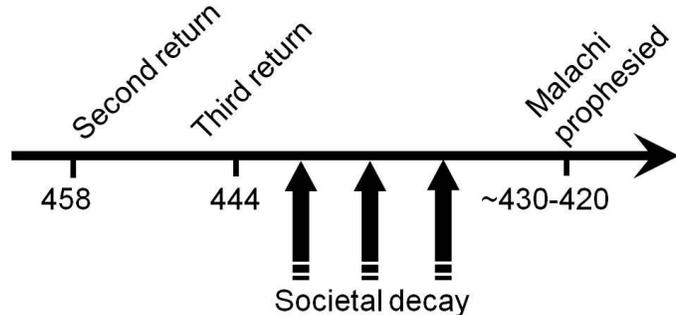
Malachi = “my messenger”

Oracle = “a burden”

“to” NOT “against” His people

Final prophet of Old Testament

- Date: 432-420 B.C.
- 100+ years after 1st return from exile
- 25 years after 2nd return from exile
- 15 years after 3rd return from exile



The Message of Malachi

Malachi records Yahweh’s burden for Israel and His desire to prompt those returning from exile to repentance from their spiritual indifference and to renew their hope in the promises to come through Messiah, God’s final Messenger.

Structure of Malachi

7 questions posed by Israel to God

Collectively, the questions reveal the depth of the nation’s spiritual indifference.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. How have You loved us? (1:2) | God’s Love (1:2) |
| 2. How have we despised Your Name? (1:6) | God’s Honor & Respect (1:6) |
| 3. For what reason were our sacrifices unacceptable to You? (2:14) | God-honoring Sacrifices (2:14) |
| 4. Where is the God of justice? (2:17) | God’s Justice (2:17) |
| 5. How shall we return to You? (3:7) | Hesitancy to Return to God (3:7) |
| 6. How have we robbed You? (3:8) | Money Due God (3:8) |
| 7. What have we spoken against You? (3:13) | Arrogance toward God (3:13) |

Theme of Malachi 1:6-14:

CHEAP WORSHIP

Background: Sacrificial Worship 101

Cheap Worship is Unacceptable (1:6-14)

Sacrificial Worship 101

- Exodus 40:34-35
 - “then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And **Moses was not able** to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.”
 - Question: How can common man approach a holy God?
 - Answer: Through sacrificial worship
 - Question: Is there a biblical book that explains the laws/rituals of sacrificial worship?
 - Answer: The Book of Leviticus
- The Book of Leviticus
 - Burnt Offering - dedicatory
 - Grain Offering - dedicatory
 - Drink Offering - dedicatory
 - Fellowship Offering - communal
 - Sin Offering - expiatory (atone)
 - Guilt Offering - expiatory (atone)
- At the heart of worship as designed by God is the sacrificial system and its benefits: cleansing from sin and access to God.
- Worship is a reaction to God’s greatness.
- Worship honors & respects God on His terms and according to His characteristics.
- Worship is ultimately about giving our very best to/for God.
- Worship involves the totality of one’s life.

Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God. Worship is the time and place that we assign for deliberate attentiveness to God...
-Eugene Peterson, *Leap Over a Wall*

- Worship is offered.
- Worship is accepted or rejected.

Cheap Worship is Unacceptable (1:6-14)

- **Disrespectful service 1:6-7**
“A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?’ says the Lord of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name.”

But you say, ‘How have we despised Your name?’ You are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, ‘How have we defiled You?’ In that you say, ‘The table of the Lord is to be despised.’

- **Disqualified sacrifices 1:8-10**
“But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?” says the Lord of hosts.

“But now will you not entreat God’s favor, that He may be gracious to us? With such an offering on your part, will He receive any of you kindly?” says the Lord of hosts.

“Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you,” says the Lord of hosts, “nor will I accept an offering from you.”

“Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you,” says the Lord of hosts, “nor will I accept an offering from you.”

- **Disdainful attitudes 1:11-14**

“For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering that is pure; for My name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord of hosts.

“But you are profaning it, in that you say, ‘The table of the Lord is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised.’ You also say, ‘My, how tiresome it is!’ And you disdainfully sniff at it,” says the Lord of hosts, “and you bring what was taken by robbery and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?”

“But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King,” says the Lord of hosts, “and My name is feared among the nations.”

You say: “How have You loved us?” (1:2)

God: “I chose you.”

You say: “How have we despised you?” (1:6)

God: “By offering cheap worship. Stop it.”

Acceptable Worship:

- Gives God the best we have (2 Sam. 24:24)
- Gives God what He wants (Matt. 22:21)
- Is motivated by love (1 John 4:19)
- Is done “in spirit and truth” (John 4:20-24)

Worship is a privilege:

- Goal: restore the discipline & joy of worship
- Remember what God has given us in Christ
- Worship reflects gratitude
- Worship demands our best

Applications

- CHOOSE to love God completely (1:1-5)
- CHOOSE to worship God fully (1:6-14)
- MEDITATION for the week...
 - Luke 19:37-40
 - Hebrews 13:15
 - Romans 12:1-2

Luke 19:37-40

Application: MEDITATION

- As soon as He was approaching, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, shouting: “Blessed is the King who comes in the

name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

- Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.
- Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good & acceptable & perfect.