

WRONG WAY!

Short Bible Studies in the Book of Malachi

#2 Malachi 1:6-14



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“I have loved you,’ says the LORD. But you ask, ‘How have you loved us?’” Malachi 1:2

These short Bible studies are written for small-group use as well as for people who are unable to join a group Bible study. Bible studies work best in groups where each encourages and builds up the others in the group in their faith (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Even so, these studies don’t require a group, a leader, or a marker. Please feel free to pass them to others. They can be downloaded, emailed, printed or posted. I’d encourage you to share your thoughts, answers, and questions, with at least one other person: phone them up if you can’t meet.

INTRODUCTION TO MALACHI 1:6-14

God now directs Malachi to highlight the hypocritical way in which his people, and especially the priest, were worshiping God. He does this by continuing what he began in verse 2, twice more giving voice to the objections and questions of the Jews of the day – and each time exposing the contempt for God revealed in their profanity.

In this section (verses 6-14) Malachi turns from an oblique answer to the question asked in verse 2 (that is, instead of saying how God loved Israel he has given a description of how God has hated Esau – and leaves his listeners to draw their own conclusion how, in contrast, God has loved Israel.) Here he is very specific in identifying actions that demonstrate their dishonouring of God.

In yet another contrast, God declares that his name will be great among the nations (implying that, at least at that time, his name was not exalted in Israel). In fact, Malachi’s message can be summed up as exalting the greatness of God’s name, a message that climaxes in a wonderful and fearful way in the last chapter.

GOD’S LAW FOR SACRIFICES

Malachi doesn’t mention the law, nor does he condemn the priests for “unlawful” sacrifices, although he could well have done so. Instead he considers something much more basic, as will become evident as you work through the study. Nevertheless, if you want to understand more about the sacrifices, key passages are Numbers chapter 28; Hebrews chapters 9 & 10; and Galatians chapters 3 & 4.

[WARNING!] Among the most evil of Mormon (or *Latter Day Saints*) deceptions are those that relate to their teaching on and immersion in sacrifices. If using the internet to find out about biblical sacrifices, check the source of every reference: heretical Mormon teachings pervade many internet sites and sources on the subject!]

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WRONG WAY! #2 Malachi Chapter 1:6-14

GETTING STARTED

Please remember that this is God's Word. So...

- Pray, asking God to guide you by his Spirit to understand his word, and learn how to live for Jesus.
- Read the passage listed above for this study.
- Now discuss/think about/answer the questions that follow. *Write answers in the spaces provided.*

1. What is this passage mainly about?

2. From these verses, what response does God seek from his people?

CONTEMPTUOUS PRIESTS: MALACHI 1:6-14

3. In Malachi 1:6, God condemns the priests serving in the newly rebuilt temple for showing contempt for God's name, but he doesn't at first say how they show contempt. Instead, in verses 6 and 8 he shows how honour is shown in three basic human relationships.
 - a. What are they?
 - i.

 - ii.

 - iii.

 - b. In some Bible translations, the heading for this section (eg "Breaking Covenant") points to the fact that offering imperfect animals in sacrifice involved breaking Israel's Covenant Law. While that is true, the passage makes no mention of breaking the Law, but of the imperfect relationships above. What does that reveal about the priests?

4. Depending on our cultural background, we may understand how honour is due to God but not place great significance on his name. Compare Exodus 20:7 with Exodus 34:14, Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 1:21; Revelation 19:13 and Revelation 19:16. What does God's name represent?

5. In verses 7 and 12 God calls the altar of sacrifice "The Lord's table."
 - a. In what way is it the Lord's?

 - b. What, according to Hebrews 9:11-28, is the link between this and Christ's death?

- c. What is the link between this and “the Lord’s table” in In 1 Corinthains 10:21?
- d. Roman Catholic theology teaches that in their version of the Lord’s Supper (they call it “Mass”), the Priest repeats the sacrifice of Jesus by again offering his body as a sacrifice on the altar in their church building. Why, according to Hebrews 10:12 and 27, is this impossible?
- e. What, according to 1 Corinthians 11:24 and 25, do we do when we eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord’s Supper?

6. What things about the sacrifices the priest made showed contempt for God

- a. v7
- b. v8
- c. v12
- d. v13
- e. v14

7. Verse 10 must be one of the most stunning and confronting statements made by God! If you read on to verse 11, what were the priests *not* doing by offering their defiled offerings?

8. Israel failed to make God’s name great.

- a. How, according to Deuteronomy 4:6-8 were they meant to do this?
- b. Yet in verse 11 and 14 God says his name *will* be great among the nations. We are not told in this passage how that will come about.
 - i. According to Revelation 1:7, how will this happen?
 - ii. According to that verse, and Philippians 2:10,11, how will people respond when his name is made great among the nations?

HONOUR GOD

9. In the light of these verses in Malachi
 - a. What can you thank God for?

 - b. What can you pray for others?

 - c. What can you trust God for?

 10. In the light of these verses in Malachi, what changes do you need to make
 - a. In your faith?

 - b. In your worship?

 - c. In your attitude and thinking?

 - d. In your life?
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