



## **“Come Back to Me”**

Lessons from Malachi

### **Malachi 1:11 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, *and a pure offering*. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

### **Week 2 - Malachi 1:6-14 – “Polluted Offerings”** **“Come back to God with worthy sacrifice.”**

**E**xcellence was once a thing to be desired, a reward in and of itself. The people of Israel once honored God with their best. In fact, when they were in the wilderness, and the temple was to be built, they not only brought their best, they brought so much that they had to be told to bring no more. (Exodus 36:5) Now Malachi shares with the Israelites God's displeasure as they have resorted to bringing Him their leftovers and their throwaways and try to count it as sacrifice. They have forgotten Who really is the God that they serve. He is about to remind them.

As we examine these passages this week, it is an opportunity for us to look at our offerings that are being given to God. Would God say to us the same things that He said to the Israelites? Are you giving God your firstfruits?

*Our scripture for this week is...*

### **Malachi 1:6-14 (ESV)**



<sup>6</sup> “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name.

But you say, ‘How have we despised your name?’

<sup>7</sup> By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, ‘How have we polluted you?’ By saying that the LORD's table may be despised.

<sup>8</sup> When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>9</sup> And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>10</sup> Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

<sup>11</sup> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the

LORD of hosts.

<sup>12</sup> But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised.

<sup>13</sup> But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

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*Day 1: A God Not Honored*

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Today' verse: **Malachi 1:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'"

One of the 10 Commandments is that we honor our fathers and mothers. But honor is not taught these days. In fact, it seems as though everything is being done to remove all honor from society. All authority is questioned. All authority is suspect. Only the individual is important. This cultural bias can bleed over into our Christianity to the point that we rob God of His honor that is His due. We treat Him like a genie or a butler, and then we complain when our faith seems empty and fruitless. Consider today how you are honoring God. Are you giving Him your first fruits or your leftovers?

1. What are two key words in this verse that speak to you? What do they mean to you as a Christian?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you think God is asking when He says "If then I am the Father" or "If then I am Master"?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Is there a difference between honor and reverence? How do we do both?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Today's prayer:** "God help me to see the areas in my life that have not been honoring you. Show me how to honor you in all things. Amen"

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*Day 2: A Table Defiled*

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Today' verses: **Malachi 1:6-8 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'"

<sup>7</sup> By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, ‘How have we polluted you?’ By saying that the LORD’s table may be despised.

<sup>8</sup> When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts.

**T**here is a great deal of work being done to reduce the pollution of our environment. We recognize that if we continue to pour waste into our waters and air without regulation that soon it will no longer be fit to breathe or drink. And even with this recognition, there remain those who do not care. They present a “let tomorrow worry about it” mentality. They want what they want and they want it now.

If we are not careful, we can do the same thing with God. The Israelites assumed that any sacrifice would do. So, they offered that which was easy or unneeded, not recognizing that not only is the imperfect no sacrifice, it is something worse – it is pollution before God.

Do you consider this when looking at that which you offer God... Think about this verse –

## 2 Samuel 24:24 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> But the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

1. Do the Israelites recognize their sin? Why do you suppose they do or do not?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Can you give a verse explaining what kind of sacrifices we are to bring to God?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why does God care about what kind of sacrifices are offered to Him?

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Today’s prayer:** “Teach me to examine the sacrifices that I am making to you – that I would not pollute your holy table. Amen”

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### *Day 3: A Favor Sought*

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Today's verses: **Malachi 1:9-10 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>10</sup> Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

**T**o be rejected by man is one thing. To be rejected by God is another entirely. Jesus tells us in **Matthew 7:21-23 (ESV)** <sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

<sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your

name, and do many mighty works in your name?’

<sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

We can delude ourselves into thinking we are doing something for the LORD when we are merely doing it for ourselves.

Israel thought they were pleasing God, but I believe that deep down they already knew the answer before Malachi shared this word with them.

1. What is God calling them to do in verse 9? What does that mean?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Who are the ones who are shutting the doors?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why will God not accept their sacrifice?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Today’s prayer:** “God help me to find the sacrifice in my life which is acceptable to you that the doors would not be closed. It is my desire that my sacrifice would be a sweet aroma to you. Amen.”

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*Day 4: A Name Above All Others*

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**Today' verses: Malachi 1:11-14 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>12</sup> But you profane it when you say that the Lord’s table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised.

<sup>13</sup> But you say, ‘What a weariness this is,’ and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

**G**od’s greatness is without question and yet the Israelites were treating Him like a second-class citizen. They were offering that which cost them little or nothing. Here God reminds them through the prophet Malachi just Who it is that they serve.

Do you come to the throne in humility recognizing Who you are serving? Has your faith become routine and without realizing it, you have forgotten Who God is?

1. What had caused the Israelites to profane the LORDS table?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How does God refer to the ones who would bring blemished offerings to God? How should this affect the way we approach God in sacrifice?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's prayer:** "Examine my heart and show me that which does not honor you, for I desire that I should not cheat you of that which you deserve from me. Amen."

*Day 5: A Worthy Sacrifice*



Anchor verse: **2 Samuel 24:24 (ESV)**

<sup>24</sup> But the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

**F**or us to come back to God in our worship, we must first recognize our need. It is easy for the things we do to become routine and without heart; a monotony of service. And we too, without realizing it, begin to count that which is easy or without cost a "sacrifice" we are making for God.

God tells us in His word that our lives should be a "living sacrifice." He tells us that that which we bring must be of the firstfruits.

Let today be one of examination and ask that God would shine on your life His light of truth as you look at your life in the area of sacrifice. How can you "come back" to God in this area?

We sacrifice in our time, our treasure, our talent... What is God laying on your heart right now?

1. What thing would you consider your greatest sacrifice in your faith for God today?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where can you improve? (Make the commitment now to do so.)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

3. If Jesus was our "once and for all sacrifice" then why do you think God calls us to be living sacrifices?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's prayer:** "God I desire to serve You as a living sacrifice. Help me to do so, not just with my lips but with my life that you may be glorified. Amen."

\*\*\* For the week, meditate on this passage. \*\*\*

**Malachi 1:11 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, *and a pure offering*. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

