

Malachi 1:6-8

A Contemporary Awakening from an Ancient Prophet
“Sincerity in Our Worship”

Introduction: Today we begin a three-part series looking at the 12th and final minor prophet-the prophet of Malachi.

About Malachi

- ✓ Prophesied sometime shortly after 433 B.C. in Jerusalem
- ✓ He prophesied at the time of Nehemiah/Ezra as the returned exiles made an attempt at rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem and restoring the temple
- ✓ This reconstruction would return national pride and honor to Israel
- ✓ The prophetic word of Malachi was that brick and mortar alone would not be their answer-a work of their heart would be necessary
- ✓ The work of the heart in Malachi’s prophecy dealt with three areas (worship, marriage, and stewardship)

First-A Call to Sincere Worship

- ✓ The indictment of Malachi was their approach to worship
- ✓ Were bringing the lame, blind, and blemished sacrifices to worship at the temple
- ✓ Approaching God’s presence carelessly and the worship experience in a trivial way

NOTE: *These people had once been warned about God’s presence*

And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish. 22 Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them." Exodus 19:21-22 NKJV

- ✓ This is still an issue of great importance today for us as worshippers

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10 NKJV

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28-29 NKJV

Three areas of truth

I. The Gravity of Insincere Worship

"Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you," Says the LORD of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands. Malachi 1:10 NKJV

- A. A closed temple, however terrible it may have been, would have been preferable to the perpetuation of worthless worship

NOTE: Better to be speechless than to blaspheme. Preferable to experience the agony of being far away from God than to deceive oneself by assuming that God will listen to the appeals of a hypocrite

- B. God will have no pleasure in insincere worship
- C. How devastating the closing of temple doors would have been
 - 1. Temple worship had been restored in 515 B.C.

NOTE: Later replaced but for then it was prescribed

- 2. Had been a time when God was Israel's God without a temple-prior to Solomon's temple-a-tabernacle
- 3. But how devastating to the people of God
 - a. There He met them
 - b. There He spoke to them
 - c. There He revealed His glory and power

TRUTH: When our worship is insincere, we risk losing the glory of His presence

II. The Portrait of Insincere Worship

QUESTION: What does it look like?

Four-fold

- A. Our approach to God's presence becomes sloppy

"A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?'

Malachi 1:6 NKJV

- 1. Honor of a son for father or servant for a master is "Kavad"-heavy-weighty-his glory
- 2. Where is my reverence?

- a. Includes holiness

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. Psalms 24:3-4 NKJV

- b. Includes awareness of His majesty

Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Psalms 29:2 NKJV

- c. Includes grateful hearts

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. Psalms 100:4 NKJV

- d. Includes expectation

Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Ecclesiastes 5:1NIV

- B. Our surrender to God's presence is absent (7, 8)

1. NOTE: They offered defiled, blind, lame, sick, sacrifices
2. That worship meant nothing, cost nothing

Law:

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Exodus 12:5 NKJV

3. When our worship costs us nothing its not sincere
 - a. Come in and out the same-unchanged
 - b. Evolves around what we like or dislike
 - c. About the atmosphere, players, the comfort
4. We are not surrendering

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12:1 NKJV

- C. Our priority of God's Presence is neglected

And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you?

Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. Malachi 1:8 NKJV

1. Governor wouldn't accept it-out of whack priorities
2. Worship in the life of the believer has taken a back seat
 - a. Corporate worship-gathering-prayer, singing, giving, proclamation of the Word
 - b. Pushed out by events, sports, money, entertainment
 - c. Taken a back seat
3. Lost the priority of God's presence
- D. Our fulfillment in God's presence is forgotten

"But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; And its fruit, its food, is contemptible.' 13 You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it,"

Says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" Says the LORD. Malachi 1:12-13NKJV

1. Worship had become a burden, wearisome
2. Bored with their duties, no fervor in their worship, joy of worship is gone

When our worship is insincere:

- ✓ Sloppy approach to Him
- ✓ No surrender
- ✓ Forgotten priorities

THE JOY WILL GO-IT WILL BE AN EXPERIENCE OF CONTEMPT

III. The Corrective for Insincere Worship

- A. Anticipation of His ultimate glory and universal adoration

For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, And a pure offering;

For My name shall be great among the nations, "Says the LORD of hosts. Malachi 1:11 NKJV

1. Samaritan Woman was a foretaste-no dealings with Jews

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." John 4:21-24 NKJV

2. Eternal hope

And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals ;For You were slain ,And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom ,And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!" Revelation 5:9-13 NKJV

3. Should motivate

- B. Demonstration of His ultimate love

"I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?' Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved; 3 But Esau I have hated, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness." 4 Even though Edom has said, "We have been impoverished, But we will return and build the desolate places," Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever. 5 Your eyes shall see, And you shall say, 'The LORD is magnified beyond the border of Israel.' Malachi 1:2-5 NKJV

1. I chose you-could have chosen Esau-I chose you to be my people
2. All the world will see-love magnified beyond the borders of Israel
3. Sovereign love for His people

Conclusion: And so it is with us

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16 NKJV

May we allow the Holy Spirit to make us sincere worshippers again