

THE PROPHET MALACHI

Malachi



God's people had returned to Jerusalem, the temple and city walls had been rebuilt, and the law had been read to the people. Even though the people promised to obey God, they turned back to their sinful ways. God sent the prophet Malachi to speak His words to the people. God said, "I have loved you." The people doubted God's love for them. But God reminded them of how He chose Jacob over Esau, just as He chose Israel to be His people. God loved His people, but they didn't show they loved Him. God told Malachi to share how the priests dishonored Him. The priests offered animals that were blind, lame, and sick. God is a great King, and He deserves the best offerings. God told Malachi to give the priests a warning: "If you don't listen, and if you don't honor my name, I will send a curse among you." The priests were supposed to help the people know God. Instead, the priests led the people away from God. But God made a promise. He said, "I am going to send my messenger to clear the way

before me. Then the Lord you seek will come to His temple." This promise was about the coming Messiah. The Messiah would make people pure, and they would be able to give offerings that please God in righteousness. Then Malachi said a day was coming when God will judge those who oppress the widow and the fatherless, and those who don't do justice. God told the people, "Return to me, and I will return to you."

After Malachi there were no more prophets for four hundred years. This was the last message from God to His people as they waited for the promised Messiah, and for the messenger who would prepare the way for Him.

Christ Connection: Malachi told the people to turn away from sin as they looked forward to the promised Messiah. Years later, God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus—the Messiah. Jesus brought a message of repentance and salvation.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

» Place a check mark by each TRUE statement and an X by each FALSE statement.

___ The people kept their promise to obey God.

___ The people doubted God's love for them.

___ God was pleased with the sacrifices offered by the priests.

___ God warned the people through the prophet Malachi.

___ The priests in this story led the people to God.

___ God promised to send the Messiah.

___ God will judge those who don't do justice.

___ After Malachi, the people waited 400 years for a message from God.

» What does this story teach us about God?

» What command from the Lord did Malachi give the people?

GOSPEL DISCUSSION

We all need Jesus to turn our hearts back to God and save us from sin. We can't do this on our own. Jesus came to save us from the judgment our sin deserves, make us right with God, and give us eternal life. Have you turned from your sin and trusted in Jesus?



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

» What might tempt you or others to turn away from God?

» Do you ever doubt God's love? Why?

» What is one way you can display your love for God this week?

CHRIST CONNECTION

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THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

» Find John 20:31 in your Bible and write the words below.

» Write a prayer to God, praising God for His mercy to call people to repent and save them through Jesus.

READ THE WORD

Read one of the following passages each day this week:

Acts 3:19

Luke 5:32

2 Peter 3:9

Mark 1:15

1 John 1:9

Luke 24:47