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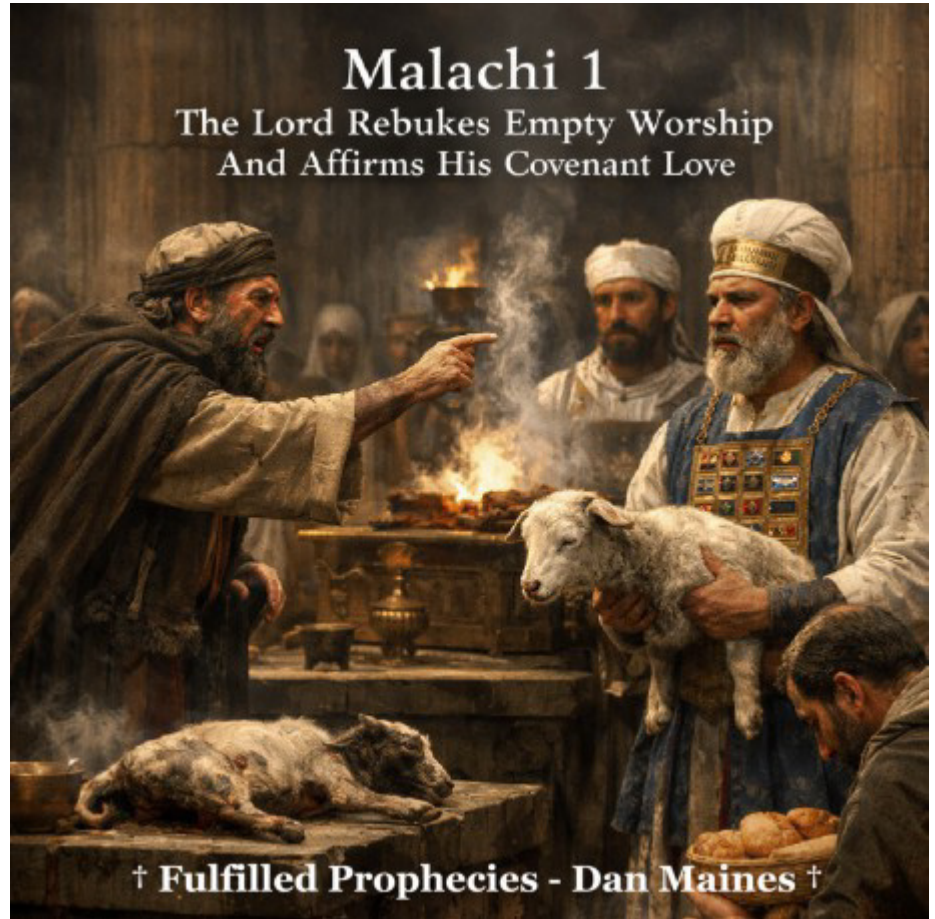
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Malachi 1 The Lord Rebukes Empty Worship And Affirms His Covenant Love



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Malachi opens with a direct confrontation, not against pagans, but against God's own people who had grown cold, careless, and blind to His love.

† From the fulfilled perspective, this chapter exposes the condition of Israel leading up to the judgment that would come

in their generation, a people still going through religious motions while rejecting covenant faithfulness.

† The issue isn't ignorance, it's indifference, they knew the Law, they kept the system, but their hearts were far from Him.

Malachi 1:1

The pronouncement of the word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi.

† This is called a burden because it's not a light message, it's heavy, corrective, and exposes sin within covenant people.

† The message is directed to Israel, not the nations, showing that covenant accountability brings covenant judgment.

† This sets the stage for everything that follows, God is speaking directly into a broken relationship.

Malachi 1:2-3

I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, How have You loved us? Was Esau not Jacob's brother? declares the Lord. Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and given his inheritance to the jackals of the wilderness.

† God begins with love, but they question it, showing how blind they'd become to His covenant faithfulness.

† The reference to Jacob and Esau isn't emotional favoritism, it's covenant election, God chose Israel as His people.

† Edom's destruction stands as historical proof, God kept His word to Israel while judging their enemies.

Malachi 1:4-5

Though Edom says, We have been beaten down, but we will

return and build up the ruins; this is what the Lord of armies says: They may build, but I will tear down; and people will call them the territory of wickedness, and the people toward whom the Lord is indignant forever. And your eyes will see this, and you will say, The Lord be exalted beyond the border of Israel!

† Edom represents rebellion that refuses correction, they rebuild in pride, but God tears it down.

† Israel was supposed to see this and recognize God's justice, but they remained spiritually dull.

† God's name was meant to be magnified beyond Israel, pointing forward to the nations.

Malachi 1:6

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 armies to you, the priests who despise My name. Yet you say, How have we despised Your name?

† The priests are directly confronted, the leaders were the problem.

† They still functioned outwardly, but inwardly they had no honor or reverence for God.

† This is the same condition Jesus exposed in the first century, outward religion, inward decay.

Malachi 1:7-8

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. 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 armies.

† They were offering defective sacrifices, giving God what cost them nothing.

† This shows their view of God, they treated Him as less worthy than human authority.

† The Law required spotless offerings, but they lowered the standard to fit their own convenience.

Malachi 1:9-10

But now will you not plead with God for His 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 armies. Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain! I am not pleased with you, says the Lord of armies, nor will I accept an offering from you.

† God would rather the temple be shut than filled with empty worship.

† Their system had become meaningless because it lacked sincerity.

† This points forward to the system being shut down completely.

Malachi 1:11

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 armies.

† This points beyond Israel to the nations.

† The pure offering is fulfilled in Christ and His people.

† Worship would no longer be tied to one place, but spread to all nations.

Malachi 1:12-13

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 armies, 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? says the Lord.

† Worship had become a burden to them.

† They gave God leftovers and corrupted offerings.

† This shows complete spiritual decay while maintaining outward religion.

Malachi 1:14

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 armies, and My name is feared among the nations.

† God declares Himself a great King who deserves honor.

† Their deception was intentional, they gave less than what they had.

† Covenant unfaithfulness brings judgment, not blessing.

Historical References

† Josephus describes the corruption of the priesthood leading up to Jerusalem's fall, showing the same condition Malachi

exposed.

† The Mishnah reflects ongoing debates about defective sacrifices, confirming the issue continued.

† Justin Martyr taught that God rejected temple sacrifices and established true worship among the nations.

How It Applies To Us Today

† God still sees beyond outward actions, He looks at the heart.

† Empty routine without honor toward God is still rejected.

† We can still give God what's left instead of what matters most.

† True worship is fulfilled in Christ, not tied to a system but to a transformed life.

Q & A Appendix

Q If God loved Israel, why does He rebuke them so strongly?

A Hebrews 12:6 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.

Q What does it mean that God hated Esau?

A Romans 9:13 Just as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

Q Why were defective sacrifices such a big deal?

A Leviticus 22:21-22 requires offerings without defect.

Q How is Malachi 1:11 fulfilled?

A John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

Q Why did God say He would rather shut the temple?

A Matthew 15:8 This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Malachi 1

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews; Mishnah; Justin Martyr

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