

MALACHI

GOD IN THE RUINS | MALACHI 1-4, WITH FOCUS ON 3:2 & 4:2
APRIL 12, 2020 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

*"But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays.
And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves." (Malachi 4:2)*

Malachi and Waiting (Malachi 1:1)

Waiting and Human Limitations

Limitations in failed sacrifices versus true sacrifice (1:6-14)

Limitations in human leaders and the true priest (2:1-9)

Waiting and the Greatness of God

The Loving God who is great (1:2-5)

The Faithful God in the midst of unfaithfulness (2:10-16)

The Just God in the midst of injustice (2:17-3:5)

The Generous God in the midst of stinginess (3:6-12)

Waiting for Something New (4:1-6)

Jesus and the Arrival of Something New (Mark 9:2-13; Luke 24:5-7; John 1:5, 29)

Jesus with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration

The True Sacrifice and the True Priest

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever experienced a scene of nature, like a sunrise, that was so beautiful you could never forget it? Where were you and why was it so memorable?
2. This week as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, we conclude our series, "God in the Ruins: The Message of the Minor Prophets," by looking at the prophet Malachi. Begin this study by praying that God would speak to you through His Word.
3. Read Malachi 1:1. *Background:* Malachi is the last of the minor prophets chronologically, most likely beginning his ministry around 460 BC, after the completion of the Second Temple encouraged by Haggai and Zechariah. Context suggests that Malachi's ministry occurred around the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, but we have little direct information about the exact timing. Malachi, which means "my messenger" or "my angel," could be the prophet's name or a title derived from 3:1.
4. Read Malachi 1:2-5. What do these verses tell us about God?
5. The successive chapters of Malachi trace ways in which God's people have fallen short of their calling. Read some or all of the following sections, and reflect on who God is and who the people are in each section:
 - Failures in sacrifices and true worship (1:6-14)
 - Failures of priests and the good priest (2:1-9)
 - Unfaithful people but a faithful God (2:10-16)
 - Unjust people and the just God (2:17-3:5)
 - Stingy people and the generous God (3:6-12)
6. Have you ever experienced failure in your life? What about in your life with God? What happened? How did you deal with it?
7. Malachi 3:13-18 shows two distinct responses to God and His calling. Read that passage, and then describe the distinct responses to God in your own words.
8. The description of the people as God's "treasured possession" comes from Deuteronomy 7:6. Read that passage. In light of that verse and Malachi 3:17 what do you think it means to be God's treasured possession?
9. Read Malachi 4:1-6. The final chapter of Malachi point to a future time that will bring together both Moses and Elijah in a time of renewal. What would you say is the meaning of this last chapter of Malachi?
10. Read Mark 9:2-13. How does this episode in Jesus' life connect with what you read in Malachi 4? What might it tell us about who Jesus is?
11. Reread Malachi 4:2. How does our celebration of Jesus' resurrection bring new significance to this verse?
12. Answer one or both of these questions. What is God speaking to you through this study of Malachi? What is one of the biggest takeaways for you from this series on the minor prophets? If you are on your own, write that down. If you are in a small group, discuss your answers with one another. Close in prayer. Choose one person in your life who you will share something you have learned about God through this study.

TAKE IT WITH YOU—This week, allow God's message through Malachi to sink into your life with this verse: *"But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves."* (Malachi 4:2)