

THE BOOK OF MALACHI – “MESSENGERS OF THE LORD”

Trinity Lutheran Church – Norman, OK.

Date: 2-24-19 Lesson: 2

Theme: “Messengers of the Lord,”

- Then and now, proclaim to each generation
The Law and The Gospel
- Properly distinguished - but boldly spoken



A. THE TEXT: (Malachi 1:1-14)

The oracle of **the word of the Lord** to Israel by Malachi.

(2) "I have loved you," says **the Lord**. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares **the Lord**. "Yet I have loved Jacob (3) but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert." (4) If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," **the Lord of hosts** says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom **the Lord** is angry forever.'"

(5) Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "**Great is the Lord** beyond the border of Israel!" (6) "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**?' (7) 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. (8) 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**.

(9) 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**. (10) 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. (11) 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**.

(12) But you profane it when you say that **the Lord's table** is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. (13) 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**. (14) 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.

B. STUDY GUIDE

1. An oracle (**Zech 9:1; 12:1; Hab 1:1**)- an oracle was often a vision, and brought a pronouncement of a burden and impending doom but also contained hope for the future.
2. Jacob and Esau – one was “loved = chosen” and the other was “hated – rejected”
(**Gen. ch. 25 – 28; ch. 32-36; Rom. 9:10-13**) God chose the younger son Jacob to establish the Messianic line, but Esau in his stubborn unbelief was rejected.
God is saying to Israel that He has loved them, as He loved Jacob.
Note the Messianic line: Abraham –Isaac –Jacob –Judah –David –Solomon –Joseph/Mary –Jesus.
3. Edom – the unbelieving descendants of Esau (**Gen. 25:30; 36:1-43; Num. 20:14-21**)
Throughout the history of Israel – the Edomites were their enemies and nemesis.
Between 550-400 B.C. the Nabatean Arabs forced the Edomites from their homeland.
4. The Lord Almighty expected at the very least, love like a son for a father, respect like a servant to his master, but Israel has treated the Lord with contempt. (**Prov. 18:3; Is 1:1-4**).
5. The food offerings they brought showed their contempt for the Lord by not bringing the best of their flocks and food, but rather the worst and the blemished. The Lord sees this corrupt practice and is angry.
(**Lev 1:6-8,21; 21:3; 22:18-23; 23:33-44; Dt. 15:21; Ezek 23:41; 44:16; Is 1:11-15**)
6. Instead, we are called to obey the Lord, come in repentance and faith, and fear the Lord Almighty, since he is the Creator and we are his creatures.
He is the Great King – the Lord whose name is to be feared among all the nations.
(**Dt 28:58; Ps 72:8-11; 95:3; 113:3; Is 56:6,7; 60:7; Jer 46:18; Zeph 2:11; Zech 14:9; 1 Tim 6:15; Heb 13:15**)
7. (v. 11) 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**. This is a foretelling of the New Testament era when the Gospel will go to all nations.
(**Lk 1:9,10; Rom 10:17; 2 Cor 2:14-17; Php 2:10; Rev 5:8**)

Apology of Augsburg Confessions XXIV:32,33 ³² Besides, the prophet’s own words give us his meaning. They say, first, that the name of the Lord will be great. This takes place through the proclamation of the Gospel, which makes known the name of Christ and the Father’s mercy promised in Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel produces faith in those who accept it. They call upon God, they give thanks to God, they bear afflictions in confession, they do good works for the glory of Christ. This is how the name of the Lord becomes great among the nations. Therefore “incense” and “a pure offering” do not refer to a ceremony *ex opere operato* but to all those sacrifices through which the name of the Lord becomes great, like faith, prayer, proclamation of the Gospel, confession, etc.

³³ It somebody wants to include the ceremony here, we shall gladly concede this, so long as he does not mean that by itself, or *ex opere operato*, the ceremony is beneficial. Among the praises of God or sacrifices of praise we include the proclamation of the Word. In the same way, the reception of the Lord’s Supper itself can be praise or thanksgiving, but it does not justify *ex opere operato* or merit the forgiveness of sins when it is transferred to others. In a moment we shall explain how even a ceremony is a sacrifice. **Malachi is talking about all the worship of the New Testament**, not only about the Lord’s Supper, and he does not propound the pharisaic idea of ceremonies *ex opere operato*; therefore he does not refute our position but supports it. For he requires the worship of the heart, by which the name of the Lord really becomes great.”

C. LIFE APPLICATION: How do we honor and show that we believe that God is a great King, so that his name will be feared among the nations as the Lord of hosts?