

I Have Loved You



Malachi 1:1–5; 3:6 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 51, “I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord,” on Gospel Library**

START

The last book of the Old Testament opens with the Lord saying, “I have loved you.” The people answered with a question, “Wherein hast thou loved us?” (Malachi 1:2).

READ TOGETHER

Malachi preached about a hundred years after the Jews came home from Babylon. The temple had been rebuilt, and many people had grown tired and careless in their worship (Malachi 1:13).

MALACHI 1:2

²I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,

MALACHI 3:6

⁶For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Malachi’s book is built on questions like this one. The Lord says something, the people answer, “Wherein?” and the Lord explains (Malachi 1:6–7; 3:7–8). It reads like a conversation with a people who had stopped seeing the Lord’s hand.

The Lord answered by pointing to their history. He reminded them that he had loved Jacob, their forefather (Malachi 1:2). All through the

Old Testament he kept reaching out. He fed Israel with manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16:4), and he brought them home from Babylon.

“For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6). Israel had survived because the Lord’s love held steady while theirs came and went.

The greatest answer to “Wherein hast thou loved us?” came about four hundred years later. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16).

TALK ABOUT IT

How would you answer the question “Wherein hast thou loved us?” Where have you seen the Lord’s love this week?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Malachi’s people asked how the Lord had loved them. He pointed to their whole history, and his greatest answer was still to come, in Bethlehem.