

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.

A Pure Offering



Malachi 1:6–14 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

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START

The priests in Malachi’s day brought blind, lame, and sick animals to the Lord’s altar (Malachi 1:8).

READ TOGETHER

The law of Moses asked for animals without blemish, the best of the flock (Leviticus 22:20–22). Some people kept their best animals and gave the Lord the worst (Malachi 1:14).

MALACHI 1:8

8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

MALACHI 1:11

11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

WHAT IT TEACHES

The Lord asked a pointed question. “Offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee?” (Malachi 1:8). No one would give a leader a gift that sick, and they were giving it to God.

They complained about worship too. “Behold, what a weariness is it!” they said (Malachi 1:13).

They went through the motions and resented every step.

The Lord promised that one day, “in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering” (Malachi 1:11). After his death, while darkness covered the land, the Savior’s voice told the Nephites what offering he wants now, a broken heart and a contrite spirit (3 Nephi 9:19–20).

Our offerings today include our prayers, our tithing, our time serving others, and the way we take the sacrament. A pure offering is the best we have, given gladly.

TALK ABOUT IT

What is one offering we give the Lord, like prayer, church, or service? How could we give him our best instead of our leftovers?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Malachi’s priests gave the Lord their sick and lame animals. The Lord asks for our best, given gladly, and the purest offering is a broken heart.

A Refiner's Fire



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START

A silversmith heats silver until it melts. The dross, the impure part, rises to the top, where it can be skimmed away.

READ TOGETHER

Malachi's name means my messenger. In Malachi 3:1, the Lord promises to send his messenger to prepare the way, and then “the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple.”

MALACHI 3:1–3

¹Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. ²But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: ³And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Jesus said that John the Baptist was the messenger in this verse (Matthew 11:10). John prepared the way, and then the Lord came.

Malachi asked, “Who may abide the day of his coming?” The Lord would be “like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap” (Malachi 3:2). A fuller

washed and whitened wool with strong soap. Fire and soap both make things clean, and neither one is gentle.

“He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver” (verse 3). A refiner sits by the fire and watches the silver the whole time. The Savior stays close to us through our refining until the work is done.

The purpose was an offering, so that the sons of Levi could “offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” In 1829 John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and he used Malachi's words about that offering (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1).

TALK ABOUT IT

Refining silver takes heat and time. What is something hard you have been through that made you better, and how was the Lord with you?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Malachi said the Lord would sit as a refiner of silver. When John the Baptist restored the priesthood, he repeated Malachi's promise of an offering in righteousness.

Windows of Heaven



Malachi 3:7–12 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

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START

“Will a man rob God?” the Lord asked through Malachi (Malachi 3:8).

READ TOGETHER

The Lord had just invited his people, “Return unto me, and I will return unto you.” They asked, “Wherein shall we return?” He answered with tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:7–8).

MALACHI 3:8

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

MALACHI 3:10

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

WHAT IT TEACHES

A tithe is a tenth. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek long before the law of Moses (Genesis 14:18–20). Today the Lord asks us for one-tenth of our increase (Doctrine and Covenants 119:4).

Then the Lord gave an unusual invitation. “Prove me now herewith,” he said, and see “if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room

enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). Tithing lets us test the Lord’s promise for ourselves.

Elder David A. Bednar explained why Malachi spoke of windows. “Windows allow natural light to enter into a building. In like manner, spiritual illumination and perspective are poured out through the windows of heaven and into our lives as we honor the law of tithing.”

Elder David A. Bednar, “The Windows of Heaven,” General conference, October 2013

The Lord measures an offering by the heart behind it. Jesus watched a poor widow drop two small coins into the temple treasury. He said she had given more than all the rich, because she gave all she had (Mark 12:41–44).

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the Lord invites us to prove him with tithing? What blessings has our family seen come through the windows of heaven?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Malachi’s people asked how to return to the Lord, and he pointed them to tithes and offerings. When we pay tithing, he opens the windows of heaven.

My Jewels



Malachi 3:13–18 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

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START

Some people in Malachi’s day said, “It is vain to serve God” (Malachi 3:14). They watched proud people do well and wondered why they bothered to be good.

READ TOGETHER

“And now we call the proud happy,” they said, because the wicked seemed to get away with everything (Malachi 3:15).

MALACHI 3:16–17

16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. **17** And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Others who feared the Lord “spake often one to another” (Malachi 3:16). They kept each other going. The Lord listened, and “a book of remembrance was written before him” for them.

“And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels”

(verse 17). The Lord counts faithful people as his treasure. Adam’s family kept a book of remembrance too (Moses 6:5), and families today still keep records of their faith.

Verse 18 promises that one day everyone will see the difference between serving God and not serving him. The proud looked happy for a while. The Lord remembers every small act of faith.

TALK ABOUT IT

Malachi’s faithful people spoke often to each other about the Lord. When do we talk about the Lord in our family, and how could we do it more?

TAKE TO CHURCH

When some said serving God was useless, the faithful kept talking to each other about the Lord. A book of remembrance was written for them, and the Lord called them his jewels.

Healing in His Wings



Malachi 4:1–4 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

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START

Malachi called the Savior “the Sun of righteousness” and said he would rise “with healing in his wings” (Malachi 4:2).

READ TOGETHER

Malachi 4 is the last chapter of the Old Testament. It describes the Savior’s Second Coming as a day that will “burn as an oven” for the proud and bring light and healing to the faithful (Malachi 4:1–2).

MALACHI 4:1–2

¹For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. ²But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Every living thing needs the sun. Its wings are its rays, reaching over the whole land at dawn. Malachi saw the Savior rising like that, with healing spreading out from him to everyone his light touches.

Those who were healed would “go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall” (Malachi 4:2).

Calves in the stall were fed and cared for until they grew strong. The Savior’s healing makes his people grow the same way.

When the risen Jesus visited the Nephites, he gave them Malachi’s words, because they did not have them (3 Nephi 26:2). He also healed every one of their sick as they were brought to him (3 Nephi 17:7–9). The Sun of righteousness had come to stand among them.

TALK ABOUT IT

Malachi pictured the Savior’s healing like sunlight reaching everything. Where would you like the Savior’s healing in your life or in our family?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Malachi saw the Savior rise like the sun with healing in his wings. He healed every sick Nephite brought to him, and he still heals the people who come to him.

Elijah the Prophet



Malachi 4:5–6 · This week: I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord, Malachi

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START

The Old Testament ends with a promise. “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5).

READ TOGETHER

Elijah lived hundreds of years before Malachi and was taken up to heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11). Many Jewish families still set out a cup for Elijah at the Passover meal and open the door for him.

MALACHI 4:5–6

⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: ⁶ And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

WHAT IT TEACHES

When the angel Moroni visited Joseph Smith in 1823, he quoted these verses with a difference. Elijah would reveal the priesthood, and he would plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers (his account).

On April 3, 1836, Elijah came. He appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple and gave them the keys of the sealing power (Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16). It was Easter Sunday, during the week of Passover, when Jewish families were watching their doors for Elijah.

In general conference, President D. Todd Christofferson taught what the sealing power does. “This sealing power is a perfect manifestation of the justice, mercy, and love of God. With access to the sealing power, our hearts naturally turn to those who have gone before. The latter-day gathering into the covenant crosses through the veil.”

President D. Todd Christofferson, “The Sealing Power,” General conference, October 2023

Turning our hearts to our fathers can start small. We can learn a grandparent’s story, find an ancestor’s name, and take that name to the temple. The last promise of the Old Testament is being kept in our own families.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you know about one of your grandparents or great-grandparents? What is one thing we could do this week to learn more?

TAKE TO CHURCH

The Old Testament ends with the promise that Elijah would come. He came to the Kirtland Temple in 1836, and now our hearts can turn to our families on both sides of the veil.