

Malachi 1:1-5 Discussion Guide

Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

Read Scripture

Read the entire book Malachi together, with special focus on 1:1-5.

Bible Study: The HEAR Method

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together. HEAR is an inductive Bible study method that looks closely at what the Bible says in order to discover what it means so that we can faithfully apply it to our lives.

HEAR stands for:

- **Highlight:** read and observe everything in the passage carefully.
- **Examine:** based on your observations, discover what the passage means in its context.
- **Apply:** determine how the meaning of the passage applies to your life.
- **Respond in prayer:** pray God's Word back to Him.

Remember:

- Walk through the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all of your life.

Pray

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

Malachi 1:1-5 (ESV)

"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 ³but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.' ⁴If 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.' ⁵Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, 'Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!'"

Open: Has a promise ever been made to you before but been delayed in being fulfilled? If so, what were some of the emotions you experienced as you waited for the promise to come to pass?

Study:

- 1) What is an oracle? The people who heard this oracle had seen God restore them to their land after their captivity in Babylon. In what ways might they have been encouraged that

God was about to speak to them again (see 1:1)? What promises had they not yet seen come to pass?

- 2) God begins to present a case against His people in vs. 2. What is His main concern? Why is it so significant?
- 3) What doubts and fears might the people of Israel have had in the wake of their restoration to Jerusalem after the exile? What does the text imply the people are complaining about (1:2-3)? What in Israel's past or present might lead them to question God's love for them?
- 4) The Lord vindicates His love for His people by reminding them of His election of Jacob as the child of the promise over his twin brother Esau (vs. 1:2-3; compared to Gen. 25:23). What lesson is Israel to learn from God's election of their forefather Jacob?
- 5) How did God treat the people of Israel and the Edomites differently in light of the judgments that came on both nations? What did He intend for this to teach the people of Israel about His love for them and His love for justice as well?
- 6) While Israel had experienced judgment and restoration, the destruction of Edom had not yet happened in Malachi's time. Deuteronomy 23:7 forbids Israel from hating Edom, so why does God tell them that Edom will also experience judgment, but not restoration? How does this again encourage Israel of God's love for them?

Apply:

- 7) In what ways do you let experiences and circumstances dictate how you view God's love and favor towards you?
- 8) Are there times that you question and doubt God's love for you? If so, what commonalities do you see, or patterns, that lead you to doubt His love?
- 9) How are you tempted to turn your attention away from the hope you have in Christ and place them on your circumstances?
- 10) How can meditating on God's choice and pursuit in saving you through the Gospel serve to silence any doubts you have of God's love for you?

PRAY:

- Take time thank God for His love that saved you and adopted you into His family.
- Take time to thank God for the many ways He has cared for you and the ways He has dealt with you even in your sin.
- Ask God for the Spirit's help to trust in the fact that God is at work beyond what you can see and experience.
- Ask God to use this book to strengthen our hope in God and enliven a boldness to live for Him.

NOTE: a variety of resources have been used for this discussion guide including: *ESV 12-Week Study Guide*, *Malachi Study Guide* from Christ Redeemer Church, and *Malachi: Easy Doesn't Change the World* by John Barry