

Malachi 1:6-14 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 first chapter of Malachi together, with special focus on 1:6-14.

Bible Study: The HEAR Method

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together using the HEAR inductive Bible study method.

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 your life.

Pray

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

Malachi 1:6-14 (ESV)

"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 priest, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?' ⁷By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD's table may be despised. ⁸When 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. ⁹And 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. ¹⁰Oh 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. ¹¹For 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. ¹²But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. ¹³But 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. ¹⁴Cursed 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."

Open: When you were a child did you ever have household chores? If so, what were they? How did you approach these chores and why?

Study:

- 1) From this passage of Scripture, what is God confronting the priests about? Why was the confrontation necessary and significant? How does the picture of a father and master reveal how the priests were despising God?
- 2) How did the priests challenge God's accusation? What does this say about their understanding of honor that God is due? How might doubting God's love have led to this (vv. 2-5)?
- 3) What were some of the specific ways that the priests dishonored God? How were these actions the equivalent of despising God's name?
- 4) Why would the Lord prefer the doors of His house to be shut rather than allow services to continue there? How does this relate to God's name being "great among the nations?"
- 5) Why would God hold the priests responsible when the Israelite laymen substituted blemished, imperfect animals in place of the better animals they had vowed?
- 6) Why does God call Himself a great King in verse 14? How does this relate to the honor that He alone deserves? Why is He so hard on halfhearted expressions of worship?
- 7) Even though Israel fails to honor God in its worship, God's plan to create worshipers for himself is not thwarted. Malachi 1:11 declares that God will ultimately recreate and change people's hearts from all nations. How is this promise fulfilled in the New Testament?

Apply:

- 8) How might these halfhearted expressions of worship be related to Israel's doubting of God's love of them (vv. 2-5)? How does Malachi's accusation challenge your approach to worship?
- 9) God says that a complete closure of the temple and a stoppage of worship would be better off than Israel's halfhearted worship. Does this sound extreme to you? Why or why not?
- 10) Are there any ways that you are offering God "blemished sacrifices"? What changes might you need to make to honor the Lord in ways that are fitting?
- 11) How did Jesus come and serve you (see Romans 5:6-11)? How can the reality that He gave His life for you, while you hated Him, empower you with new strength and vigor?

PRAY:

- Take time thank God for His love that saved you and reconciled you into His family.
- Ask God for the Spirit's help to understand and revel in the extent of His love for you.
- Ask God to for strength and power to worship Him with your whole heart.

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