

A Credible Faith

Lesson 1

Malachi 1:1-2:9

June 6, 2021

Credibility Gap in Giving God Our Best

Introduction

Malachi is the last book in the epic of the Old Testament and was written about 500 years before the birth of Christ. Its pages detail the prophecies of the Lord's judgments and, in particular, highlight the frustration that God has with the nation of Israel and the priests of the tribe of Levi. The priests maintained a distinct and "set-aside" role in Jewish culture, but they had forgotten their true love and replaced it with a smug, self-satisfied nominal service to the Lord. They did not truly love the Lord, and it showed in their offerings.

God required that Israel give Him their best and therefore that the offerings be the best that they had to offer. The priests of Malachi were presenting second best and second-tier offerings, proving that they did not truly love the Lord.

In the same way, Christ has no interest in our second best. He asks for and deserves our whole heart, our entire lives, and our best offerings. Christ chased (and still chases) after us despite our sinful ways, and He is worthy of our complete worship.

As you read through this week's journal, think about your offerings to Christ. How are you spending your time, your energy, and your money? Are you giving Christ your best or your leftovers? His love for us extended to the Cross, and He deserves our daily best.

As the architect and creator of the universe, the Lord has no needs. In the same way that a father loves the gifts and hugs from his 3-year-old child, our Father in Heaven cherishes our worship and offerings.

Memory verse: “Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and my name is to be feared among the nations.”—Malachi: 1:14

Pray and read Malachi 1:1-2:9. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. Who did God love? (Malachi 1:2)
2. Like what relationship did the Lord say that His relationship with Israel is? (Malachi 1:6)
3. Why did the Lord say that He is worthy of perfect sacrifices? (Malachi 1:6, 8)
4. What was wrong with the offerings and sacrifices that the priests offered? (Malachi 1:7-8)
5. How did the Lord say that the priests had angered Him? (Malachi 2:2, 7-9)

