

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. The name “Malachi” means “my messenger.” The historical background of Malachi dates back to around 430-460 B.C., during the post-exilic period. After the return from Babylonian captivity, the temple was completed through the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah, and some time had passed since then. A great spiritual revival had occurred through the ministry of Ezra after the completion of the temple. However, as time went on, the spiritual fervor began to fade. The worship of the Israelites became merely formal. They were sinking into deep spiritual stagnation. God's message through Malachi was to expose their true condition and warn them.

The first message reveals that Israel's crisis came from turning away from God's love. Even in the time of Malachi, God declared, “I have loved you.” But the people of Israel responded, “How have You loved us?” It was their way of saying, “I don't feel God's love.” The returned people of Judah were living in poor and difficult conditions. They were suffering economic, social, and political hardships. Naturally, they questioned, “If God loves us, how could He let this happen?” Looking at their lives, they couldn't help but ask, “Does God really love me?”

Why did the Israelites respond this way to God's word? It reveals what they truly desired from God—they wanted success and peace, and they sought confirmation of God's love through those things.

God responds, “Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated.” This is a unique Hebrew expression used to show preference. It means He loved Jacob even though he was not the firstborn. This comparative, present-tense message of love also appears in today's passage. God is saying, “Did I not choose you?” It speaks of God's unconditional and sovereign love that began even while Jacob was still in the womb.

From the perspective of Israel, this love is incomprehensible. But because it is God's sovereign love, it is unshakable and unchanging. Therefore, we must trust in this love. And we must hope in this love. Moreover, this love is eternal. That is why we must place our hope in it.

The Lord proved His love by laying down His life for us. He loved us with the love of the cross. Israel doubted God's love. Every broken relationship begins with doubt in love. When love grows cold, devotion also grows cold. People serve half-heartedly, going through the motions, or they serve with bitterness and complaints. Worship becomes formalistic. In Malachi, we see that the root of all Israel's problems was the loss of love.

Dear friends, believe in God's absolute, unconditional, and incomprehensible love. Love God, and hope in His love. That is the path to restoration.

As it says in verse 5 of today's passage, we must recover our praise and thanksgiving in response to God's enduring love for us. Then our worship will come alive. Our devotion will be restored. The work of the Holy Spirit will begin anew.

**Bible
Memorization**

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:44)

**Bible
Reading**

7/28(Mon)	7/29(Tue)	7/30(Wed)	7/31(Thur)	8/1(Fri)	8/2(Sat)	8/3(Sun)
Ecc. 4-8	Ecc. 9-12, Songs 1	Songs 2-6	Songs 7-8, Isaiah 1-2	Isaiah 3-6	Isaiah 7-10	Isaiah 11-14

QT

Quiet Time Passage

7/28(Mon)	7/29(Tue)	7/30(Wed)	7/31(Thur)	8/1(Fri)	8/2(Sat)	8/3(Sun)
Ezekiel 8:1-18	Ezekiel 9:1-11	Ezekiel 10:1-8	Ezekiel 10:9-22	Ezekiel 11:1-12	Ezekiel 11:13-25	Ezekiel 12:1-16

**Sharing
Questions**

1. Share the grace you have experienced in your life through last week's message or your personal devotional (QT) time.

2. What new insights or grace did you receive through today's message?

3. Reflect on how the message “God loves me” resonates with you personally today. Evaluate your current spiritual condition, and pray together that your gratitude and praise for God's love would be restored.