

MALACHI #1
SEVEN QUESTIONS OF A BACKSLIDER
HOW DO YOU LOVE ME?

Malachi 1 An oracle: The word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi.
²“I have loved you,” says the Lord . “But you ask, ‘**How have you loved us?**’ “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” the Lord says. “Yet I have loved Jacob,³ but Esau I have hated, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals.”⁴ Edom may say, “Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins.” But this is what the Lord Almighty says: “They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the Lord .⁵ You will see it with your own eyes and say, ‘Great is the Lord —even beyond the borders of Israel!’ NIV

I. GOD’S LOVE DECLARED- “I have loved you” v 2

- A. The message is delivered by His prophet
- B. The message does not change in the N.T.- John 3 16
- C. The message is from the Father of Israel to his people.
- D. The Father does not lie to us about how he feels toward us.

**When Adam sinned it was God who said ask, “Adam where are you?”
not Adam asking, “God, where are you?”**

Not only is God’s love declared but ...

II. GOD’S LOVE DOUBTED- “how have you loved us?”

- A. They were questioning God’s love based on **history**
They had been disciplined as a nation because of their idolatry. They had gone into Babylonian captivity.

Discipline is not perceived as love when it produces pain!
Why did God allow them to be taken captive in a foreign land?
What good can come of them losing their identity as a nation?
Why does God allow His people to suffer?

- B. They questioned God’s love because of **ingratitude.**

a *Malachi* means *my messenger*.

They had forgotten God had brought them back to from Babylon.
They had rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.
The temple had been rebuilt.

C. They questioned God's love because they had **lost faith.**

vs 3,4 Esau was hated and his descendants the Edomites were taunting the descendants of Jacob. The Jews were having to confront them again and again since returning to the Promised Land.

When a believer doubts the love of God and loses faith....

*They have **lifeless ritualistic worship**

*They **withhold their tithes.** Mal 3 6

*They begin to **develop bad relationships with others.**

*They begin to **live a hard life.**-The way of the transgressor is hard.

God's love is was only declared, and doubted but

III. GOD'S LOVE IS DEMONSTRATED

A. God's **covenant** with Jacob and his descendants.

v2... "Yet I have loved Jacob" ...

B. They were **chosen-**

v2.... "Yet I have loved Jacob, ³ but Esau I have hated, Esau and his descendants rejected the covenant. Therefore Israel is favored.

C. Their previous adversity and captivity were not signs of God's hatred toward them, but evidence of His love, to turn them from their wickedness.

D. God's dealing with their enemy

1. Past

v3 Esau I have hated, and **I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals.**

2. Present

⁴ Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins."

It may be that your enemy is prospering, prideful, and taunting with their words. It is a prelude to a fall.

Watch what God does to our enemies in their future plans.

3. Future

The Lord Almighty says: “They may build, but **I will demolish**. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people **always under the wrath of the Lord**

E. God’s promise

v5 You will see it with your own eyes and say, ‘Great is the Lord —even beyond the borders of Israel!’

God is assuring them that he has plans for their future. His love does not abandon us. **God’s love cannot be seen just in the moment or in just our own lifetime.** Look around you there is plenty of evidence of His love for you.

Conclusion: Backsliding starts with ...doubting God’s love. One of the early signs of drifting from God is bitterness and doubt. We begin to judge God’s love based on material blessings or on just the moment. God’s love must be measured over a lifetime. Failure to see God’s love is a serious “I” problem, and means we need to have our vision corrected. God will not fail us!