

# MALACHI

## Week 2

### OVERVIEW

Ever feel unappreciated or unheard? Do you long to be respected and listened to? Do you wish the people in your life would honor you for what you've done?

Israel is confronted with a message from the Lord through Malachi that addresses the waywardness of their hearts. He is worthy of their listening and obeying – Hebrew: “shema” – and yet continually gets ignored. After 70 years in Exile and after all God has done for them to enable them to return home to rebuild life together as a people, they have quickly fallen away.

In this opening dialogue, God calls out the people for their lack of honor, faith, and trust in Him.

### KEY QUESTION:

What does it look like for you to fear God and give Him your very best?

### DISCUSSION

READ Malachi 1:1-14 out loud as a group

#### OBSERVATION:

- Who is involved/mentioned in the text?
- What does God say?
- What do the people say in return?
- What key words stand out to you?
- What are some repeated words, phrases or ideas?
- Notice the Disputations (there are 2 in this part)
  - o What are they about?

#### INTERPRETATION:

- What seems most important to God that the people should know?
- Why would it matter that God starts with His love as a matter of dispute?
- What role did Jacob and Esau play in Israel's history and why might that matter here?
- What role did sacrifices play in Israel's history?
- What role did sacrifice play in their current context?
- Why might it be significant that the priests are being disobedient?
- We know God to be a loving God, how do you feel about v3-4?

#### INTERPRETATION CONT.

- How can we hold in tension that God is love and He has wrath for sin?
- Why is it significant that the priests were offering imperfect sacrifices (v13)?
- What does the "fear of the Lord" mean? (v6, 14)
- Why is it significant that the Lord would be feared "among the nations" and not just by Israel?

#### APPLICATION:

- In what ways have you seen God's love in the last few days? Have each guy name a few examples.
- Why does it matter that we take time to slow down and call out God's acts of love?
- When is it easiest for you to miss God's provision in your life?
- What do we miss when we neglect gratitude as a regular practice in our life (particularly with God)?
- What is at the heart of the issue in Chapter 1?
- God is worthy of our best. The best of our time, talents, and treasures are what God is asking for. Are there ways in which you hold back from offering God your best?
- What does it look like for you to fear God and give Him your very best?

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Read Malachi 2:1-16
- Make notes of Observation, Interpretation, and Application
- Bring your thoughts to group to share next week