

# Malachi #1: An Introduction

by Ed Miller

---

*The book of Malachi is a message from God to His people, particularly the remnant of Israel and Judah, about His burden to communicate with them and the personal crisis of forgetfulness and pride that they face.*

**Duration:** 52:29

**Topics:** "God's Character", "Spiritual Pride"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the book of Malachi and its significance as the closing of the Old Testament. He highlights six major issues that God is burdened with, including the love of God, the work of God, the people of God, the ways of God, the faithfulness of God, and the glory of God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding these aspects of God's character. He also warns against forgetting God's commandments and becoming proud when experiencing material blessings. The sermon encourages listeners to examine their inward thoughts and align them with God's truth.

---

## Transcript

It's always a privilege for me to have the opportunity to share the Lord Jesus, especially with hearts that I know are hungry and desire to see Him. As we come to the study of God's Word, there is a principle of Bible study that's absolutely indispensable. A principle we cannot take for granted.

We cannot live without. And that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. This is His book.

This is His Word. He revealed it and now He must illumine it. He must give us eyes to see it.

If He does not, we don't miss it by a little bit. Isaiah 55, verse 8 says, As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my thoughts above your thoughts, my ways above your ways. We might get the idea as we read God's Word, if we're not enlightened by God, well, we're close to the truth.

We're not close. As high as the heavens are above the earth, that's how much we miss it without the light of God. It's not just a little bit.

We are all together out of it. And so He's promised if we would come as little children, that He would minister unto us, show us Himself. I think you know that we're going to look this weekend at the wonderful book of Malachi.

Every book in the Bible gives a revelation of the Lord Jesus that no other book gives in the same way. We're asking the Lord to give us that revelation of the Lord from this book. I'm going to ask you brothers to join with me please as we commit this time to Him because it's an introduction lesson and we're sort of all over the place just to get a spirit of the book.

We actually begin the book in the morning, but we need to feel it, we need to sense God's heart in this book. So I'm going to ask you to join me and ask for the Lord's grace as we begin. Heavenly Father, we do thank You so much that You have not left us on our own when we come to study Your Word, but You have given us Your life, the Holy Spirit in our hearts whose precious ministry it is at all times to put the spotlight on the Lord Jesus, to unveil Him, to reveal Him to us in a living way that we might be changed from one degree of glory to another.

And so we wait this evening and we ask by Your mercy that You would do that. Open our hearts. We pray that You would do what You did for Eutychus and by a miracle of resurrection keep us alive to hear the end of the message.

We thank You, Lord, for Your goodness and Your grace and we just look to You now in Jesus' matchless name. Amen. Brothers, I want to open with you some of the things the Lord has begun to make real in my heart from that wonderful book of Malachi.

Some of you that haven't heard me speak, you might wonder why my Bible sits there and you say, he never even opens it. How come he doesn't open it? I have opened it. My eyes are not what they used to be.

The older Lillian gets, the worse my eyesight gets. And so what I have done is I've enlarged the print and I have pasted it on my paper. So you'll hear the Bible.

I really have opened that book. That's just by way of explanation. And for those of you that see this stack of notes and say, oh no, we'll be here forever.

I don't put much on a page. I just so I can glance and it's for your protection that I have these notes so that I don't go astray and happily there's a last page. So you'll be out of here sometime.

I'm going to ask you to turn please to the book of Malachi. Why? I've heard some folks refer to it as the Malachi papers. Whatever you call it, it's the last book in your Old Testament.

And I'm afraid that's about the only thing that some folks know about it. That it's the last book in the Old Testament. And it's last in several ways.

It's the last of the minor prophets. And so you can expect God in some way to clinch the message of the minor prophet. It sort of sits between two 400s.

The minor prophets cover approximately 400 years. And there was 400 years then to the Lord Jesus. And this is central.

And so it will clinch the minor prophets. It's also the last book of the post-exilic prophets. And so you can expect God to wrap up the remnant truth concerning the exile.

It's also the last book of the Old Testament. And so you can expect God to wrap up His entire heart as He comes to the close of that revelation. Now this is sort of an ending and an introduction.

Because He closes and summarizes His heart for the past 3,500 years. And He anticipates all that's going to be coming and in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Don't answer this out loud.

If you were God, and you were writing a last book of the Old Testament, what would you say in four chapters? And if you had the Hebrew Bible in three chapters, what would you say as you close? To wrap it all up. To get you ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus. Look, if you would, at Malachi 1.1. The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi.

Most translations don't say oracle. They use the word burden. The burden of the Lord.

The word of the Lord. The burden. And that in the original carries the idea of heaviness.

That's a weight. That's a pressure. The burden of the Lord.

And I have an idea, and I think we'll be able to see it. As God comes to the end, He has a burden. He has a pressure.

He has something on His heart. Something heavy that He wants to communicate. Parting words are serious words.

They're sober words. They're somber words. And as God prepares to leave the Old Testament, He has some sobering things to say.

Things are pressing on His heart. Now you'll notice in verse 1, even though Malachi 1.1 says to Israel, you need to understand how Malachi is using the word Israel. For example, in chapter 2, verse 11, it says Judah has dealt treacherously.

And in chapter 3.4, the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, and so on. As you know from your Old Testament Bible history, that in its early history, the nation was split, north and south. And there were ten tribes in the north called Israel.

Two tribes in the south called Judah. And every now and then, God would call His prophets. And some of the prophets would address the northern kingdom, Israel.

For example, Amos and Hosea to Israel. And some of His prophets would address the south, Micah, Habakkuk, Joel. And they would talk only to the south.

And some prophets would talk to both halves, like Isaiah, like Ezekiel. They'd talk to the north, and they'd talk to the south. Call attention to that, because Malachi 1.1 says to Israel, later He's talking to Judah, when God comes to the end, He doesn't recognize the split anymore.

The remnant is who He's addressing. The remnant from Israel. The remnant from Judah.

Those that had gone back out of the captivity. He doesn't see north. He doesn't see south.

He doesn't see His people split. This book is addressed to the remnant. The united part of the body.

The heart part. That were seeking the Lord and returned out of captivity. All those old distinctions are not in the book of Malachi.

He addresses, He unburdens His heart to the remnant. Notice in verse 2, it says, The book of Jonah begins, speak this word against Nineveh. The way some commentators look at Malachi, it's as if he spoke against Israel.

This book is not against Israel. This book is not against the remnant. It's a book that's addressed to the remnant.

He's got a burden. And He wants to talk to His people. I read one commentator that said, this is nothing, the whole book of Malachi is nothing but one long rebuke.

They did not see God's heart in that. That is not what this book is. It's not against His people.

It's the Lord speaking to His people. And there's no question as you go through the book, if you're familiar with it, you say there's some strong language in this book. But it's a severe tenderness.

It's necessary. There is strong language. But if you miss God's heart in this book, then all you're going to see is rebuke.

And it's not that. And so we come to Malachi, God's final word, and I have to add in seed form, because that's Old Testament. You know it's not His final word.

The final word has a first name. What's His final word? Exactly right. He's going to speak again.

And after Malachi, He gives His final word. And Christ is God's all-inclusive, God's final word. This is God's final word too.

It's Christ. But in seed form. And so we're going to look at it in terms of that.

The burden of the Lord as He comes to the end. What I want to do, brothers, this evening, God assisting, as I said, it's an introduction lesson and so it's not going to be chapter 1, verse 1 and verse 2. I want us to get a sense, get the Spirit of God's heart. What's Malachi about? What's the message about? How does God communicate? What is His burden? And then if God would dawn that on us tonight, prepare our hearts, then I feel like God can begin then to minister and give us that full revelation of Christ.

In order to get this before your hearts, I'm going to ask you to bear with me. We're going to do a little bit of donkey work. Let me make a couple of observations that have helped me in understanding God's heart in this book.

And one of the first things we need, now I'm not going to go throwing a lot of dates at you. This happened at a certain date. You can read the reference book.

You can get that yourself. I want the principles. I want to see what's behind all of these facts.

But I think it's important if you're going to understand not only Malachi, but any book, you need to get the historical background. You need to get the setting. And what I want to explain here is this, that the remnant that is addressed in the book of Malachi had a history, a spiritual history of life with the Lord.

They're not strangers to the Lord. They're not strangers to His revelation. These are the saints of God that responded to the Lord and came out of captivity.

And because when that message of grace, when the beautiful feet of Cyrus announced that they could go back, this is the group that went back and how they rejoiced. Listen to this verse from Psalm 126. When the Lord brought back the captive ones out of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Our mouth was filled with laughter, our tongue with joyful shouting. Then they said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them. The Lord has done great things for us.

We're glad. See, that was the joy that they had. And when they went back, even though this might not be literal, in their hearts they were singing Isaiah 51.11. Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and go with singing.

That's where they were going. They were coming out of captivity. And they were going back to Zion.

They had a spiritual history. But that was a long time ago. You're not going to understand Malachi unless you realize that was a long time ago.

When you read the book of Malachi, you see that the temple has already been rebuilt. And so it's later than Ezra. The priests have already been reestablished.

They've had worship in the temple for a long time. In fact, when you see the book, it's starting to go in the other direction. As I said, I'm not just going to throw a bunch of dates at you.

When did this happen? When did that happen? When did the other thing happen? Get hold of the spiritual reality. This was a people that had much to praise the Lord for. But it was a long time ago.

They had at least two revivals since they had come out of captivity. Of course, the first one Ezra speaks of in his book when under Zerubbabel and Haggai and Zechariah, the temple had been reestablished. And even though there was a period in there where it was delayed for about 15 years, it finally was completed and how they rejoiced at that time.

Great dedication they gave and offered all of these sacrifices, reestablished Passover. It was a glorious time. But that was a long time ago.

They had a second revival of sorts when Nehemiah came back and led them in the rebuilding of the wall. The walls were reconstructed and they celebrated after and set up the Feast of Booths, rejoiced and praised the Lord. No, that whole idea, we don't have time to go into it, but that whole coming back out of captivity, the temple represented the spiritual life of God's people.

And when they built the temple... See, they wanted to build a wall first. They said it makes more sense. Otherwise, it will fall down.

People will come and attack it. Let's build a wall, get some security, and then build a temple. God's prophet said, No, the Lord is a wall of fire round about.

You get right with Him first. And then that wall which represented the knowledge of God that had broken down in so many places. He said, I want a people who are right with Me and surrounded with the knowledge of God.

That's what the remnant is all about. Those are those remnant folks. And you study how God brought them to the place where they were right with Him and finally surrounded with the knowledge of God and

God got His name back and His testimony back.

These people had a lot to praise the Lord for. They had a spiritual history. But that was a long time ago.

It was about 100 years ago that they had been let out of captivity. It had been about 80 years or so that they had the temple rebuilt. It had been 20 years ago when they were finally settled in the city.

They were a people that had a history with the Lord, but they hadn't heard from Him in a long time. Something happens in the heart with a people who have a history with the Lord, who have tasted His deliverance, who have known His goodness and sung His songs and experienced a right relationship with Him and were surrounded with the knowledge of God. And God hasn't spoken in a long, long time.

If you are going to understand Malachi, you need to understand that that was the situation. We know that Malachi was probably written sometime around Nehemiah. They were probably contemporaries.

Some folks say, well, the same sins mentioned there are in Nehemiah 13. And so when Nehemiah, you know, 12 years he was in the land and then he went back. And during the time he was gone is when this was written.

I don't incline to that myself. I think Malachi is a little later. I see evidence that there was a repentance.

And so that would put it a little bit later. I'll show you that when we come to it. I get tickled at some of the commentators.

They say, you know, it's not possible to date this book. But it was followed by 400 silent years. Well, can't you go backwards? It seems like you can date the book if 400 years later Jesus came.

But I'll leave that with them. Anyway, the point I'm making is this. If you're going to understand the book, and now it comes home to our hearts.

They were a people who loved the Lord, who had a history with the Lord, who had tasted deliverance, had tasted the good Word of God, had come a long, long way. But what happens when that was a long time ago? When it's been a long time since I've heard from him. Very instructive.

Closely connected with that is the way Malachi differs from some of the other prophets. You see, the other prophets always, I don't know of an exception, they always addressed a crisis. That's what would happen.

There would be a crisis, usually political. There would be a crisis, and God would raise up a prophet. And so many of the prophets begin that way.

The Word of the Lord came to Isaiah in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. And so you've got to study the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and then you'll understand the message. And over and over again.

And there were big crises. And so Assyria was a big crisis, and then a cluster of prophets were raised up to talk about that crisis. Babylon was a great crisis, and a cluster of prophets were raised up to talk about that crisis.

And Cyrus and the return was a great crisis. And so, by the way, that's ABC. Assyria, Babylon, Cyrus.

It just helps you remember. And there are crises, and these prophets cluster around these crises. But when you come to Malachi, there's no crisis.

At least not out there. You see, the people in that day, they were not being tempted to turn to Baal. That wasn't the issue.

Babylon had cured them of idolatry. And they weren't turning to idolatry. There was no great apostasy.

There was no great persecution at that time. There was no threatened invasion. The Philistines weren't going to come in.

The Moabites weren't going to come in. Babylon, Persia, Greece. It was all over.

They weren't coming in. No threatened invasions. They weren't making any unholy alliances with heathen nations.

You see, brothers, when a person has or a group has a history with the Lord, but that was a long time ago, and there's no crisis going on, there's no problems, there's no issues, something happens. That's what Malachi is about. About a people who loved the Lord and had a history with the Lord, but it had been a long time since the Lord spoke to them.

And meanwhile, things were relatively at ease. Things were going okay. There was no problem.

There were no big issues. There were no threatened invasions. There were no overt attacks of the enemy.

And because of a people that had not heard from God, and because everything was sort of sailing okay, we have the issue, the crisis. It's just not out there. It was a personal crisis.

And if you're going to understand the message of Malachi, we need to understand that crisis. It's addressed to a people who have not had a vital encounter with the Lord for a long time. And basically what follows that is the coming of the Lord Jesus when a people have not heard from the Lord, and all they have to do is wait for Jesus, and everything is going okay.

Listen as I read this warning from Deuteronomy 8. When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land that He has given you. Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which are commanding you this day. Otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, when you have built good houses and lived in them, when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold multiplies, and all that you have multiplies, your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God that brought you out of slavery.

That's the background of Malachi. May God help us not to just read this la, la, la. That's the first observation that I hope will help us get the sense of this book.

The second observation not only has to do with the historical setting, but brothers, I want you to note the peculiar form that the message of this book takes. It is unlike any other book in your Bible. It's different.

And when you study it, you need to see this different. The way it's given is different. With most of the prophets, you have preachers.

These prophets stand up and they address the will. Turn or burn. They just go right after you.

They go after the will. When Amos, the prophet, stands up, his first words are, The Lord roars from Zion. He doesn't roar in Malachi.

He speaks, but he doesn't roar. Strong language, but once you see God's heart, it sort of comes out more as sobs than as a roaring lion. He's not preaching.

You know, when you go through the prophets, usually you're familiar with expressions like this. And the word of the Lord came to the prophet, saying, and then he stands up and says, Thus says the Lord. And you have the Lord speaking through the prophet.

Very little. I saw one, maybe two places where you have something like that in Malachi. But that's not how Malachi does it.

Malachi 1. Verses 1 and 2. The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi. I have loved you, says the Lord. Look at verse 6. A son honors his father.

A servant his master. Then if I'm a father, where's my honor? If I'm a master, where's my respect? Who's talking there? It's amazing. It's almost like the prophet is not there.

It's God talking to His people directly. I've loved you. A son honors his father.

A servant honors his master. You don't honor me. It's me.

It's God talking to His people directly. A personal interview. As you go through the book of Malachi, it's almost as if God took His people into His private office and said, I want you to sit down.

We need to talk. You don't even see the prophet in the book. It's amazing when you go through it.

He's there, but He's not there. It's the Lord talking to His people. Who is this prophet Malachi? Ask me who Hosea is.

I'll tell you who Hosea is. I can tell you about Joel. I can tell you about Jonah.

I can tell you about many of the prophets. Ask me about Daniel. Ask me about Ezekiel.

I'll tell you about Ezekiel. I can tell you about Isaiah. Who's Malachi? Like Melchizedek.

Who's his parents? This guy just shows up. Where did he come from? Where did he live? Where was he born? Commentators are not even sure Malachi is his name. You're familiar with the fact that the word Malachi means messenger of the Lord.

Some think that's just his official title. It's not his name. Messenger of the Lord.

Like John the Baptizer. A voice crying in the wilderness. Go through the whole record of your Bible.

Look in all of those genealogical records. Anybody else in the history of the Bible named Malachi? Nobody. Now Haggai is called the messenger of the Lord, but that's not his name.

That's his title. And so some say we don't even know who wrote this book. I don't think it proves anything that that name has never been used because Amos has never been used and Jonah has never been

used.

There's a lot of names that are mentioned only one time. I was amazed as I went through the commentators. You know, you say the Bible sheds a lot of light on the commentaries.

And it does. Indeed it does. I was amazed because I went through one commentator and he said, and so we have evidence that this was Zerubbabel.

And he begins showing how it's Zerubbabel. And another commentator says, and so we know for sure this was Ezra. And another says it was Nehemiah.

And another says this is Mordecai. And another says this is just some unnamed Levi from Zebulun. Who is it? Is that his name? Is that his title? Some of the commentators said he wasn't human.

The messenger of the Lord? That's the angel of the Lord. This is a message from the angel. It's from heaven.

It's not even a human being. Glance at these verses, please. All through the book there's a play on his name.

In verse 1, of course, it's the author of the book. Look at chapter 2-7. The lips of a priest should preserve knowledge.

Men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is a Malachi of the Lord of hosts. Same word. So a priest is the Malachi of the Lord.

And then chapter 3, verse 1, the forerunner. Behold, I am going to send my Malachi. He will clear the way before me, and the Lord you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

Even Messiah is called Malachi in this book. Chapter 3, verse 1b, the messenger of the covenant. The Malachi of the covenant in whom you delight.

He's coming. That his name? That his office? Does it matter? I think the point is this, brothers, that God seems, as He does in Hebrews, to deliberately hide the human messenger so that we can get the idea that in this book, in a special way, it is God's burden to deal personally with a remnant that hasn't heard from Him for a long time, who had nothing to do but wait for Jesus, and in days when things were going relatively all right. God wants to speak privately to His children.

As I sought the Lord, brothers, for this weekend, I'm convinced in my heart that the Lord wants to deal personally, as if there were no human messenger. He wants to minister unto our hearts. And I don't know, but maybe it's been a long time.

You've got a history with the Lord. You know the Lord. You've been delivered.

You've sung His songs. But maybe that was a long time ago. What does God have to say to a people like that? See, that's what Malachi is about.

God wants to deal personally with His people, with His sons. Let me give one other observation, and I hope it will help us unveil the book. Not only does God speak to a people who are blessed indeed, but who have not heard for a long time, not only does God hide the human instrument so that He can deal

personally, but here's another observation.

To catch the burden of the Lord, I want you to notice the response God gets when He speaks to His people in this book. As I said, there's not another book like this in all the Word of God. This is the great indication, I think, that something was terribly wrong.

Every time God speaks to His people in this book, His people speak back to Him. It's an amazing thing. Every time God opens His mouth, they open their mouths.

Sixteen times in this book, God says, I say to you, but you say. I say, but you say. At a glance, if you would, at that handout sheet I gave, we won't read all of these, but you'll get the idea.

The but you say side. I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, how have you loved us? A son honors his father, a servant his master.

If I'm a father, where's my honor? If I'm a master, where's my respect? Says the Lord of hosts, to you, O priest, who despise my name. But you say, how have we despised your name? You're presenting defiled food on my altar. But you say, how have we defiled you over and over again? When I was a student at Columbia Bible College from 1964 to 1967, we had a visitor come to speak to our anthropology class.

It was an aborigine from the jungles in Australia. You talk about a testimony. He kept you right on the edge of your chair.

This man talked. He was an uncivilized man. And they lifted him up and they brought him into civilization.

He just about got off the plane, saw a cat, domestic cat, grabbed him, ripped him apart, and began eating him raw. That's this man. He was spellbinding to listen to.

He got on the subject of family and family mores. And even in uncivilized societies, they have rules in their family. And he told us about one thing that was not tolerated in his tribe in the history.

It was cannibalism in this man's family. He called it backchat. Backchat.

He said if a child dared backchat his parents, they would reach down on the ground and take a handful of gravel and put it in his mouth and make sure he did not open his mouth to spit it out until he swallowed the gravel. That's backchat. That's the penalty for backchat.

When you read Malachi, you don't have some uncivilized native backchatting to his parents. You have the people of God backchatting to the God of Heaven. Don't read this la, la, la.

These are God's people. This is one of the symptoms of the heart problem in the book. Would you tolerate it with your kids? With your grandchildren? I don't think, as I studied this book of Malachi, I don't think they were brats, this remnant.

That they were just always with a smart, aleck remark and coming back on the Lord. And the Lord said something and they made a wise crack. I don't think it's that.

I think the backchatting had to do with rationalization. There's a good possibility. God keeps saying, but you say, but you say, but you say.

But I have an idea, if you read the book, the what you say you would never say with your mouth. You'd never say it with your lips. You'd never say it with your tongue.

And as you go through the book, it's amazing to see. It's deeper than that. Now, no doubt on occasion it's possible that God's children might say some harsh things to the Lord and talk back to God.

When they're going through some great experience, they might talk back to the Lord. Jeremiah did. Jeremiah told the Lord, You deceive me.

I like the New English Bible on that. Jeremiah 26, You have duped me and I am your dupe. Jeremiah 26.

Job said some harsh things to God. So did Habakkuk. But this is different.

God looks at, can I use you brother as an example, God looked at him and He says, This is true. That's what you say. And his heart says, When? I would never say that.

Would you tell God with your lips, I despise your name. Would you ever say that with your lips? Would you ever say with your lips, Your table is defiled. Your ministry, your work, your service is burdensome, tiresome.

See, we wouldn't say that with our mouth. But maybe we would say it with our heart. See, that's what this book is about.

God is hearing this, and as He gets ready to close the Old Testament, He's hearing these whisperings of the heart that they're saying in their heart. They're not saying it out loud. Sota voce.

Under the breath. And they're saying these things under their breath. It's latent.

It's dormant inside. And I'd like to look at the things we're going to see in this book as the whispers of the heart. The whispers of the heart.

Because in our heart, sometimes, and it's expressed by our actions and by our behavior and by our attitudes and by our disposition, we don't say it out loud. We wouldn't pray it. We wouldn't share it with a friend.

But God hears it. And sometimes it just smolders down there. And so, brothers, we're going to look at Malachi.

And if I understand God's heart, this is about the deep, deep whisperings of the heart. God hears those well-guarded secrets. Things we would never verbalize.

Listen to this Psalm 139, verse 11. Surely the darkness will overwhelm me. The light around me will be night.

Even the darkness is not dark to you. And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are both alike to thee.

I want you to pray with me, brothers, as we go through this weekend. That it would not just be one of those weekends. La, la, la.

Now, this book is the burden of the Lord. He's burdened about those that have had a history and haven't heard for a long time. And something has gone on in those hidden things.

Things that are way down deep that only the Lord hears. As He closes the Old Testament, He takes His remnant into the Oval Office. He sits them down.

And He says, Now, we need to talk. We need to talk. Malachi 2.17, How you've wearied me with your words.

This is the God that can't grow weary. This is the God that can't fatigue. This is the God that can't faint.

And He said, I've been hearing what your heart's been saying. And I'm weary. I'm weary.

God closes the Old Testament. Malachi 3.13, Your words have been arrogant against me, says the Lord. I'm going to ask you to glance at that handout sheet one more time and I'll wrap this up.

The suggested outline I want to follow. You're going to notice I've listed six things. And I'm calling them the inward thoughts of the heart.

Not everyone breaks up Malachi the same way. There's no special magic in one outline over another outline. Feinberg.

I don't know if you're familiar with him. Charles Feinberg from Talbot. He breaks up Malachi into eight controversies.

Our own dear Stephen Kahn found seven. And actually, he broke it up. He calls them seven debates.

Seven debates. And he calls them rounds. Round one.

Round two. Round three. It's like they're in a ring together.

But for our purposes this weekend, I've combined some of that overlap. I've listed these six. Big issues.

Great things over which God is burdened. Now, just listen as I read the things themselves. Do you understand how this is a summary? How God, as He closes 3,500 years of Revelation, would say, Are you clear on the love of God? Are you clear on the work of God? Are you clear on the people of God? Are you clear on the ways of God? Are you clear on the faithfulness of God? Are you clear on the glory of God? That's what this book is.

God said, I can't leave the Old Testament until I unveil those whisperings in your heart. Because, I'll tell you brothers, if you're messed up on the love of God, if you dare harbor a suspicion somehow that He doesn't love me, you're done. You're done.

God sits His people down and they say, No, no, no, it can't be. Here's the method God uses. It's the method we'll follow.

He does two things. And He does it in each case. God help us as we go through this.

Here's what He does. First, He takes His child aside. He said, we need to talk.

And He begins to dig. That's why I love that, Search me, O God, know my heart. That's why I've chosen that as our prayer.

The Hebrew there has to do with delving inside and probing and digging. I just translate it, Dig deep, O God, and know my heart. And He digs deep.

And the Lord takes Him aside and He digs down and He pulls up something that they would deny is there. They do deny. They say, I'd never think that.

God pulls it up and proves it. And then after He proves it, and this is the part we need to see. I've never seen anything like this anywhere else in the Bible.

He digs up the issue and He gives the perfect answer for that issue. The perfect answer. There's no other answer.

It's the only answer. In each case, it's a different answer for each of these six things. God helping us, what I want to do is I want to follow in the book of Malachi as God sits us down and digs this up.

You had a problem, an issue with my love. Here's my answer for that. You've had a problem with my work.

These are the common whisperings of the heart of God's people who have a history with God's people and haven't heard for a long time. Then these things begin to smolder and they begin to come. And God says, I want to give you My answer for this.

I want to give you My answer for this. My answer for the people of God. It's an all-inclusive answer.

There's no other answer. God in the book of Malachi says this is My answer for the work of God, and this is My answer for the people of God, and this is My answer for the ways of God, and this is My answer for the faithfulness of God, and this is My answer for the glory of God. And so we come to this last book.

It's a precious book. I've got to admit, brothers, the Lord has done a number on my heart. As I've studied this book, I've walked with that remnant, and I've denied and I've rationalized, and I've said there's no way I thought that.

And He pulled it up, and He showed me, and then He gave me that answer. It's a great book. Can we trust the Lord together? Can we pray that God would take deep, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me? I believe with all of my heart, apart from any human messenger, the Lord wants to take His sons aside.

He wants to dig deep, and He wants to give His answer on all these issues. Father, thank You for this book of Malachi. Not what we think it might mean, but everything You have inspired it to mean.

Will You teach us, and will You work that in our hearts? We do pray dig deep, O God. Know our hearts. Lord, we don't want to be messed up on these great issues.

Such a burden on Your heart that we know Your love, that we know Your work, and Your people, and Your ways, and Your faithfulness, and Your glory. Will You speak to us this weekend? Thank You. In the matchless name of our Lord Jesus, Amen.

Thank you, brothers.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11417.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ed-miller/malachi-1-an-introduction/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**