

PostExilicProphets 22-03-23b

Let's resume our study now in the book of Malachi. We have covered the first verse. We know that this is going to be a sober likely warning and heavy message from God personally Communicated hand delivered in the hand of his messenger This is a reminder that the messenger has a responsibility if God places a message in his hand He should faithfully deliver that message without any reservation or purpose of evasion And sometimes it is difficult it's hard to deliver bad news it is easy to want to to want to Sugarcoat it or water it down or change it to something more ironic and something more hopeful But there is a time when we need to hear why God is Displeased and that he is displeased So as we come to verse 2 God says I have loved you.

I have loved you says the Lord The immediate response here To I have loved you Is the people say in what way have you loved us? Let's think about this for a moment, you know the history of Israel How Historically theologically and socially uninformed is this question God says I have expressed profound Active love for you. I have in many ways In Hebrew is the equivalent of agape in the New Testament There is also chesed in Hebrew which is loyal love Mercy and this idea but I have is more the the Universally applicable word for great favor great concern conferring benefit looking out for watching over supporting encouraging being there in a time of need unfailing Love and God says I have loved you. Oh Israel it's the first Thing out of his mouth in the delivery of this burden by the messenger By the Lord's messenger there is not a response This response is God Quoting the response in the past.

God says I have loved you yet you say and Because of the way tenses work in Hebrew I have loved you yet. You have said in response to the expressions of my love in What way have you loved us? this is a Conversation in the past up to the present This isn't a response as this particular message is being delivered God says I have loved you yet. You say you have said and continue to say in what way have you loved us? God says I have conferred benefit protection blessing forgiveness long-suffering I have treated you in a special way as my covenant people and You don't appreciate it.

You do not see The love and Your response is really you have loved us how so this is one of the first points of departure for the people of God Old Testament or new One of the first ways that we begin to depart the narrow road We begin to depart the walk and the life of faith. We begin to depart from a close personal intimate Relationship with God in our age relationship with God through Christ and through the Holy Spirit the first point of departure is we Lose our appreciation for what God has done We no longer think about it and because we're not thinking about it. We're not appreciate it appreciating it You keep your finger in Malachi and turn over to Romans chapter 1 we've seen it many times we need to see it again Romans chapter 1 Verse 20 since the creation of the world God's invisible attributes are clearly seen Being understood by the things that are made You could paraphrase this for our purposes in Malachi to say Since the creation of the world His love is clearly seen since the creation of the

nation of Israel His love has been clearly seen being understood by the things that he has done his deliverances his forgiveness his provision his protection his fulfillment of his promises for prosperity in the land Should have been understood by the things that he has done his eternal power and his deity his divine identity So the people of Israel are without excuse in Failing to recognize God's love in the same way that the people of the earth are Without excuse if they suppress and deny the knowledge of God That has been made so manifest and so evident because verse 21 Romans 1 Although they knew God they did not glorify him as God nor were they thankful Did not glorify him were not thankful the proper response to God's love Expressed to his people should be To glorify him and to thank him Think about Psalm 100 we've memorized this in times past You can say it with me either out loud or in your mind Psalm 100 make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands Serve the Lord with gladness come before his presence with singing Know ye that the Lord he is God it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves We are his people the sheep of his pasture.

What's the next verse? enter into his gates with Thanksgiving and into his courts with praise Be thankful unto him and bless his name glorify him For the Lord is good His mercy is everlasting and his truth endures unto all generations This is the healthy response of God's people the easiest way to start peeling off to fail the grace of God to depart from abiding in the vine as fruitful branches is To Make it through an entire day never stopping to reflect on How great things he hath done for us? What he has done for us in Christ what he has done for us in our own lives What he has done for those around us and be thankful unto him and bless his name To fail to appreciate what God has done look at the gross Ignorance in this response God says I have loved you and you say you haven't loved us Where have you loved us in what way have you loved us? Scary scary terrifying attitude We should be terrified of this attitude ever creeping into our souls Can you honestly sit down and not think of anything to thank God for? Not think of anything to glorify him for to be grateful for to be humbled by To revel in his grace and in his faithfulness If we can't take two minutes in a day to stop and reflect on what God has done We can easily Eventuate with this attitude I've got problems. I'm oppressed. I'm depressed.

I'm afflicted. I'm suffering. I'm persecuted.

I'm Unappreciated I'm this I'm that I'm the other I don't see the love of God. I don't see the provision of God I don't see the grace of God. All I see is Trouble, nobody knows the trouble I've seen Where's the sympathy where's where's somebody to feel sorry for me and pet my shoulder and hold my hand and Cry over me a little bit danger danger danger The evil heart that departs from the Lord Beware Lest there be in any of you an evil heart that departs from the Lord Well, this is how it departs we get Subjective eyes on self eyes on circumstances eyes on other people eyes on current events eyes on the news eyes on social media Eyes on there is plenty of objectivity Available to us, but if we go subjective there is an ocean of Negativity that we can focus our attention on what's that going to do? It's going to drag us down.

There is only one source of genuine spiritual buoyancy to rise above The waves of the troubled sea casting up mire and dirt and That is to fix our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our

faith Who for the joy that was set before him? Didn't get bogged down by the cross Didn't get bogged down by opposition by betrayal by negativity by indifference by outright hypocritical Persecution and attack for the joy that was set before him. He endured all of that up to and including the cross Despised the shame didn't let the shame take hold of him. He took hold of it and shoved it into its place shoved shame where shame belongs Now he's seated at the right hand of the father so Back to Malachi.

I have loved you says the Lord yet you say in what way have you loved us? What is the matter with you? How can you possibly say this? Look at the History of Israel. Did you ever read the Old Testament all of the things God has done? parting seas preserving from plagues providing manna and water and All kinds of abundance in the wilderness and ultimately in the land moving enemies out of the way giving them a land that they Had not formerly possessed Giving them promises all of the blessings that are pronounced on Mount Gerizim But there's also the warnings of Mount Ebal and they seem to have forgotten all of this In what way have you loved us? What is God's response? Have you looked at Edom lately? have you looked at the heritage of Esau and And in the days in which this message is delivered Edom has been obliterated Edom is a no-man's land and it's an immediate example God doesn't say have you been Down to the temple to hear the scribes read any of the books of history Any of the the wonderful miracles that have been done on behalf of your fathers to to bring you to this point He says look around in the present day. Where is Edom? Whatever happened to Esau? Esau was a brother to Jacob Started out on an equal footing, but what happened? Was not Esau Jacob's brother says the Lord Now this is really interesting.

I want to show you something here in verse 2 if we go to the Hebrew you have I Have loved you and you can see the the blue there the ahav t If you don't read the squiggles that are the Hebrew there in the upper left a h a b t i ahav t I have loved you and It's emphasized notice ahav t Et chem et is the sign of the direct object and chem is the is the plural you all and It could have just been affixed to the verb, but it's emphasized. I have loved you in particular the the Addition of the of the sign of the direct object and the pronoun there is emphatic. I have loved you Uniquely Exclusively in contrast to everybody else Amar Yahweh says the Lord once again using his covenant name and you say But ma In what remember mana When the when the food fell from heaven and they came up the next morning.

They saw this stuff on the ground They said ma. Nah, what is that ma means? What? Well in this case, it's buh which is in by or with in what Have you loved us and you can see ahav tanu? Was not Esau the brother of Jacob now notice number up above when it said Says Yahweh Amar Yahweh you see that Now it's different Says Yahweh below. Do you see that? That's not Amar.

It says not um No, um is not a verb it's a noun There is no verb this if you look it up in a Hebrew lexicon It says from an unused word an unused root There is no verb that corresponds no. Um is always only and ever a noun No, um And it means Oracle pronouncement emphatic message Oracle is a good translation Was not Esau the brother of Jacob an Oracle of Yahweh This was a decree a declaration a pronouncement by an oracle That he's not talking about what he's

saying in the present he says Jacob and Esau were brothers by an oracle of God It was an oracle of God. It's in the oracles It's in the writings go back and read Genesis before the brothers were ever born or had done anything good or bad God oracled God made an oracle that said the elder will serve the younger.

This is a reminder of that Do you remember the oracle of God when these two brothers were born as twins No, um Yahweh, it's an oracle of the Lord and I have noticed yet is not in there. It says Va-a-ha and I have loved There's at the sign of the direct object again Yaakov Jacob Why does he say Jacob here because when the brothers were born they were named Jacob and Esau He's not going to get the name Israel till decades later, right? There was an oracle when the brothers were born and God says I have kept that promise. I have followed my own decree and Jacob is the beloved one and You people are Jacob Jacob have I loved Very fascinating the oracle here go back to the promise of God.

God is Pleading with his people with this hand-delivered message You say in what way have I loved you think about? Everything that pertains to you from the time of your earliest origins in the womb of Rebecca Two twins come out. You are the descendants of Jacob I love and it has been love and attention and a claim of covenant relationship ever since There is a basis for that. What is the basis for that covenant love? What's the basis for God's covenant love with us? faith We enter into covenant relationship with God by faith By faith Jacob became the beloved of God God foresaw his faith God foresaw the lack of faith on the part of Esau and Began putting the pieces in place for the blessing of Jacob and the lack of blessing For Esau before they were ever born God isn't surprised there are people who think that that God Processes history as it unfolds It's called process theology.

God just watches the process and because he's God he can quickly improvise adapt and overcome Sorry, no God doesn't have to do that. God sees the end from the beginning. He's eternal.

He's outside time and he Knowing that two people are eventually going to meet and get married he can put things into their Previous life before they ever meet that is going to work into the wonderful blessings of their marriage God can pre-arrange for children to be born into Particular families to a particular set of parents because he is for ordaining Things that are going to benefit them and optimize their opportunities for faith and obedience and so on God sees the end from the beginning It is process theology if you're asking me is bunk. God doesn't process anything Nevertheless our will is completely and absolutely free Esau had free will and so did Jacob God foresaw how that will would function and began to plan His response and his provision and his further opportunities for faith or for rejection Just as he did with Pharaoh just as he does with everyone So what's our point here was not Esau's Jacob was not Esau Jacob's brother Oracle of Yahweh That's when God's support for this nation began was with their archetype their namesake When he was still in the womb, there was an oracle that began this road of love and blessing Jacob I have loved Esau. I have hated when you get to verse 3 and laid waste Esau's mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness Why Arbitrary

inscrutable will of God What is the track record of Esau? What is Esau most famous for? What is the single thing Esau did that he's more famous for than anything else? His birthright as the firstborn Was worth One meal one pot of stew Give me a pot of stew.

You can have my birthright and I don't care about the birthright not important to me It's gonna weep over it later when it's too late But When the pressure is off when there's nothing to cry about when there's no regrets It's not important to him It was very important to Jacob. It was important enough to Jacob to ask for it when he saw an opportunity Why did Jacob want it Jacob knew that there is a God and that he is the God that controls destinies and futures He is the God of his father Isaac. He's the God of his grandfather Abraham he knows the stories he knows and believes in God and his power and the benefits of his favor and Jacob says it's just bad luck that or something that I happen to come out second instead of first Hey, I didn't try to grab onto my brother's heel, but he got out ahead of me, but I want the blessing and His mistake is in trying to use human means to obtain it instead of trusting God for it.

God could have given it to him without Deceiving his father and and all the rest of it in the same way that David would ultimately probably have been Bathsheba's husband even without the Deception and the adultery and the betrayal and the murder of Uriah Wait upon the Lord They who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They're the ones that are going to fly They're the ones who are going to run without fatigue They're gonna walk and not faint. You just have to wait let God's timing work.

Don't get ahead of it. Don't push it Don't try to accomplish God's Will even when it is God's will by human means I Will not let you go until you bless me Instead of being the kind of person that God wants to bless that God is able to bless By faithfulness and obedience and Jacob's always wanting to jump the gun get ahead of God's plan. He did that with Rachel he did it with the blessing and he winds up limping for the rest of his life as a result so What is the message for us here in verse 2 There are two brothers an older and a younger but the interests and the birthright of the elder were set aside by an Oracle of God in favor of the younger when you look at the history of the last 4,000 years Who's the elder brother when you look at Israel in the church Who frittered away their birthright so that it now falls on the younger brother Israel by extension is Esau in this picture and God says I wasn't able to express display and fulfill my love for the older brother And by my own decree and according to my own Oracle I have conferred it on the younger that's us This is originally what Israel's position was so what happens if Israel who by miraculous Oracle and work of God comes into the Potential and the opportunity for the blessing of God what happens if they fritter it away? They're going to lose it in the same way Esau lost it What's going to happen to us by way of application if we? by Fiat Oracle benefit of God's plan and purpose and design in breaking off the faithless branches of Israel and grafting us as wild olive branches into his plan as Paul talks about in Romans look at 9 10 and 11 there What happens if we are as faithless as they were Paul says you can be busted out of the tree just as fast as Israel was and by the way if Israel returns to faith they can be grafted in just like you are the issue is faith Don't worry about birth order don't worry about circumstance.

Don't worry about challenge. Don't worry about limitation The issue is faith That's what God is Angling for and is going to get to in this burden of the Word of the Lord Hand delivered by his messenger to Israel We are now in the Israel position in terms of being The younger that the elder will end up serving think about ruling and reigning with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom What's that all about the elder will serve the younger if we are faithful? So Esau I have hated laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness What happened to Israel for the last 2,000 years? Where is Israel's heritage, where is their land? Where is their promised heritage and blessing it has been gone it's still not restored the moving of pieces into place For it to be restored is underway in our lifetime But Israel is a secular nation There are some messianic Jews. There are some Orthodox Jews There's all kinds of people in varying degrees types and levels of faith there, but it doesn't define the nation by a long shot It's a secular assemblage Fighting for survival at this point Not protected by God not subject to the national blessing package of covenant with God That it will one day enjoy again, but that's not in place yet And their position is precarious at best as we now speak So You can substitute in our day Israel I have hated and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness and Jerusalem has been trodden underfoot by the Gentiles for century upon century upon century So now look at verse 4 Even though Edom has said we have been impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places What is Israel done in the last 60 odd years a little bit longer than that actually in terms of? Sooners getting to the land and starting to buy it and reclaim it 1948 they're officially granted nationhood as it were in the international community They've been building ever since what do they say? We will rebuild the waste places.

We're going to return. This is what Esau said Israel pay attention wake up to your divine opportunities your your covenant promises Thus says the Lord of hosts still in verse 4 they may build, but I will throw down They shall be called the territory of wickedness and the people against whom the Lord will have indignation forever much of Israel Never recovered even after the Babylonian captivity they never again had sovereignty over their own land They have always been ruled by outsiders whether it's the Persians the Greeks the Romans or the nation's They've never they've never been truly independent They are still so under pressure so dependent on the United States and a few other allies and so oppressed By their neighbors that they don't really have freedom in the true sense of the word They've got to maintain a virtual police state along some of their borders They may build but I will throw down they shall be called the territory of wickedness and the people against whom the Lord will have indignation forever This was originally Edom in These past many centuries it has been Israel You will not see me we saw on Sunday in Matthew until you say Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord? that's when covenant relationship Covenant love is going to be restored to Israel and not before And that will not really occur until the age of the church is concluded and we are taken out of the way and The man of sin is revealed Israel will also be revealed once again as the people of God there will be a faithful remnant who will pay attention and In that last seven years of the age of Israel a final sorting will take place So very significant and once again You think about what happened to Israel because they did not respond to this burden They did not repent God was not able to restore to them the fullness of covenant relationship with himself

and because of that from that day to this They have never enjoyed the fullness and the expression of God's love that he had expressed in the past He doesn't say I will love you He says I have loved you and you did not recognize it. You did not respond Woe unto us When God loves us and we don't recognize it and we don't respond.

What is the proper response? Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise Be thankful unto him and bless his name The Lord is good His mercy is everlasting and his truth endures To every generation. It's an opportunity for every generation whether it's the past dispensation or this one Whether it's Israel or the church those who respond to the truth can be enfolded in the loving arms of God But woe unto those who don't and that's what this burden is about Do you really want to be thrown down every time you build up Do you really want to be a territory of wickedness instead of a land where righteousness is at home? Which is the fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom? The people against whom the Lord has indignation unendingly He can do nothing but be indignant against the unrepentant the unappreciative the unresponsive the stiff-necked and disobedient Verse 5 your eyes shall see and you shall say the Lord is magnified beyond the border of Israel Your eyes will see it and you will say Look at how the Lord is magnified, but it's not happening in Israel Where should it be happening today that is not Israel It is you we I us This is where the Lord should be magnified not unappreciated well, we have a lot further to go in Malachi, but wait until we get a little bit further along and Get to the part about sacrifice when we get to the part about pure offerings That is going to be the whole rest of this first chapter How pertinent? How sobering how? Confrontational it is and You can think about it in advance. All you have to do is go to that same book of Romans One further chapter after 9 10 11.

How does 12 start? Don't make the mistake that Israel made by polluting God's sacrifice 12 1 & 2 think about it. That's where we're headed here in the future But this is a good place to stop for tonight What an opportunity we have to enjoy the fruits and benefits of the love of God Because the Lord Jesus loved us enough to lay his life down on our behalf We love because he first loved us and even here in Malachi the last book of the Old Testament You have an anticipation of the message That Jesus is going to encapsulate As he sums up all of the law and the prophets in one word Love the Lord your God With all your heart all your soul all your strength all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself All the law and the prophets are summed up and this last prophetic message Begins with the love of God that should engender the response of love in us What a great opportunity we have in the time that remains to us in this life to do so Let's close here in a word of prayer Father, we are so grateful for the expression of your love the fullness of it in the Lord Jesus Christ We pray that as we reflect on what we've seen tonight from your word that your Holy Spirit will Open our eyes to our hidden faults to the areas where we have become subjective Or we are failing to appreciate how much you have done for us That we can avoid the mistake that the people in the latter days of Israel made that we can truly appreciate and truly exploit and Bear the fruit in keeping with the wonderful provision the wonderful love that you have expressed toward us We pray these things in Jesus name.

Amen