

## Digging Deeper Sermon Study

1. **Read Malachi 1:1-5.** What was life like in the days of Malachi? How is their world similar to our own?
2. Have you ever faced a time when you felt abandoned by God?
3. What did Malachi 1:1-5 teach us about how to face the times when we feel abandoned by God in a crisis?
4. **Read Romans 9:11-16.** What is the reason behind God's love for us? Why did he choose to show his love to us?
5. **Read Romans 8:31-39.** What does this passage teach us about God's love?
6. **Read 1 John 4:8.** How should God's unconditional love affect our love for other people?
7. **Read Jonah 4:1-2 and Nehemiah 9:17.** Why was Jonah frustrated with God's love? According to Nehemiah, why was Jonah's frustration actually an encouragement for the rest of us?
8. **Read Ephesians 2:4-7.** What does this passage teach us about the state of our heart before God showed us his love through Jesus? What have we received because of God's love?
9. **Read Revelation 3:19.** What should we know when we face hard times because of sin? What should we do when we face hard times because of sin?
10. **Read 1 Peter 1:6-7; Hebrews 12:11.** If God brings hard times into our life that are not intended to correct us of sin, what is their purpose?



## Malachi 1:1-5 – When Times Are Tough, What Should I Do When I Don't Feel God's Love?

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### 1. What is the background of Malachi?

*"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. Jeremiah 29:10 (ESV)*

### 2. Why were they discouraged?

*Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy; my house shall be built in it, declares the Lord of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. Cry out again, Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.' " Zechariah 1:16-17 (ESV)*

*and it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. 2 Chronicles 5:13-14 (ESV)*

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (ESV)

### 3. What do I need to know about God's love when times are tough?

#### 1. God loves me, even when my circumstances don't leave me feeling loved.

The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. "I have loved you," says the Lord... Malachi 1:1–2a (ESV)

but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Deuteronomy 7:8 (ESV)

#### 2. God loves his people so much that his love for the rest of the world is like hate.

"I have loved you," says the Lord. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert." Malachi 1:2–3 (ESV)

When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. Genesis 29:31 (ESV)

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:26 (ESV)

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:3–6 (ESV)

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20 (ESV)

#### 3. God's love for me will always be seen over time.

Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!" Psalm 137:7 (ESV)

If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the Lord of hosts says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.' " Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel!" Malachi 1:4–5 (ESV)

### 4. Conclusion