

Your Call to Respond to God's Love Malachi 1:1-5

Malachi 1 offers three evidences of God's love.

- Evidence #1: GOD'S **WORD**

This is the message that the LORD gave Malachi to tell the people of Israel. The LORD says to his people, "I have always loved you."

Malachi 1:1, 2a (Good News Translation)

Two Characteristics of God's Love

- God's love is **personal**, describing the deepest of bonds.

The LORD says, "When Israel was a child, I loved him and called him out of Egypt as my son. ² . . . ³ . . . I was the one who taught Israel to walk. I took my people up in my arms . . . I drew them to me with affection and love. I picked them up and held them to my cheek; I bent down to them and fed them." Hosea 11:1-4 (GNT)

*"But Zion said, 'The LORD has forsaken me, and the LORD has forgotten me.'
¹⁵Can a woman forget her nursing child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. ¹⁶Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; . . ."
Isaiah 49:14-16 (New American Standard Bible)*

- God's love is **unconditional**.

*The LORD did not choose you and lavish his love on you because you were larger or greater than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! It was simply because the LORD loves you . . .
Deuteronomy 7:7, 8a (New Living Translation)*

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.
1 John 3:16a (New International Version)*

- Evidence #2: GOD'S **CHOICE** TO ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH US

The LORD says to his people, "I have always loved you." But they reply, "How have you shown your love to us?" The LORD answers, "Esau and Jacob were brothers, but I have loved Jacob and his descendants, ³and have hated Esau and his descendants." Malachi 1:2, 3a (GNT)

When I am afraid, O Lord Almighty, I put my trust in you. ⁴I trust in God and am not afraid; I praise him for what he has promised. What can a mere human being do to me? Psalm 56:3-4 (GNT)

"loved Jacob" and "hated Esau" = idiom = ranking or a preference
(See Luke 14:26.)

Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. ¹⁵Yet on your fathers did the Lord set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. Deuteronomy 10:14-15 (NASB)

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
1 Peter 2:9-10 (NIV)*

. . . For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. Romans 5:5 (NLT)

- Evidence #3: GOD'S **ASSURANCE** OF HIS ULTIMATE PLAN

If Esau's descendants, the Edomites, say, "Our towns have been destroyed, but we will rebuild them," then the Lord will reply, "Let them rebuild—I will tear them down again. People will call them 'The evil country' and 'The nation with whom the Lord is angry for ever.'" ⁵The people of Israel are going to see this with their own eyes, and they will say, "The Lord is mighty even outside the land of Israel!" Malachi 1:4-5 (GNT)