**The Sins of the Saints**

**Text – Malachi 1:1-5**

***Introduction***: The name Malachi means “My messenger” (3:1). He was the last of the writing prophets but wrote nothing about himself. We have no biblical information about his ancestry, call, or personal life. But the important thing about messengers is the message they bring, not who they are or where they came from.

In 538 BC, Cyrus issued a decree that the Jews exiled in Babylon could return to their land and rebuild their temple (2 Chron. 36:22–23; Ezra 1). About fifty thousand of them accepted the challenge, and in 515, after much delay, they completed the temple. Ezra visited them in 458, and in 445 Nehemiah became their governor and served for twelve years (Neh. 5:14).

The conditions described in the book of Nehemiah are the very things Malachi deals with in his book: poor crops and a faltering economy (Mal. 3:11), intermarriage with the heathen (2:11), defilement of the priesthood (1:6ff.), oppression of the poor (3:5), lack of support for the temple (vv. 8–10), and a general disdain of religion (v. 13ff.). It was a low time spiritually for Judah, and they needed to hear the Word of God.

Malachi was the last prophet Judah heard until John the Baptist came and the prophecy of 3:1 was fulfilled. His messages against “the sins of the saints” need to be heeded today.

# **I. DOUBTING GOD’S LOVE (1:1–5)**

A. God’s electing grace—1:2

B. God’s blessing on Israel—1:3–5

# **II. DESPISING GOD’S NAME (1:6-14)**

A. Offering defiled sacrifices—1:6–14

B. Despising divine privileges—2:1–9

# **III. DEFILING GOD’S COVENANT (2:1-17)**

A. Marrying heathen women—2:10–12

B. Hypocritical repentance—2:13

C. Divorcing their wives—2:14–16

# **IV. DISOBEYING GOD’S WORD (3:1-15)**

A. The first messenger—John the Baptist—3:1a

B. The second messenger—Messiah—3:1b–6

C. Evidence of Disobedience

* Robbing God—3:7–8
* Robbing themselves—3:9–11
* Robbing others—3:12
* The complainers—3:13–15
* The believers—3:16–18
* The evildoers—4:1–3
* The preachers—4:4–6