

Malachi 1:1-2a

“An oracle: The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi. “I have loved you,” says the LORD ...”

Though Malachi is only four short chapters long — in the Hebrew Bible it’s only three chapters — it has much to say to the social, political, and religious compromise in both Malachi’s age and our time today. Originally written some 2,500 years ago, the message for us now is contemporary and equally convicting.

Malachi simply means *my messenger*. Other scholars prefer to translate it as *my angel*, but of course the word for angel and messenger are the same. What I find interesting is that we don’t find the name Malachi anywhere in scripture outside of this book of prophecy. Some believe it’s even the surname of one particular prophet. In fact, Malachi at the beginning of this book doesn’t name his father, which many other prophets do, to give us an idea where he came from and who he is. For that reason, some scholars believe that Malachi is not a proper name at all, rather a descriptive term. Nevertheless, I think it will be clear as we go through this study that Malachi was an individual person. Although he is not considered the last Old Testament prophet — John the Baptist was the last — Malachi is the last prophet to write Old Testament scripture.

I think what the Holy Spirit is really telling us is simply that God wants to communicate the most important thing, the message, and not the messenger. It would do us all well to remember that Malachi’s chief concern was his faithfulness delivering God’s message rather than his personal fame.

As we study this little book, in the weeks ahead, let us receive what the Lord is saying to our hearts as His people in this age. As Israel had lost touch with God, Malachi’s message was simply this: whatever changes in the world, whatever changes among His people, whether they be Israel or the New Testament church, whatever changes in your transitory life, God never changes!