

# God Are You Really There? - Part 8

Sunday, August 27, 2023  
10:30 AM

For several weeks we have been making our way through the book of Malachi with this theme in mind - God, are you really there? While they continued to call themselves the people of God and while they continued to go through the motions of spiritual worship and activity, each message from God exposes the peoples true heart condition. They no longer believed whole-heartedly in the reality of God's existence and presence in their lives.

**“YOU HAVE LOST YOUR WAY” - An overview of Gods Messages in the book of Malachi that expose the condition of the people’s heart and relationship with God.**

**"I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED YOU" - Malachi 1:1-5**

**“YOU ARE NOT LOVING ME” - Malachi 1:6-14**

**“LISTEN” - Malachi 2:1-9**

**YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAITHFUL TO ME - Malachi 2:10-17**

**REPENT AND RETURN - Malachi 3:1-7**

**TO TITHE OR NOT TO TITHE? - Malachi 3:8-12**

Each message from the Lord calls upon them to recognize their lack of faith in Him, repent of their actions, and return to Him. Let's continue our journey as we look at God's next message to the people - and to us.

Key Text: Malachi 3:13-15 (NLT)

13 “You have said terrible things about me,” says the Lord.

“But you say, ‘What do you mean? What have we said against you?’

14 “You have said, ‘What’s the use of serving God? What have we gained by obeying his commands or by trying to show the Lord of Heaven’s Armies that we are sorry for our sins? 15 From now on we will call the arrogant blessed. For those who do evil get rich, and those who dare God to punish them suffer no harm.’”

Malachi 3:13-15 (NIV)

13 “You have spoken arrogantly against me,” says the Lord.

“Yet you ask, ‘What have we said against you?’

14 “You have said, ‘It is futile to serve God. What do we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the Lord Almighty? 15 But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly evildoers prosper, and even when they put God to the test, they get away with it.’”

God again speaks directly to the people and says they are guilty of believing and speaking arrogant things about God (strong words against)

*arrogant implies a claiming for oneself of more consideration or importance than is warranted.*

What’s the use of serving God?

What have we gained by observing His commands or by being sorry for our sins?

The arrogant are blessed.

The evil are blessed.

They tell God what to do and get away with it.

God, are you really there?

Where does this attitude come from. How did the children of God get to the point that they believed these things about their Father in heaven? How do we?

I believe it is because they/we fall prey to the lies of the enemy.

## LIES OF THE ENEMY

### God doesn't give enough...

Remember the enemies' lies always contain a measure of truth. That's what makes them so believable. He never starts out by saying God isn't there. He slowly moves us to that point. He doesn't say that God doesn't give any of these things (at least not at first), just that God doesn't give enough.

Today I want us to consider three lies that the enemy has been using from the beginning.

#### Genesis 3:1-17 (NLT)

3 The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

2 "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. 3 "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

4 "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. 5 "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

6 The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. 7 At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

21 And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

God doesn't give enough...

- **Provision**

They had everything the garden had to offer. But Satan lied to them and got them to believe that it wasn't enough.

- **Protection**

God had been their protection, their covering. In fact, His prohibition about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was for their protection. He protected them from the effects of sin, from aging, sickness, disease, and death. But Satan's lies convinced them it wasn't enough, and they needed to take things into their own hands have more knowledge so they could better distinguish between good and evil. Their sin left them vulnerable and unprotected and so they attempted to create their own protection by sewing fig leaves together.

I feel naked without - Vulnerable and unprotected.

God stepped in and made better protection for them.

- **Power**

You will be like God (remember what we said about the word arrogant "*Claiming for oneself ore consideration or importance than is warranted.*") Isn't this what Satan did when he rebelled against God? And this same lie is what he plants in our hearts - we deserve more power, and we arrogantly accuse God of not giving us enough.

These are the same lies that Jesus heard when He was tempted in the desert...

### **Matthew 4:1-11 (NIV)**

**4** Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

(If you are the Son of God - in other words if God really cares for you like a Son. You're hungry, God is not providing enough for you... Turn these stones into bread and prove that God takes loves you and provides for you)

**4** Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

(Prove - Put God to a test - that He protects you and takes care of you)

7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

*(Isn't it interesting that this is what the people in Malachi's day were saying ... "Evil people put God to the test and get away with it - They dare God to punish them, and He doesn't. What kind of protection is that?)*

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

(I will give you more power than your Father has promised you) - but it's a lie!

10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

How do we defeat these lies?

1. Remember the great things God has done
2. Recite the truth of God's Word
3. Repeat the promises of God
4. Refocus on what you have not on what you don't have
5. Raise your voice in praise and thanksgiving