

Naked Bible Podcast Transcript

Episode 418

Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: Malachi and Romans

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Episode Summary

The book of Malachi closes our English Old Testament. Because of its position and status as one of the “minor prophets,” this book is one of the more neglected in the Bible. What possible relevance could it have for the messianic profile discussed in preceding episodes of this series? How does it relate to Paul? Surprisingly, Malachi is the perfect set up for what Paul does with the Old Testament in his writings. Listen to find out how!

Transcript

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 418: Paul's Use of the Old Testament Series: Malachi and Romans with Dr. Matt Halsted. I'm the layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey, Mike! How are you doing?

MSH: Having a good week as far as things go, you know, just trying to keep up with what I'm supposed to be doing on chemo and whatnot. But not too much that's different. But having a good week.

TS: Yeah. Yeah. Malachi's on the radar today. So can you give us a brief description of what we're going to get into today?

MSH: We're going to see that Malachi should not be neglected. [laughter]

TS: Haha! There you go.

MSH: But Malachi really is kind of a microcosm of a lot of the things we've talked about to this point, which would sound pretty startling or amazing, but it's actually true. So we're going to see how Malachi really sets the table for Paul in a number of ways.

MSH: Well, we're blessed once again to have Matt Halsted with us. If you've been tracking through this series, the series is ostensibly about Paul's use of the Old Testament in the New Testament, and how Paul gets the Christology and the messianic theology he does. And the dilemma in trying to tackle something like this in this format (really in any format, to be honest with you) is that you first have to know what was in Paul's head. You have to be able to read the Old Testament in the manner that Paul was reading his Old Testament. And Matt has, I think, done a lot of good work here. This is why we wanted to have him on for this extended series. Because what he's introduced us to is a storied reading of the Old Testament. Again, that's probably a less clunky way of saying "the metanarrative of Scripture," which is something that we talk about here a lot on the Naked Bible Podcast. It's reading Scripture as a story, reading it as though it were a novel unfolding—a story unfolding in front of you—taking it seriously that it represents truth and corresponds to real-time events and so on and so forth. So we're not saying that it's fiction. But we're saying if you read it like you're reading fiction, your mind is prepared in a different way to get into the content. You become attuned to story elements, to plot lines and subplots, you become attuned to (in our case) a whole list of vocabulary and themes that are going to just keep popping up as the story is propelled from one book of the Old Testament to the other, things like seed and offspring and branch and a lot of these metaphors for messianic talk that we've been through in previous episodes.

So this, I think, is our eighth episode together. So if you're just jumping in here, I'm just going to tell you right now, you might as well go back to the very beginning because we can't take time in every episode to get you up to speed on our method or what we're trying to accomplish here. You've got to go back to the beginning and listen through. But we're trying to construct the messianic profile that Paul would have had in his head as Paul read the Scriptures, not as a textbook but as a story. So that's the simplest way I can put it.

We discussed Daniel in the last time we chatted. Today we're going to go to a very neglected book. And you're going to ask yourself right away, "Well, what in the world does the book of Malachi have to do with any of this?" And Matt is going to be here again to inform us just exactly how that question should be answered. Malachi has a lot to say. Because the New Testament—the Gospels and whatnot—repurpose some parts of Malachi in significant ways. And again, it's not as though you have a grocery list of passages that get quoted verbatim out of Malachi in the New Testament. What you do have are you have themes, you have plots, you have vocabulary, that have all been part of the story up to this point. And we're going to add a little bit to it in Malachi. But Malachi is going to propel the story even further. And since he's at the end of the Old Testament period (the Old Testament that we have in the way our Old Testament is laid out), this is going to be our bridge into the New Testament in more substantial ways as we keep going through the series. So Matt, why don't you get our feet

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wet here and give our audience some good doses of Malachi today. I don't know that we've ever done Malachi on the podcast. I'm sure maybe in a Q&A we hit Malachi 3 or something like that. But why don't you just jump in here and tell us why in the world are we spending time in Malachi?

MLH: Yeah, that's a great question. Malachi is a super important prophet. It's unfortunate that the so-called minor prophets are called "minor prophets," because they have so many good things to say. We take it to mean they're in the minor leagues versus the major...

MSH: Or yeah, they're inferior. They're not quite as good as the big ones.

MLH: Right. And that's just not the case *at all*. So Malachi is part of the so-called minor prophets. But there's nothing minor about him, as we'll see today. So yeah, starting over, just as a very brief recap, all that we've said in the previous episodes has served to construct that messianic profile. You know, the profile is bigger than the word "messiah." And we've gone through that in detail in the past episodes. But what's important about that messianic profile is that it is the larger narrative—the story in which Paul goes on to interpret Scripture. So in Malachi, we see that messianic profile continue to develop. And it provides, I think, *the* perfect segue into a book like Romans, where Paul interprets Scripture in a way that is congruent with the conceptual framework and the categories that Malachi constructs.

So in Romans... Let me just start here for just a moment. In Romans, Paul is very broadly-speaking concerned with two things. He's concerned first with election. And messianism. Those two things: election and messianism. In other words, for Paul, the pressing question in Romans—the question he's trying to answer—is "how has the Christ event reconfigured the identity and the definition of what it means to be God's covenant people," which includes, of course, Jews and Gentiles. So the Christ event—that's his messianism, and what it means to be the people of God—the chosen, elected people of God... And Paul's messianism has also reconfigured various Jewish concepts such as faith and obedience and Torah-keeping by interpreting certain Old Testament texts through his Christological or messianic lens.

So for example, when you get into Romans, he talks a lot about faith. And he even talks a lot about obedience, and of course, law—Torah-keeping. And he takes those concepts that are very familiar with the Old Testament and he wraps them around Christ or his messianism. So for Paul, faith/obedience/law-keeping... It carries the same meaning as it has in the Old Testament, but those concepts are constantly recentered, reconfigured, around the messiah—Jesus. So there's a lot of continuity between him and the Old Testament. And there's some discontinuity, but not what you would think. It's in line with...

MSH: Yeah, it's not like he's disagreeing with something or changing something. He's really dialing it in—sharpening focus because of the Christ event.

MLH: Exactly. And I think Malachi helps give us some insight into that. Malachi won't go as far as Paul does on some things because Malachi is pre-Christ event. And so there are just some things he doesn't have the details on. But as you just said (and I like the way you put it), Paul is going to dial in, though. He's going to narrow it down and get to the point. So even when Paul's interpretations of the Old Testament take on what looks like fresh meaning, there's still radical continuity back with the Old Testament. And so I think the benefit of looking at a book like Malachi is really twofold. First, it further develops that messianic profile that we've been working through. And while it does that, it reveals those conceptual categories in which Paul's going to interpret Scripture. And so both of those go together. In fact, as I was thinking through all this, I think Malachi is a good introduction to Romans in a number of ways. So let's just dive into it. But before we get into Malachi's messianism, we need to talk about his idea of election—of God choosing a people. And you don't have to go very far in Malachi before you get to this. So when you open up to Malachi 1, starting in verse 2 down to verse 5, you read this:

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2 “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 ³ but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.” ⁴ 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.’” ⁵ Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, “Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!”

MSH: That's pretty harsh. [laughs]

MLH: It really is harsh. Man. And it's kind of a controversial text, right? This is a text that Paul will quote in Romans 9. And a lot of my Calvinist friends love this text [laughs] because it has the whole... It's centered around the concept of election. And I just want to point out, because we have to go here for just a moment, is Malachi is not talking about the historical persons Jacob and Esau. The reason you say that is obvious. I mean, Jacob and Esau are dead, like, they're not around at this time.

MSH: Right.

MLH: So he *can't* be talking about them. So when it says, “I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated,” he's not talking about individuals. He's talking about nations. He's talking about the nation of Israel and he's talking about Edom. And

so what this is really about is Israel's national election. And if you dig back into the Torah, Genesis 25:23, you really see this whenever... Well, I'll just read the text. Genesis 25:23 says:

**²³ And the LORD said to her,
"Two nations are in your womb [MLH: speaking of Jacob and Esau],
and two peoples from within you shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the older shall serve the younger."**

And the point here is that Jacob is a patriarch, right? He represents the nation of Israel. Esau is a patriarch. He represents Edom. And so that same idea is in mind. This corporate, nationalistic idea is in mind in Malachi. Whenever God says, "I've loved Jacob, but hated Esau," he means something else than individual.

MSH: Yeah, and of course in prior discussions, you brought up the whole, well, Israel... Israel is God's solution to the world's problem. But what exactly is Israel? So there's this... I don't know if I want to use the word "ambiguity." That's not really the best word here because I think in Scripture, in God's mind, he knows what Israel is [laughs], and that's the conduit through which he's going to rescue the world. But out of the gate, that doesn't necessarily conform to a lot of the categories that we'll just say that our Calvinist friends will like to use that passage to argue.

MLH: Yeah. The emphasis is not individual election or individual reprobation or... You know, the word "hate" is used.

MSH: Which is good, because we have this thing called the exile.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: [laughs] So if every individual Israelite was, like, automatically elect, well then great, now we've got Baal worshipers in heaven. [MLH laughs] You know? It just doesn't make any sense.

MLH: It messes up our Christology and soteriology quite a bit, right?

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: So a couple of the... Let me just say a couple of things here about that passage I just read. So despite Edom (who represents the Gentiles here), despite their non-election, what's interesting is that in that text there is

nonetheless a global aspect or consequence to Israel's election. And you see that in verse 5, the last part that I read. And I'll read it again. From Malachi 1:5:

⁵Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!"

And that's really interesting. So Israel's election is not going to be for themselves. There's some aspect about their election that's going to be consequential for the nations. And this is not the only place in Malachi you see that.

MSH: Yeah, and it goes all the way back to Abraham, as we've talked about before, where Abraham is destined to be the father of many nations—plural. That's something Paul picks up on in different places in the epistle to the Romans.

15:00 **MLH:** Yeah, oh, absolutely. Yeah. It's all over the place. Yeah, Israel is elected from *among* the nations *for* the nations. And so this corporate or national election—that's the emphasis, not individual election. And just like we talked about in one of our previous episodes, you go back to Genesis 11-12 (the Genesis 11-12 narrative is what we called it) and you see how Israel's election works—that's it's more about a vocation than anything. So Genesis 11, of course, is the Tower of Babel where the nations are fractured and cursed. The next event that God performs is the calling or the election of Abraham, who is called to be a blessing *to* the nations that have just been cursed and fractured. That narrative (Genesis 11-12 narrative) is the driving narrative, I think, in all of Scripture. And so there's so much going on.

MSH: What I call the Deuteronomy 32 worldview is...

MLH: Same thing.

MSH: It's such a big deal.

MLH: Yeah. Yeah, it's the same thing. The Deuteronomy 32 worldview that you talk about a lot is really just the unseen realm—the other side—of the Genesis 11-12 narrative. Really, right? They're the same things, just two sides of the same coin. And it is the driving narrative in Scripture. And so... Yeah, that's why everybody should go read *Unseen Realm*. [laughter] Right? Because it gives a biblical theology of how things are working out.

So the point is, Israel is God's rescue plan for the world. Again, N.T. Wright talks a lot about that. But interestingly enough, just to drive the point home a little bit more, when it says in that passage that we opened with that Edom or Esau is rejected forever, that seems to be a reference (an emphasis really) on that divine vocation. It's not so much salvation. There may be aspects involved in that, but

that's not the emphasis. And let me say more about that. You can't think of election there, obviously, in terms of individualism for the reasons we mentioned above. This is clearly about nations. That's the context. But we can't think of Edom's or Esau's nonelection as having really anything to do with eternal reprobation, where they're just eternally reprobate. And that's what's required if you see this as an individual election for salvation. I mean, there's no hope for Esau from that point on—no hope for Edom from that point on. And the moment you say that is the moment that causes a lot...

MSH: You get in trouble. [laughs]

MLH: Yeah! There's really a couple of problems with that. I mean, lots of problems. But there are conceptual problems with that. So think of the ramifications of that view. You're going to have to say that every descendant of Esau is eternally reprobate—like, all of them. And that gets really weird, right? [laughs] So I don't think we want to go there. It doesn't make sense. But there's also scriptural problems, too. So when you get into the Gospels, Mark 3:7-12 records how Jesus is ministering in places like Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, and Idumea, which is Edom. [laughs]

MSH: "What's he doing there? Didn't he read Malachi?"

MLH: Yeah, they're reprobate forever. Right? Well, that's only a problem if you think God is talking about Edom's salvation or eternal reprobation. And yeah, so that's not what's going on. So I kindly point this out to my Calvinist friends and say, "Okay, but we need to pay closer attention to the text of Malachi, where it says, 'Jacob have I loved; Esau I have hated.'" This is covenant love in the sense of calling and vocation. That's how election works. And so when Paul quotes it in Romans 9, he's operating by that same thought.

MSH: It's actually contradicted by Amos 9: "In the day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches and raise up the ruins," and all that, "that they may possess the remnant of Edom." Of course, when that gets cited in Acts 15, it's the remnant of humankind. So it's a reference to the whole world—Israel being the rescue plan to the whole world, which includes Edom.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: It's flatly contradicted by Amos 9 and Acts 15.

MLH: Yeah, that's right. That's exactly right. And mysteriously, through Christ (through the messiah, through union with Christ) we can be part of... No matter our ethnicity, we can all be part of the covenant family of God that is called the elect. And we can have that vocation of imaging God's ways on the earth. And so when Paul goes to quote Malachi in Romans 9, that is part of his larger argument

in Romans 9-11 that says election has been reconfigured around Christ, and hence it's available to Gentiles, too. And so in other words, Gentiles will participate in that divine vocation that is being a blessing to the nations. And in fact, if you pay close attention to Romans 9-11, the Gentiles actually (Christian Gentiles) will become a blessing to Israel herself. And so there's this mutual blessing one another that exists in Paul's theology, where it is Christ and the Gentiles who bless the Israelites so that the Israelites will become Christians and have faith in Christ. So there's... Israel really is blessed and will be a blessing in more ways than one. And so that's just something to keep in mind when folks read Romans 9.

You know, when we get back to Malachi, it's really interesting when you... You just have to sit down and read the whole book in one sitting. And we won't do that here obviously. But to the audience, I highly encourage you to do that. It won't take much time. And it's well worth the time. But when you do that, you'll notice throughout the text that Israel has clearly failed in her vocation, that is, in her election. She has become part of the problem, even though she was originally designed to be part of the solution. So I want to read just some selections from Malachi 1, starting with verse 6. So it says this:

⁶“A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, ‘How have we despised your name?’ ⁷ By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, ‘How have we polluted you?’ By saying that the LORD's table may be despised. ⁸ When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts.

So that's Malachi 1:6-8. I want to skip down to chapter 2:1. And that's a direct word to the priests. It says:

“And now, O priests, this command is for you. ² If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart. ³ Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it. ⁴ So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with Levi may stand, says the LORD of hosts. ⁵ My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him. It was a covenant of fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my name. ⁶ True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked

with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. ⁷ For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. ⁸ But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts, ⁹ and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction."

This is quite the critique of the priestly system of Israel. [laughs] Right?

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: Some of these verse we probably wouldn't want to be the mottos or the memory verses of our VBSes and churches. I mean, they're pretty out there. And they're straightforward and to the point. And the only thing I want to highlight here is that Israel's priestly vocation has been an utter failure. They have not sought the Lord. They have not been sincere in their worship. And the priest actually in chapter 2:7 here that I read, he says that the priest's lips "should guard knowledge, and the people should seek instruction from his mouth." Because after all, he's the messenger of the Lord of hosts. And that word messenger there (*malak*) is actually where we get the title for Malachi (*malaki*, my messenger). And so the priests of Israel were supposed to be messengers of the Lord and yet they as a messenger failed and they've become a curse. They were supposed to be the blessing to the world and to that which was cursed, but they themselves have found themselves cursed. So that's one critique of Israel. They've not been faithful to their vocation—their election. More of what I read I want to point out here, too, is Israel... They have also failed to be the true son in whom Yahweh can be pleased. So that's important I think. Malachi 1:6...

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MSH: So they fail as a priest. They fail as a son.

MLH: Yeah, that's right. And just to jog people's memories, priests were called *mashiach*. They were labeled messiah sometimes in the Old Testament. Sonship is a key motif that we've talked about before. So that's just interesting to keep in the back of our mind. Malachi 1:6, I'll just read it again. He says:

A son honors his father, and a servant his master.

Servant language. And he says,

If I am a father, where is my honor?

And he goes on. Look, they failed in their sonship; they failed to be good servants, too. And this is in context a direct critique or rebuke of the priests. So they failed to be good priests. They've despised the Name. Now just again, kind of previewing ahead New Testament stuff, this is very interesting when God the Father speaks to Jesus in front of everybody in Matthew 3. It says that a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased." Now that's something God could never really say of Israel—that he was well pleased with them. And so Jesus as the new Israel—the new rescue plan. He's perfect. He has pleased God in every respect. And here in Malachi, unfortunately, they don't receive that praise. They can't. Not only has she failed (Israel failed to be faithful priests), but just like we read, they've actually caused people to stumble. And that's a major rebuke, given what we know about Israel's calling to be a light to the world. They can't even be a light to their own people because they're causing people to stumble. So again, Malachi 2:7-8:

⁷ For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. ⁸ But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts,

So Israel's actually doing the *opposite* of what she's supposed to be doing. She's leading people astray, not bringing them to God. And that's a major rebuke.

MSH: Well, I'm hoping that everybody in our audience who has tracked through this series already can see what's being set up. This is going to sound like a dumb term to use, but it's the anti-Christ picture. [laughs]

MLH: Oh, that is! That's a good term.

MSH: Well, it fits, because we have failure as a priest, failure as a son, failure in the vocation, failure from basically everything. So that's ultimately going to be replaced by something that isn't a failure, *someone* who isn't a failure in all these aspects.

MLH: Right. It's the anti-*mashiach*. Yeah, that's how we could probably see it. And by the time we get to Malachi at the end of our Old Testament, we should be well-versed in all the other things that have been said about priests—how they are often called anointed, the servant, the son, sonship motif, and all of those things. And by the time you get to Malachi, you see that it's just all a complete failure.

MSH: You get this messianic profile built up, but it's a consistent failure. And so it creates that expectation that, "Well, if God's really committed to this, there's

going to be somebody come along here that's going to fix this mess and is going to fit the profile."

MLH: Yeah. And the question someone might ask is, "Well, why doesn't God just scrap the program? It's a mess already." And the reason God cannot scrap the program of redemption is because God promised unconditionally to Abraham that he would be the rescue plan for the world—that he would be the blessing to the nations. And every student of the Old Testament, when you start looking at covenants and stuff, we recognize that the Abrahamic covenant was unconditional. It was one-sided. God said he was going to do it and he can't go back on his word. That's not who God is. So he *has* to use Israel.

MSH: He's looking for the right partner. [laughs]

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MLH: Yep. Yeah. And by the time you get to Malachi, he's surveyed quite a few people—quite a few partners—and they're just not up to the task. Even the good ones, like we talked about in one episode: David, Solomon. I mean, they've got failures that are just disastrous at times. And so not even the heroes of the Old Testament can do the job. So we're left longing for someone else, right? And it's interesting, Paul does pick up on this. I won't spend a lot of time on this. But in Romans 2, he carries along with this same idea of how in Romans 2:17 and verses after that... He talks about how Jewish people (and he is a Jew, so he's talking about the nation collectively)... "We might call ourselves a Jew, we might rely on the law, we might boast in God, we might think that we are a light to those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish people, teachers. And we have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth itself. And yet we steal. We break the law. We covet. We commit adultery. We do all these sorts of things. And so how can we actually be the light of the world?" That's Romans 2 stuff that we need to reckon with. And Paul is operating by this same story that we've been talking about. He's assuming that Israel *should* be the light to those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish and a teacher of children. And he is assuming that that is the calling of Israel. And yet he's also reckoning with the fact that, "Yeah, we haven't done that. We've actually brought reproach upon us." He quotes that verse, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of us." He's talking to his Jewish interlocutor, but he means himself too. "We've actually brought shame upon God. We haven't brought people to God." And so again, as a preview, when you get into Romans, all of this is in Romans. Paul is operating by the same narrative. In that passage I read from Malachi, it's very clear and explicit that Israel has come under the divine curse. So again, Malachi 2:2-3 says:

² If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart.

So he clearly wants them to know that they are under a curse. And even their blessings are under a curse, which is so interesting when you go back to Genesis 12:1-3, where God says that you will be blessed and you will be a blessing to the nations. And yet, if there was ever a text... That whole project has been taken off track because they've actually been a curse. [crosstalk]

MSH: Yeah, the whole thing's inverted.

MLH: Yep. That's right. He goes on, Malachi 3:9:

⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you.

So he's not talking about just one person within Israel. He's saying, "You all (collectively) have been a disaster."

MSH: He's not just talking about a tithe either.

MLH: [laughs] Yeah, right.

MSH: It's so much bigger than that.

MLH: Yeah, right, exactly.

MSH: The failure is comprehensive.

MLH: Yep, which is interesting. The election of Israel was national. And the disaster that Israel became is national. Like no one's not guilty of this. They're all guilty. And so that's something important to keep in mind.

So yeah, we come down to another interesting section. And when I was re-reading Malachi 2:10-11, looking through the Hebrew of it all, I found some allusions, I think, to other parts of the Old Testament I want to talk about. But in that text (Malachi 2:10-11), I think we see how clearly Israel's disobedience to God is described as covenant-breaking and it's described as faithlessness, which is very interesting. So let me read this text. It's super-intriguing. Malachi 2:10-11 says:

¹⁰Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? ¹¹Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.

And what's interesting there is, there seems to be some reflection on the part of the people of Israel saying, "Have we not all one Father? Have we not all one God? So if that's true, then why as a nation are we mistreating one another? How come we have brought disaster upon one another? Why have we been faithless to one another?" And when you read that text in Hebrew, you're immediately drawn to those words "one Father." "Have we not all one Father?" [אֱחָד] That word "one" (*ekhad*) should clue all of us back to the Shema. Which of course everybody knows the Shema, Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is [*ekhad*] one.

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And so what's interesting about the Malachi text is I think they're clearly alluding back to the Shema prayer there. They're saying, "Look, we worship one God, and yet we ourselves are fractured. We have broken and profaned the covenant (*berith*) of our fathers. And we have proved faithless." And that's interesting to me because what they seem to be saying here is that, "We've breached the very foundation of our way of life, namely Jewish monotheism (one Father, one God)." And they've taken the most fundamental belief (or if we can say "theology" if that's an appropriate term)... They've taken their most fundamental belief and fractured it and have proved faithless. And so that's a really interesting text in many ways. And it helps us to see that their desolation has just been down to the core.

MSH: Yeah, it's the opposite of believing loyalty. It's unbelieving disloyalty, both to their creed and also their vocation. It's just one big mess.

MLH: Yeah, it *is* interesting because like I said, they were supposed to heal the fractured nations and they have found themselves fractured due to their own disobedience. They have not remained loyal to God or faithful to him.

MSH: They have essentially become Babel.

MLH: Yeah.

MSH: And some of that language actually gets used in the Prophets, where Israel is put under the ban (the *kherem*). You'll actually get this kind of language. It's really disastrous in all aspects. We tend to look at Old Testament Israel's failure as what? "Oh, people weren't doing every part of the law. Or they missed this part of Leviticus. Or they didn't do this ritual right." It's so much more comprehensively bad [laughs] than any of that.

MLH: Yeah, the corruption is thorough. Absolutely. Their ideal was, "Here, since we worship one God, there should be one people. And yet even though we claim to worship the one God, we are so fractured." You know, you have the kingdom divided (Israel and Judah). You have division even within that. And so I think the

Shema (“the Lord our God, the Lord is one”)—that prayer was meant to be enacted and lived out in the life and practice and ethics of Israel. And yet they found themselves in complete disarray because they’ve breached even that foundational creed.

What’s interesting... I’ll just point this out and won’t go into detail at this point. But in Romans 3 around verse 29 or 30, Paul will actually appeal to the Shema to make the argument that because there is one God, there is one people, and that one people is Jew and Gentile. You know, there’s not Gentile gods and a Jewish god. No, there’s one Creator. He’s the Most High. And because we affirm that as a creed, there should be one people. And that’s part of Paul’s argument that Jews and Gentiles should come together in covenant unity *through* the messiah. So anyway, it’s just kind of a point of contact of how Malachi and Paul will use the Shema in the same sort of vein and the same narrative.

So another key text I think that we can point to is Malachi 2:17, where it says:

17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, “How have we wearied him?” By saying, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God of justice?”

Okay, so that word “justice” there, interestingly...

MSH: Interesting term.

MLH: Yeah, it is, in Hebrew and in the Greek Old Testament! In the Septuagint, you have the word δικαιοσύνη. And every Pauline scholar knows that δικαιοσύνη (which is often translated “righteousness”), is one of the most important terms that Paul employs in all of his writings, particularly Romans. And it’s a term that is used with respect to covenant loyalty. Like, a status of righteousness for Paul (to have a status of δικαιοσύνη) is to have the status of being in covenant loyalty, like you are marked out as loyal to the covenant. And for the Jews of the Old Testament, the idea is that covenant loyalty is pointed and centered around Torah—obedience to Torah. And for Paul, it’s going to be centered around messiah (Jesus).

40:00

MSH: You could even question whether the Jewish angle is correct as well. Is it really centered around Torah? Well, yeah, but if the mission is Genesis 12, that sort of overrides or overarches Torah.

MLH: Yeah! You know, that’s actually an argument that Paul makes in Galatians, where he says, “Look, you know, you have the Mosaic law (the Torah). But just because God enacted a Mosaic Torah doesn’t nullify the Abrahamic covenant.”

And the Abrahamic covenant is a covenant that we can't forget about, and that Abrahamic covenant was all about loyalty to Yahweh—belief in God—but it was always oriented toward the nations. And so you can't, in other words, say, "We have to keep the Mosaic law to the exclusion of being in unity with your Gentile brothers and sisters in Christ." That's Paul's argument.

MSH: Yeah. That's what Paul hammers consistently. "Great. You're obedient to the law. Great. I'm a Pharisee, too. Wonderful. But look at what you're missing. Look at what's not included." And it's the Abrahamic covenant.

MLH: Right. Absolutely. That's exactly right. And so in the Malachi text here, there's lots of different allusions to Romans that we can point to. But one thing that just occurred to me just now is, whenever the text (Malachi 2:17) says that they have wearied God by asking, "Where is the God of δικαιοσύνη? Where is the God of justice (*mishpat*, or ὑψηλὴδικαιοσύνη in the Greek)?" it's really interesting because in the context they seem to be questioning God's ability to be an impartial judge. You know, they can get away with evil. "God's not going to get us. And we can sin and perform all the wickedness we want, and God's not going to get us." But for Paul in Romans 3, he says that the δικαιοσύνη has been revealed by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Jesus has revealed the justice of God—the righteousness of God—on the cross. And God *has* shown up. He has punished sin, but he has also revealed a way that all people can have covenant loyalty. And that's by recentring their lives around Jesus the messiah, the one who reveals or manifests God's δικαιοσύνη. So that's an important point here. I guess my point is, Paul's going to answer that question. He's like, "When Malachi and the people in Malachi say, 'Where is the God of δικαιοσύνη?'" Paul's going to have an answer to that in Romans 3. It was revealed on the cross. It was revealed in messiah, Jesus. So there's a lot of connections we could make there. But a very important connection here that I think is part of that storied narrative, (that Genesis 11-12 narrative) comes from back in Malachi 1. A couple of interesting texts here that I want to raise our attention to. Malachi 1:5. It says:

⁵ Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!"

That occurs in the context of God's discussion about Jacob, who he loves, and Esau, who he has not loved. And he ends that whole passage by saying, "You know, the Lord will be great beyond the border of Israel. And you're going to see it." So God's electing of Israel is going to have global consequences. We've talked about that. But we need to move a few verses down after that to Malachi 1:11. This is an interesting text. So let me read verse 11. It says:

¹¹ For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

45:00 Now here's what's interesting. If you take this passage just on its own and consider all that we said a moment ago about how God is upset with the priests because the priests have misled the people... And even though priests were designated messengers of Yahweh, they had not been *good* messengers of Yahweh. And so here, though, we see how yet God, despite the failure of Israel at being good priests, is going to still make his name great among the *goyim* or the nations (the *ethne*, the Gentiles—that's the Greek word and *goyim*, of course, is Hebrew). "Among the peoples. And in every place incense will be offered to my name, and it'll be a *pure* offering—a clean offering." That's the idea. It's ritualistic purity—cleanness. "And my name will be great among the nations." Now the question I have is, okay, how is that going to happen? Because the priests who were supposed to do this sort of stuff failed. And yet God seems to be extremely confident that, "Well, we're going to get the ball rolling. The nations will know my name and there's going to be pure, clean offerings offered among them." In other words, what's happening is this temple cult language (this language of sacrifice and so forth) is being applied to the nations—to the Gentiles. And again, that shouldn't surprise us because that was Israel's mission to be a blessing to the nations. I think that's what's going on. Now when you jump to Paul, the very first opening verses of Paul in Romans 1:4-5, he says this: "Jesus Christ" or "Jesus the messiah our Lord..."

⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

Among all the *ethne*. That's so important when you put them in parallel to the Malachi passage, where it says, "My name will be great among all the nations." Paul says he's going to take the obedience of faith—he's going to take the gospel of Jesus—for the sake of God's name among all the nations. The wording there is very close and nearly identical. And later on in Romans 12 (a well-known passage that we all know), where Paul says,

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice...

θυσίαν. That's the same word actually in the Septuagint of Malachi that we read. Anyway, we're presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice...

...holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

So the point here for Paul is that the way in which God's going to bring about true, pure sacrifices among the nations (which Malachi promises) is going to be through the gospel of Jesus the messiah. So that's what he's going to do with these questions and these prophecies that Malachi puts forward.

But let's put Paul aside for just a moment and go back to Malachi. Malachi thinks this is going to happen. And so far in Malachi, we don't know how that's going to come about. All we have are a bunch of problems. But as we read on, Malachi will go on to talk about someone called "the messenger." Now he's going to use this word in a couple different ways. He's already used it to reference the priests, who have failed to be good messengers. But he's going to talk later on in Malachi 3 about another messenger (actually two more messengers). But these messengers (one of which is the messiah) are going to be instrumental... He's going to be instrumental in bringing about pure sacrifices among the nations. And he's going to actually restore the priesthood, and hence validate and establish Israel's election. So I think we should get into some of that here.

MSH: Definitely, because I'm going to throw out not a wild card in here. To use "scholar speak," this is a multivalent passage. [laughs]

MLH: Hmm. Yep.

MSH: Because there are some really interesting things going on here.

MLH: Yeah, absolutely. Okay, so let's talk about Malachi's messianism. We start by focusing on Malachi 3:1-5. So let me read that text. It says this:

"Behold, I send my messenger [MLH: and again, the words 'my messenger' is a translation of *malaki*, which we get "Malachi" from], and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵ "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the

fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

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If there was ever a dense text, that's going to be it. Right? There's so much there. So just a few observations here that we need to attend to. In Malachi 3:1, where it talks about the messengers, there's actually, I think, two messengers identified here. The first appears to be a human. So this one is the one who prepares the way. So: "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me..." It seems to say "before me," meaning "before Yahweh." So this is an earthly human messenger that's later in Malachi identified with Elijah. And in the New Testament, of course, that's later applied to John the Baptist. And he prepares the way of Yahweh. "He prepares the way before me." That's the text. And there are some parallels there with Isaiah 40: "A voice cries in the wilderness. Prepare the way of the Lord." People are familiar with that text. So there's some continuity there with that.

So that's the first messenger. But there's a second messenger there who seems to be divine. So let me just read verse 1 there again. It says:

"Behold, I send my messenger [MLH: that's the Elijah person], and he will prepare the way before me [MLH: that is, before Yahweh]. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

Many scholars are going to take *that* messenger—the messenger of the covenant or the Lord who will suddenly come to his temple... That messenger is divine. That's kind of the messianic figure, even though the word messiah is not used there. And when I read that, Mike, I think, of course, of "Angel of the Lord" texts. Is there something there that we can say about that with respect to this Malachi passage?

MSH: Yeah, I think there is something going on here as far as having at least the possibility of one of these messengers being divine, and then that becomes an element of the messianic profile. It can't be divorced from the messianic profile. It becomes part of the mix because it evokes this language of how the messenger of the Lord (the Angel of the Lord—the *malak adonai*) led the children of Israel through the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land, where they were going to build a temple. I mean, that was the whole point—to establish the Name in Canaan, where God chooses. So you get that flavoring to it. But what's really interesting is, I've had my head in Aramaic traditions for the last few months, and specifically the Memra, which I know you're familiar with. But the word *memra* in Aramaic is the word for "word." And the Targums have a habit of taking characters like the Angel of the Lord or Yahweh himself or the Glory and referring to that figure as the Word—the Word of the Lord. And John Ronning has written,

I think, just an excellent book that everybody ought to read, but it's very dense. And if you don't have the Targums... Fortunately I have a digital addition of the Targums. I can go look up stuff really quickly. But if you don't have that, you miss the import of how many times in the Old Testament the Targums (which were Aramaic translations that would have been read in the synagogues every week in the first century) the Word of the Lord shows up. And this is where John gets his "Word become flesh" theology. It's the Angel. It's the anthropomorphized form of God—the second Yahweh figure—that I talk about in *Unseen Realm*. And in this passage, what's really interesting... I'm actually going to read a little bit from Ronning here, from this book. Because it's something you just wouldn't think of unless you were thinking like an Aramaic-speaking Jew [laughter] in the first century. He's talking about Deuteronomy 16, which prescribes certain duties that Israelites were supposed to carry out.

Of primary importance was the duty to remember their deliverance from Egypt mentioned in connection with the feasts of the Passover and the Unleavened Bread and Pentecost. We may presume that this duty was intended to be part of the feast of Booths as well, though it is not specifically mentioned. If nothing else (says Deuteronomy 16:3), they should remember every day of their lives their deliverance from Egypt.

Again, they're being led by the Angel out of Egypt on the way to the Promise, and they should remember this every day of their lives.

And in light of this statement, the statement by Jesus' critics in John 8:33 takes on a new flavor.

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And they say there, "We have never been enslaved to anyone." And that implies that they had failed in their duty to be thankful to God for their redemption. Which ties in with what you've been saying in this episode—the vocational failure of being the rescue plan for the nations. They have totally failed this. And they've actually become... It's become inverted. They've become the slaves. They've become the ones that are fragmented—that are not whole. So Jesus' status as the Word of the Lord raises the question as to whether *he* was obligated to keep this command of remembrance. I mean, if he is the Word, if he is the new manifestation of the Angel (God in human form)... Of course, the incarnation ups the ante considerably. But if he's the latest installment of this and really the final installment of this, does he have the obligation to remember these things as well?

Malachi had prophesied, "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple." And John seems to indicate that this prophecy was fulfilled at the feast of booths in John 7-8. John 7:11 says that the Jews were seeking him [Jesus] at the feast, and then at verse 14 Jesus suddenly appears in the temple in the

middle of the feast. He comes to the feast as a redeemer, not as one needing to remember redemption.

So that's just a little tidbit—a little throwaway. But if John does interpret Malachi 3:1 as being fulfilled there in John 7-8 in that temple scene, you have a supernatural being in Malachi, and you've certainly got one in Jesus, who is the Word incarnate in the Gospel of John.

MLH: That is so good. That is so good.

MSH: It's crazy!

MLH: Yeah, the consistency of it all, right? You know, I'm trained to think of the relationship, of course, between the Old and the New Testament. And that's just what I've focused so much of my work on. And what I continue to be amazed about is how consistent they are together. You know, I always grew up thinking there was this huge divide between the two. And I'm constantly amazed at the continuity between the two and how everything just sort of flows together once you actually get into the text and note all these seemingly minor details in these seemingly Minor Prophets. [laughs] Right? There's nothing minor about any of this.

MSH: Yeah. The point is that if John is reading Malachi 3:1 as a supernatural encounter with the Word, [laughs]... You know? It makes perfect sense to refer to him as the *malak*, regardless of whether he also means Elijah and the John the Baptist figure as well. You can have both of them, like you were saying.

MLH: Yeah. I think so. For sure, yeah. And I think it's important to draw attention to what Malachi says that the divine messenger is actually going to do. He takes the priestly vocation and redeems it.

MSH: Yep.

MLH: That's the idea here, that he's a refiner. He's going to show up at his temple, of course, suddenly. And he's actually called a messenger of the covenant. And that's really interesting because it's the covenant that Israel has violated. Even the most basic creedal form of the covenant (the Shema) they have violated. And this should go back to our episodes about the servant, who... You know, Israel is called the servant in Isaiah, but we get the strong impression that the servant is also an individual who will *redeem* Israel. And so here you have someone who is intimately associated with the covenant, who is a messenger, who is the Lord, and yet he comes to redeem all of the things (the priesthood, the vocation, the election, all that)—to redeem all of that. And as someone who does that, he's called a messenger of the covenant. He represents the embodiment of the covenant in himself. At least that's how I see this.

MSH: Yeah.

MLH: And this becomes the answer to the question that we've asked before. Okay, how are the Gentiles going to be equipped to offer sacrifices, and how is God's name going to be great among the *goyim* or the *ethne*—the nations? It will be by getting Israel purified again. It will be by renewing Israel. And when you do that, you renew her election. You renew her mission. And it will be through Israel (the renewed Israel) that the nations will be blessed, thus fulfilling the Abrahamic promise in Genesis 12. And so that's this whole idea. He redeems the priestly vocation. And what I would like to say about this is that the priestly vocation of Israel is going to be reconfigured around the messenger, and that's how I read Malachi here—that all of the priestly vocation, the sacrifices, all of that stuff, the covenant itself, is going to be reconfigured around this messenger. And that's pretty much all Malachi says. It's kind of vague. But he presents a lot of conceptual categories that can later be filled in once you get into the New Testament. And I think Paul in Romans fills those in really...

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MSH: Well, at the very least, he shows the failure is total and leaves his own readers expecting something to come along. You know, if even the heroes of the faith can't do this, then where are we? And the answer is, "Well, the Lord has to do it himself." And the Lord... Either the Lord (the invisible Yahweh) or the Lord who is the visible messenger, they both had the same mission at the same time: to get Israel into the Promised Land, to hopefully fulfill this expectation. And that's where we have to go back. But now all that talk is replaced by the Christ event. The incarnate Word has now shown up, and he's the one who's going to show up at the temple and redeem it.

MLH: And how does he redeem the temple? Well, we talked about that, too. He redeems the temple by raising it from the dead.

MSH: Yep.

MLH: And the audience can have fun with that one. There's a *lot* just right there. Right? [laughs]

MSH: Well, and it's back to the Gospel of John again—the temple, which is his body. He *is* the embodiment of the covenant. He *is* the embodiment of the temple. He's the embodiment of all these things.

MLH: Because it's in his body where the sacrifice is made. He is the mercy seat. He is the one that spills his blood. And it's in the temple, of course, where the sacrifices are made. So he becomes temple. He becomes the sacrifices, and then we as those who have been united to Christ, incorporated into Christ (Romans 12:1), so that we present our bodies as sacrifices. And so there's that plurality—the pluralizing of the body.

MSH: And we become the temple, as well, because we're joined to him.

MLH: Right. That's why the temple's going to be redeemed. Our hearts have to be redeemed. Yep.

MSH: All of these theological buzzwords and these prooftexts (the New Testament temple talk of the body of Christ and believers individual and corporately and all that)... I'm amazed, too, at how consistent it is. You know, like you were just saying, it just... It actually makes sense. [laughter]

MLH: Yeah, right.

MSH: You know, we talked about in one of our earlier episodes how reading the Old Testament sometimes to young Christians can appear disconnected, and just kind of this blob of information, like, "I don't know what to do with this." At least that's how I felt. And that's why I think this series is so important. Because we are piecing everything together by recognizing... We're not creating the story, we are recognizing the story that's been there all along. And so I think our series here is an exercise in hermeneutics. It's also an exercise in apologetics, right? And those two have come together real well. And I'm a Paul guy. I mean, that's what I did my dissertation on, in specifically Romans. So I like to see Malachi here almost appear to be an introduction to what Paul is going to say in Romans. Maybe I can tease us on that? [crosstalk]

MSH: [crosstalk] Yeah, go ahead and throw out a teaser there. Because that's where we're going to be transitioning to.

MLH: So as I wrote in my book, *Paul and the Meaning of Scripture* (and this was my dissertation as well), I've recognized that Paul interprets a lot of Old Testament texts Christologically, meaning he takes these Old Testament texts and he finds meaning in them that only makes sense in light of how he understands Jesus to be the messiah. It's a messianic interpretation, in other words. And what's interesting and what scholars have pointed out for a long time, is how sometimes Paul will take an Old Testament text and appear to give it new meaning, or some sort of fresh meaning. And it leaves us scratching our heads. And that's what I focused my book and dissertation on: How do we make sense of this? So whenever we recognize Paul's reading of Scripture or we recognize he's interpreting it Christologically, it's important to realize that Malachi has already given him those categories. I don't think Paul's doing anything that Malachi hasn't already set him up to do. So the question is, how can Paul reconfigure Old Testament texts around the messiah? Well, by following the same logic of Malachi. So remember, from Malachi, Israel's election and her priestly vocation was going to be reconfigured around the messenger or the messiah. We've talked about that a moment ago. Well, that's all Paul is doing in Romans, I think. So again, this is recap. Recall from those previous episodes

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how Israel was elected to be a blessing to the fractured nations of the world. For Malachi, Israel's election (her vocation) is still intact. He's affirmed that. And yet it's also...

MSH: They're still supposed to do it.

MLH: Yeah, that's right. It's still clear, though, that Israel has failed to live up to her covenant obligations and her priestly vocation. She has not been a faithful chosen one or an elect one, right? But Malachi still envisions how the nations will nonetheless be reached, despite Israel's failure. How? Because God's going to send the messenger—the messenger of the covenant. He's going to restore the priestly vocation. He's going to make it where offerings and righteousness will be able to be offered. He's going to do that even among the *goyim*—even among the nations. And Malachi is really consistent there with the story of Israel and the messianic profile that we've been talking about in all of these previous episodes. So for Malachi, everything in that Jewish story (Israel's election, Israel's covenant, Israel's Gentile ministry, Israel's priestly vocation), all of that will be restored, and they are reconfigured around the divine messenger or the messiah. So like I said, Malachi said all of this before Paul does. And so that's how I think Paul reads Scripture, is that he's going to read Scripture Christologically through his own messianic interpretation. He's going to look at Old Testament texts and give them fresh meaning. This doesn't mean, though, that Paul's going to commit interpretive violence, or... Because he's not out of step with standard Jewish practice. I mean, the Jews, like Malachi, believed that everything *needed* to be reconfigured around the messiah.

MSH: He's not the only storied reader.

MLH: No, not at all. He's operating within the same vein as many of his contemporaries. You know, it's true that texts like Malachi (the messenger) or texts like Isaiah's servant were very vague, cryptic, ambiguous. But after the Christ event, and I think specifically after Paul's Christophany on the road to Damascus... After that, I think Paul could see how the Old Testament could take on fresh light and could be actually... Well, I think he came to the realization, "Hey, now is the time when all of that's going to be reconfigured around Jesus."

So just as a teaser for Paul in Romans, he's going to make the same argument—that Israel has been unfaithful to her election. She has been unfaithful to the covenant. That's Romans 3 stuff. We can get into that later. He's going to affirm that Israel's election and covenant promises are Gentile-oriented. So that's consistent with Malachi. And he's going to give this elaborate argument that really coalesces in Romans 9-11, that Israel's disobedience to believe in the messiah will lead to Gentile inclusion in the covenant. And that's how Gentiles become part of the covenant or the chosen or the elect family of God (Israel). And then when the Gentiles come into that family (when they are part of the

chosen family of God), that will drive physical Israel to jealousy and then to faith in Christ. And it's in that way that Israel becomes both blessed and becomes a blessing and therefore fulfills the entirety of the Abrahamic covenant. That's Paul's way of solving the problem in Romans 9-11. He thinks Israel's priestly vocation is resumed and picked up in the Christ people—Romans 12:1. "Present your bodies as living sacrifices." And so Paul is going to take Old Testament texts and Old Testament concepts like faith and obedience and Torah-keeping and he's going to wrap those around the messiah. And I think when we get into Romans, we're going to see that some of Paul's interpretations at first glance look odd, disjointed, and contrived. But because we've spent seven or eight episodes constructing the story of the messiah and the profile of the messiah in all of its variety and consistency, since we have that in place, we will apply that to the way Paul looks at Old Testament texts. And his interpretations, even when they're fresh and even when they're creative and almost mysterious, those will begin to make sense. And in many ways, this whole series has become an apologetic for Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament.

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MSH: Yeah. And that was part of my thinking when I approached you with the idea. Because this marginalization of Paul, I just think, is so wrong-headed in so many ways. And this at least gives us one trajectory (messianism) to illustrate that, I think.

MLH: Yeah, it illustrates it well, in my opinion.

MSH: Well, thanks again for being with us. This was, again, fascinating to give Malachi some stage time. [laughter]

MLH: He deserves it. [laughs]

MSH: Yeah! He deserves it, for really good reasons. It just encapsulates so much that we had talked about before in terms of the covenantal failure, and then what's going to come out of that or how he leaves his own audience expecting something more (expecting some fulfillment, if I can use that word) of God's intention to have Israel play this role. And despite the miserable failure that it is, there's something yet to come. And that's what we're going to get into next time. So we are going to transition into the New Testament when we come back. And we're going to land somewhere in Romans, and I'm sure not just one place. But hopefully you'll begin to see the logic of what Paul is trying to do, based upon his reading of the Old Testament as a story. He is not alone. He is well within Jewish tradition. But he has been impacted deeply by the Christ event, his own encounter with Jesus, and of course being taught by Jesus early in his ministry as well. So he's affected by all of that. But his method—his approach—is consistent with Second Temple Judaism.

TS: Alright, Mike, another great weeds one. I could tell Dr. Halsted liked this episode. I think he mentioned afterwards about it being one of his favorite episodes so far, but I assume that's going to get eclipsed when we get into Romans, because he seems to love Romans. But I'm glad a Minor Prophet (if you want to say "minor") is getting some love this episode.

MSH: Yeah, really, it's about time. Long overdue.

TS: Alright, well, we're looking forward to next week when we get into the New Testament. And loving the series so far. So with that, I want to thank everybody for listening to the Naked Bible Podcast! God Bless.