



2 I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, 3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. 4 Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. 5 And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel. (Mal 1:2-5)

The prophets of Malachi's day believed the Word of God was a burden they bore. Is this true? I do not believe so since I do not believe we can bear any burden for the Lord. He has born all of OUR burdens – not the other way around. Our help in serving the Lord is not an essential to His purpose, but He does allow us to serve Him in ways that build our faith. That which we Love and carry on our shoulders is never a burden but a joy. If we love God's Word, bearing it to the most remote corner of the earth would not be a burden. It may be that the prophets considered that burden more as a responsibility than something that the Lord required for His glory. Rather than bearing a burden for the Lord, we who have that Word must bear a burden for the world – to share and proclaim the same Gospel by which we, too, have been saved!

We are faced with a very difficult truth in verses 2 & 3 of Malachi 1. 2 *"I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, 3 And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness."* We may, at first, harshly judge our very Maker when we read these lines. This is so because we may not understand what God is saying altogether. God loved Jacob and hated Esau. What think you of that fact? Is it unfair of God? Is it favoritism? In our view, it may be unfair, and it may be that God is showing favoritism. So is God disallowed such sentiments as God Almighty? God has known our natures long before our parents came together in wedlock – long before the stars, the moon, the sun and the planets were slung, by the finger of God into their respective orbits. Does God not have an intimate knowledge of all that He conceives and Creates? He knew Jacob's nature long before Jacob was a twinkle in his father's eye – and He knew the nature of Esau as well. Esau and Jacob, too, are types to teach us of Christ.

By the first man, ADAM, came sin and death upon the human race. Nonetheless, he became the federal head of humanity. By the Second Man, Jesus Christ, came salvation and life eternal. *"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* (1 Cor 15:21-22) Esau, being the firstborn, stands in the place of Adam. Jacob, being the second born and chosen of God stands in the stead (in type) of Christ. *"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* (1 Cor 15:45-49) The long suffering of Christ for His Bride the Church was much like the long suffering of Jacob for his favored bride, Rachel. On the other hand, Esau knew no long suffering. Instead, he foolishly traded his inheritance for a bowl of red porridge. I am afraid that this is EXACTLY what the modern church is doing today!

Israel questions whether God had loved them. They had gone into captivity in Babylon owing to infidelity. Now God has brought them out of Babylon back to Jerusalem. They are restored to their land, but there are always consequences to be paid for sin in this life. The former grandeur of Solomon's Temple could not be replicated in the dire and meager bricks of the new. Jerusalem had been trodden down by the Gentiles. It no longer had the dreamy appeal of its former glory. So the people believed that God loved them less. Do we not always blame God for our own shortcomings and sin? If God chose the scoundrel Jacob as a chosen vessel, do you believe He did any better in choosing you and me? God saw the deep-seated soul of Jacob and He saw something that was good and profitable for His plan in Jacob's heart. Though Jacob got His father's blessing through the deceit of his mother, he possessed a spirit about him that would compel him to appeal to God and even to wrestle with God's Angel to get the blessing. Esau had no such character that would turn to God. He felt himself self-sufficient as do many modern ministers. He was animalistic and crass.

**4 "Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever."** Because he strove not for those things above, Esau and his red porridge became cursed as the land of Edom (red in the Hebrew tongue). Edom proudly proclaims herself the master of her fate. She will rebuild again her tall towers thrown down in judgment, or so she claims. But God will not be mocked. He seeks out those who will believe and walk by faith. Jacob was weak and small. He could not build a marvelous Temple such as Solomon, his descendent, built; but he knew a great Person who could – His God! *"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."* (Psalms 127:1) Any attempts of man to recreate the Paradise of God will meet with His wrath and sure judgment. Many new church assemblies begin with earnest intent to build a house to the glory of God; but as the spire of the structure reaches near the clouds, the builders take pride in the labor of their hands and forget the Lord for whom they began their labors. Does this not fit perfectly the attitude of the modern monstrosities we call churches in our land? If remaining true to the Gospel of Christ means losing a thousand adherents and retaining only ten, what recourse does a true church have but to take the loss in numbers and the gain in fidelity to Christ?

There is in Agra, India, a beautiful structure called the Taj Mahal (Urdu/Persian for crown of palaces). This structure was built by Emperor Shah Jahan for his wife to commemorate the beautiful gardens of her native Persia. He had always promised to build it but, before he fulfilled his promise, the love of his life passed away during childbirth. Grief-stricken, he began construction of this most beautiful and classic structure in 1632. The Taj Mahal itself was sixteen years in the building. The Emperor penned these words to reveal its purpose:

*Should guilty seek asylum here,  
Like one pardoned, he becomes free from sin.  
Should a sinner make his way to this mansion,  
All his past sins are to be washed away.  
The sight of this mansion creates sorrowing sighs;  
And the sun and the moon shed tears from their eyes  
.In this world this edifice has been made;  
**To display thereby the Creator's glory.***

There is a legend (I know not if it is true) that says that the emperor, Shah Jahan, was going through the building inspecting its progress when it was only ten years in the making. Stumbling across a large box amid the construction materials, he cursed and ordered that piece of trash removed from the building. Timidly, the builders said; "But, Your Majesty! That is the coffin of your wife for whom the building is being built." Have not many churches forgotten, in their race to build a glorious institution, forgotten the Lord for whom they build and settled upon the personal glory of the structure itself?

**5 "And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel."** In the days of Malachi, the prophet, evil was abounding and righteous living on the wane. This hurt the sensibilities of the prophet just as the wickedness that abounds in our nation should offend the consciences of all Americans and drive them to their knees in supplication and prayer. Whether the people of our nation respond in that way or not, the LORD will nonetheless be magnified. He will either be magnified by the blessings He will be led to bring upon a repentant nation, or by the curses which an unrepentant nation brings upon themselves. His Name and Glory shall forever be vindicated. The New Testament Church, no less than that of the Old Testament, will be held accountable for the manner which they honor, or dishonor, the Name of the LORD. How will you respond among your friends and family to the Word of the Lord?