

Expectations and Reality
Matthew 11:1-19

Review:

1. When our expectations of God don't match up with the reality of suffering in our lives, we can be offended at Jesus, rejecting Him or giving ourselves over to disappointment and despair
2. The same Jesus Who healed the sick and raised the dead has the power to save us
3. Jesus allows suffering to come into our lives to refine us, to make us more like Him in holiness
4. No matter what we are going through, Jesus has come into His Temple, living within all those who trust in Him

Go further: Read Malachi 2:17-3:5

1. How does God say His people have wearied Him?
2. In what two ways do God's people accuse Him of injustice in 2:17?
3. In 3:1, who does God say He will send in response to His people's questions?
4. What does God say "my messenger" will do?
5. Where does the Lord promise that He will come?
6. What does God say the "messenger of the covenant" will do? How does God say His people feel about this messenger?
7. How does God say His people will react to the appearance of the "messenger of the covenant" in 3:2?
8. To what two things does God compare the "messenger of the covenant?"
9. What does God say the "messenger of the covenant" will do to the sons of Levi? How will he do this? For what purpose does he do this?
10. After the "messenger of the covenant" comes, how does God describe the offerings of His people in 3:4?
11. Why does God say He will come near to His people in 3:5?
12. Against what sorts of people does God say He will bear witness?
13. Why does God say He will accuse these wicked people?
14. What title does Malachi use for God in 3:1 and 3:5? Why would this title be appropriate, given what Malachi has told us about God?

Apply:

1. What things in your own life or in the culture around you make you wonder about God's willingness or ability to do justice?
2. How has God used seasons of suffering in your life to refine you and make you more like Jesus?
3. Have these passages from Matthew and Malachi changed your perspective on the suffering in your life and in the world around you? Why or why not?