

MALACHI: CALL TO REVERENCE

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MALACHI IS THE LAST BOOK IN THE OT

IT WAS WRITTEN IN ABOUT 435 BC, ABOUT 100 YEARS AFTER THE FIRST JEWS RETURNED FROM BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

MALACHI 2:17; 3:13-15

THE PEOPLE SIMPLY DID NOT RESPECT GOD.

THEY "DO NOT **FEAR** ME" (**MALACHI 3:5**). CF. PSALMS 36:1

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CORRUPTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD

OFFICIATING AT THE TEMPLE SACRIFICES AND CEREMONIES – **LEVITICUS 21:6**

INSTRUCTING THE NATION IN GOD'S LAW – **LEVITICUS 10:11**

JUDGING DISPUTES OVER APPLICATION OF THE LAW TO SPECIFIC CASES – **DEUTERONOMY 17:8-11**

AS LEADERS, THEY WERE MORE A HINDRANCE TO THE NATION THAN A HELP

IF THEY WOULD NOT REPENT, GOD WARNED OF SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES –

MALACHI 2:1-4

THERE IS NO MORE DISASTROUS FAILURE THAN A FAILURE OF EXAMPLE – E.G. DAVID IN **2 SAMUEL 12:13,14**

TODAY, WE ARE "A SPIRITUAL HOUSE" AND "A HOLY PRIESTHOOD" (**1 PETER 2:5**)

DO WE APPRECIATE THE PRIVILEGE? DO WE ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY? CF. **MALACHI 2:7-8**

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DISREGARD FOR GOD'S MARRIAGE LAW

IN MALACHI'S DAY, THE MEN OF ISRAEL WERE UNLAWFULLY DIVORCING THEIR WIVES – AND THEN COMPOUNDING THE PROBLEM BY UNLAWFULLY MARRYING GENTILE WOMEN – **MALACHI 2:10-16**.

IN **MATTHEW 19:3-12**, JESUS SUMMED UP GOD'S MARRIAGE LAW "FROM THE BEGINNING," "SO, THEY ARE NO LONGER TWO BUT ONE FLESH. WHAT THEREFORE GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN SEPARATE."

WHILE BOTH PARTIES ARE LIVING, THERE IS ONLY ONE EXCEPTION TO THE PERMANENCE OF MARRIAGE: **ADULTERY**.

IN THE ABSENCE OF THAT CAUSE, DIVORCE IS A SIN

WE CAN'T DISREGARD OUR MARRIAGE VOWS AND CONTINUE TO WORSHIP GOD WITHOUT REPENTANCE.

NOR CAN WE MISTREAT OUR MATES AND CONTINUE TO WORSHIP GOD WITHOUT REPENTANCE – **1 PETER 3:7**.

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DECAY IN WORSHIP

THE PEOPLE TO WHOM MALACHI PREACHED HAD MADE A MOCKERY OF WORSHIP – **MALACHI 1:7-8,12-14**

IF THEY WOULD NOT REPENT, THEY SHOULD "SHUT THE DOORS" AND "NOT KINDLE FIRE ON MY ALTAR IN VAIN" (**MALACHI 1:10**).

THERE WERE AT LEAST THREE WAYS THAT THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL HAD PERVERTED THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

1. THEIR WORSHIP WAS NO MORE THAN A MECHANICAL ROUTINE – WITH NO INVOLVEMENT OF THEIR HEARTS.
2. THEY HAD COMBINED WORSHIP AND UNGODLY LIVING. CF. **ISAIAH 1:12-17**.
3. THEY WERE GIVING THE LORD NOTHING MORE THAN THEIR LEFTOVERS.

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DECAY IN WORSHIP

WORSHIP IS "A RIGHT RESPONSE TO THE TRUE NATURE OF GOD." IF SO, ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP WOULD INVOLVE THE FOLLOWING.

A TRUE CONCEPTION OF GOD – **Acts 17:22-23**.

DOING ONLY WHAT GOD AUTHORIZES IN WORSHIP.

WORSHIPING SINCERELY, FROM THE HEART. - **Acts 13:22; 1 SAMUEL 13:14**

WHERE IS YOUR HEART? – A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL.

REMEMBER ABRAHAM – JAMES 2:21-23 "FRIEND OF GOD"

THERE COULD BE NO WORSE INSULT TO GOD THAN SHOWING IRREVERENCE TO HIM IN THE VERY ACT OF WORSHIP.

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CONCLUSION

ALTHOUGH THEY LIVED MANY YEARS AGO, IT IS DANGEROUS TO DISREGARD THE PROPHETS.

FOR THE TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE TODAY, THERE IS NO MORE POWERFUL PROPHET THAN MALACHI.

MALACHI CALLS US NOT ONLY TO A REVERENCE FOR GOD, BUT TO A REVERENCE THAT IS TO THE "ROOT" OF THE MATTER

WHEN GOD COMMANDS HIS PEOPLE TO "GIVE HONOR TO MY NAME," NO HOPE IS GIVEN TO THOSE WHO "WILL NOT LISTEN ... [AND] WILL NOT TAKE IT TO HEART" (**MALACHI 2:1-2**).

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CONCLUSION

HOW WILLING ARE WE TO HEAR WHEN GOD WARNS US TODAY?

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A SPIRITUAL PRIESTHOOD?

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS MARRIAGE LAW?

OUR PRACTICE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WORSHIP?

THE LAST CHAPTER OF THE LAST BOOK IN THE OT PRESENTS US WITH A CLEAR CHOICE – **MALACHI 4:1-2**.