

Malachi Chapter 2

V: 1 Malachi is mostly addressing the leadership in Israel, the priests because of the impact they will have on the people and the nation as a whole. They are being held to a higher standard.

James 3:1 “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive the stricter judgment.”

- The priests have somehow moved from serving God to despising God.

Malachi 1:6 “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts to you priests who despise My name...

V: 2 He’s calling the priests out to live a Godly, God honoring life.

1 Peter 1:15-16 “¹⁵But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.””

- Instead of despising His name they should be glorifying His name - that is their calling.
- In the glory days of Israel where were the priests? They were in the Temple singing praises to God, they were offering sacrifices to God. In their off time they were teaching the people God’s Word, giving Him glory. Even in this newly rebuilt Temple that is what they were doing.

Nehemiah 12:40-43 “⁴⁰So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God, likewise I and the half of the rulers with me; ⁴¹and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Minjamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; ⁴²also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang loudly with Jezrahiah the director. ⁴³Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.”

Nehemiah 8:5-8 “⁵And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, “Amen, Amen!” While lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maasseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people stood in their place. ⁸So they read distinctly from the book,

in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.”

Psalm 100:1-2, 4 “¹Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! ²Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing.” - ⁴Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His, name.”

- He’s warning the priests to take it to heart and give glory to His name, but He already knows that they’re not going to take it to heart.
- There are definite consequences to not obeying the Word of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 28:15 “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”

- Sadly we see the same thing today. Men & women that go into the ministry for a variety of reason that have nothing to do with God, or reverence for His Word - it’s a profession, it’s a platform, an opportunity to express their ungodly misguided and blasphemous thoughts about eternal things.  Which church?
Presbyterian, Episcopalian, United Methodist...

V: 3 KJV - “Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; And one shall take you away with it.”

- They are going to be humbled greatly.
- This will impact them, negatively for generations to come.

Hosea 8:7 “... they sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind.”

Galatians 6:8 “For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

Similar to another man who willfully disobeyed God:

1 Kings 14:10 “Therefore behold! I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse / dung until it is all gone.”

V: 4 When they see their demise they will know that God has not only brought this calamity upon them, but that the commandment that they ignored was actually from the LORD.

- And that if they repent, His covenant with Levi may continue.
- After all of this God is still merciful and compassionate - He will chasten them if that is what is needed, but it's not what He really wants to do.
- God had made a covenant with the Levites, they wouldn't get land like the other tribes, He would be their inheritance!

Deuteronomy 10:9 "Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, just as the LORD our God promised him."

V: 5 Reminding Levi / priests what that covenant was:

- A covenant of life and peace: We can enter into that same covenant of everlasting life and peace with God for all eternity.

Romans 5:1-2 "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

- God made this covenant of life and peace with the Levites - and they fear Him and revered Him - just as they and we should.

Psalms 116:12-14 "What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows to the LORD now in the presence of all His people."

- How should we respond to God's amazing love toward us?

Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

- At the very least we should revere Him, honor, and glorify Him!

Proverbs 28:14 "Blessed is the man who is always reverent..."

V: 6 Continuing: The law of truth was in his mouth... that is a good thing, may His word continually be on our lips as well.

Joshua 1:8 "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Why? Because he loves it!)

Psalms 119:97 "Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day."

- Part and parcel to all the above: *“He walked with Me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity.”*

Genesis 5:24 “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”

Hebrews 11:5 “... before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

Genesis 6:9 “... Noah walked with God.”

Genesis 17:1 “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.”

Amos 3:3 “Can two men walk together, unless they are agreed?”

- You can't walk with God unless you're at peace with God. You can't be at peace with God unless you're in agreement with who He is, and who we are.
- Once you are in agreement, and at peace, and walking with Him, then it's very natural to seek to turn sinners from their sin and towards the True and living God - *“turning many away from their iniquity.”*
- This is all the ideal, this is what the Lord wants for and from them.

V: 7 The lips of the priest should keep knowledge - meaning God's Law should continually be on his lips and people should be able to receive the law from his mouth.

- I personally really admire those pastors who continually speak of the Lord, and when you ask them questions they respond with scripture as opposed to their own opinions.

Jesus said to Peter:

John 21:17 “Feed My sheep.”

Paul:

Acts 20:27 “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”

1 Thessalonians 2:13 “For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”

- The priest, and the pastor should be the messenger of the LORD of hosts. We need to stay close to God's Word.

Just as Paul declared:

1 Corinthians 11:23 “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you...”

V: 8 Should be.... but “you have departed from the way and have caused many to stumble at the Law and corrupted the covenant of Levi.

- Bad witness, bad testimony.
- Like Pastor Andrew mentioned about Demas:

2 Timothy 4:10 “For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed...”

Jeremiah 17:5 “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and make flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the LORD.”

- Jesus would later point out the inconsistencies and mistakes that had developed over time by the religious leaders, often supplanting the Law with their traditions, making the Law really of no effect.
- One example, the law declared that you weren't to swear or take an oath, but if you did you were to keep it. The Bible declares that when people did swear it was always by something greater or higher than themselves.
- The religious leaders taught that if you swore by the altar of God that it wasn't binding, but if you swore by the gift that was on the altar, well then that was binding.

Jesus said:

Matthew 23:19 “Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?”

- They had developed these traditions that sort of made the law of no effect, thereby stumbling the people.

Jesus warned us:

Matthew 5:17-19 “¹⁷Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, He shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

V: 9 The calling of the priest was to stand before God on behalf of the people, and to stand before the people on behalf of God - but they didn't do that. They misrepresented God and misled the people.

- Therefore, because of that - you have made My law contemptible in the sight of the people, and now I've made you contemptible before all the people.

God through Samuel was rebuked Saul for the same basic thing:

1 Samuel 15:26 “But Samuel said to Saul, “I will not return with you, for you have rejected the Word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.”

V: 10 We're all just a bunch of dumb sheep, we're all on an equal footing, we should not deal treacherously with one another.

Acts 10:34 “In truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”

- As people seek to live apart from God and are controlled by their own lust and greed - it leads to dealing treacherously, it leads to war and bloodshed, violence, corruption.

1 Corinthians 8:6 “Yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live.”

- If we would live according to God's Word, according to His principles for life, living in love, enjoying His peace. We all with One Father could as His children be one family, how different this world would be.

V: 11-12 Judah has dealt treacherously and committed an abomination.

- How? They have profaned God's holy institution - which He loves. They have profaned God's Holy institution of Marriage by marrying the daughters of foreign gods.

“May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this...”

- Then on top of that disregard for God's Law, then has the audacity to bring an offering to the LORD of hosts! Hypocrisy!
- The priests, followed by the people had gone out and made marriages with the foreign women all around them - and God calls it an abomination. The laws of marriage for the priests was stricter than that of the people, and they went way beyond in their disregard.
- Even before the Law, Abraham would not take a wife for his son Isaac from among the Canaanites amongst whom he dwelt.

Describing the nations around them:

Deuteronomy 7:2-4 “²And when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.”

2 Corinthians 6:14 “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

V: 13-16 Marrying foreign wives, and divorcing their current wives to do so.

- I've been blown away more than once to see a couple split up for non-biblical reasons and within a week one of them is with someone else - having dealt treacherously with their wives.
- God is decrying the tears and the heart ache involved in people not honoring their marriage vows before God.
- Then trying to make an offering to God. Hypocrisy!
- The issues of Marriage, divorce, and re-marriage are prickly at best. And I know as a pastor I rarely get the whole story, but God knows every detail.

1 Peter 3:7 “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- He hates divorce. We make our choices, we take our vows, and we're to keep them, we're not to deal treacherously with our spouses.
- Marriages isn't just based on love, it's based on an ongoing commitment that only love, the love for God and each other can produce.
- God instituted marriage, and intended it to be a type or model of our Lord Jesus and His bride, the church which by the way is permanent.

Ephesians 5:31-32 “³¹For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³²This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

- It's harder and harder for young people to get a right perspective on marriage trying to get a look at the shifty, moving target that the world presents today. So many people come from broken homes with messed up marriages that getting a

sense of what it should be is almost impossible - which is where the Bible comes in.

- God isn't just seeking "offspring" - monkeys, dogs, pigs, and goats can do that - He's looking for "*Godly offspring.*"
- That means parents giving their children instruction, leading by example, making corrections where needed. Too many parents are letting the children decide and guide themselves - not actively training them.

Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

- Bottom line: V: 16 "God hates divorce!" Do everything you can to avoid it.
- Take heed to your spirit, be very careful - don't deal treacherously with your spouse.

V: 17 These priest have been wearing the Lord with their words - their meaningless word salads, their excuses, their rationalizations.

Isaiah 5:20 "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

- He's looking for repentance. He's looking for truth in the inward parts.
- He looking for action indicative of repentance.

James 1:22 "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

- Let's go back and do the things that please Him:

V: 5-7

Revelation 1:5-6 "5b... To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, 6and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father..."

1. Let's engage in the covenant of life and peace with the Lord.
2. Let's make it a point to fear God and to be reverent.
3. Keep the Law of truth in our mouths.
4. Let no injustice be on our lips.
5. Walk with God in peace and equity.

6. Turn others from iniquity.
7. Keep knowledge and seek the Law.