**Malachi: Bible Study**

**How Have We Despised Your Name? (1:6-2:9): Profaning God's
Name**

A. Yahweh Defiled by Polluted Offerings (1:6-14)

1. It Would Be Better to Shut Down the Temple (1:6-10)

The section begins with a widely accepted truth in this culture: sons honor fathers
and servants honor masters. A reverence for parents was engrained in Israelites via
the fifth commandment (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16). Yahweh is in view in both
metaphors: God is both Father and Lord/master [Exod 4:22; Isa 26:13; Ps 123:2).
The painful reality is, however, that Israel has disrespected God and failed to
acknowledge God's authority by their actions. Specifically, the priests, the one group
that should have known better, are despisers of the name Yahweh. In addition to the
5th, they were also in violation of the 3rd Commandment: "You shall not take the
name of your Lord, your God in vain." The priests were continually bringing
contaminated, polluted offerings and placing them on the altar. It was the
responsibility, of the priests to ensure that the offerings brought by the people met
the requirements. It was so sickening to God, that Yahweh bemoans that there is no
one among the priests "to shut the doors and not light a fire on my altar in vain."

2. Yahweh's Name Must Be Honored (1:11-14)

At the present, not even Israel's offerings were acceptable to God. But the day would come when even the nations would offer pure worship to God. Paul seems to reflect the same anticipation in Phil 2:11, when every knee shall bow and tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. In v,13 we learn that the priestly duties had become wearisome, a bore to the priests. The joy in performing their duties was lost. The fire they kindled was only on the altar; there was none in their heart. V. 14 invoked God's curse on those who tried to substitute a blemished animal [see Deut 27:15-26). The basis for the curse is Yahweh's kingship and the necessity that his name is reverenced among the nations.

guard knowledge and people should seek instruction from them. They should be the
messengers of the Lord. That is, they are bearers, revealers, and interpreters of
divine revelation. The priests in Malachi's day, the descendants of Aaron, have:
[1] Turned from the way; [2] They caused many to stumble by their teaching of the
Torah; [3] They violated the covenant with Levi [see 2:4].

B. Disrespectful Priests Rebuked (2:1-9]

Malachi confronted the priests with the consequences of a curse by portraying Levi as the model ancestor, followed by a statement defining the role of the ideal priest

1. Blessings Turned into Curse [2:1-3]

Malachi makes use of a judgment oracle that involves giving proper honor and respect to Yahweh's name. And if they did not, God promised to "curse your blessings." But what does this vague threat mean?

--God would take away their material blessings.

-They would forfeit the blessings of God's covenant with the Aaronic priests.

namely peace (Num 25:12-13].

-God would take away their ability to bear children.

-God would turn the blessings that the priests pronounced on worshippers at the temple [Num 6:23-27] into curses.

-A combination of all four.

Furthermore, God warned that he would [1] rebuke their offspring. (2] spread dung on their faces and [3] remove them from his presence.

2. Levites as Ideal Ministers [2:4-9]

The covenant with Levi is a reference to the Levitical responsibilities described in Deut 18:1-8. In payment for their service in the sacrificial system and in worship, they would be fed from the sacrifices. They would serve in the name of Yahweh, but they would have no territorial land that would be theirs as an inheritance. Their duties included assisting the priests, singing [1 Chron 9:33] and baking [1 Chron 9:31-32]. In w. 5-7, Levi is presented as an ideal priest in both speech and lifestyle. Levi's ministry represented what a priest's ministry should be. Their lips should guard knowledge and people should seek instruction from them. They should be the messengers of the Lord. That is, they are bearers, revealers, and interpreters of divine revelation. The priests in Malachi's day, the descendants of Aaron, have: [1] Turned from the way; [2] They caused many to stumble by their teaching of the

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