

Malachi 1:6-2:3 – The Priests Despise God’s Name

God loved Jacob and chose to enter into a covenant relationship with his offspring. The descendants of Jacob did not recognize God’s special love for them. As a result, they did not treat God with respect and lived selfish and sinful lives. The priests should have been teaching the people the truth about God but instead they gave the people a distorted view of God. God used Malachi to rebuke the priests.

Read Malachi 1:6-14.

In verse 6, what was God’s assertion concerning the priests? How did the priests respond to this assertion?

In verse 7, how had the priests despised God’s name?

The priests wanted to know how they had polluted God. Based on verses 7 and 8, how had the priests despised God’s name and Yahweh’s table? What is Yahweh’s table? See Ezekiel 41:22 for the “table that is before Yahweh”.

What were the basic requirements for an animal which was to be sacrificed at the alter of God? See Leviticus 22:2, 17-32. Do you think the priests were ignorant of the law or were they willfully disobeying God?

How were the priests treating God with less respect than they would their governor or even an ordinary guest? (1:8)

God asked the priests a common sense question. If they didn’t respect God, should they expect a favorable and gracious response from God in return? The obvious answer is, “No”. (1:9)

If there was a choice between polluted sacrifices and no sacrifices at all, what would God choose? If God did not accept their defective offerings, why did they still offer them? (1:10)

Should verse 11 be taken as something that was happening at the time of Malachi or should it be understood as a prophetic prediction of what Jesus told the woman of Samaria? The true worshipers of God will worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). See Isaiah 59:19, 66:19-20.

In verses 12 and 13, what do the priests say about the alter and the offerings. What offerings do they sacrifice which God said that they should not sacrifice?

Instead of receiving God's blessing from their offerings, what did they receive? Why were unblemished offerings so important to God? (1:14)

Read Malachi 2:1-3.

What did God say would happen to the priests if they did not honor his name? (2:1-2)

What was already happening to the priests because they did not honor God's name? (2:2)

When an offering was made on the alter, certain parts of the offering were removed, taken outside the camp and burned. One of these parts was the dung of the animal. What did God say he would do to the priests if they persisted in their disobedience? (2:3)

We are no longer required to bring offerings of animals. Christ is our once for all sacrifice for our sins. In what ways do people dishonor Christ's sacrifice on the cross?

This section concerning the priests continues through verse 2:9. We will resume this section on the priests next time.