

SERIES: "LAST...BUT NOT LEAST":

An In-Depth Study of MALACHI - the Final Prophet of the Old Testament Era-
PART XIV - Malachi Chapter 2:1-9

"THE PRIESTHOOD: GOD'S EKG OF ISRAEL"

WEDNESDAY, April 1st, 2009

- I. God, like a Father, must discipline His children who are disobedient to His Word.
- II. Spiritual leaders who blatantly defame and demean their call are especially accountable!
- III. God warned the priests that if they did not "lay it to heart" (v2) - and continued down the path of disobedience - then he would send the curses prophesied to Israel before they entered Canaan. (Deuteronomy 27:9-26; 28:15-68)
- IV. Several Judgments would come upon the priests as a result of God's CURSE:
1. God would "corrupt" their seed (v. 3).
Interpretation: their offspring would be removed from their official priestly duties, responsibilities & privileges
 2. God would degrade the priests. (v 3) (NOTE: "your solemn feasts")
 3. God removed the priests from their duties.
NOTE: They ought to have learned from the "examples" of:
1) King Jeroboam (I Kings 14:9, 10)
2) King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 22:19)
- NOTE: IN SHORT, God demanded MORE than mere "lip service" from His priests...He expected (and deserved) a TOTAL Life commitment! Today, a "Believer - Priest" who hears God's Word BUT who does NOT PUT IT INTO PRACTICE lives a life of SELF-deception! (SEE James 1:22-25)
- V. According to this passage, these priests would experience the Reality of God's discipline for 2 REASONS:
- REASON #1. So that they would KNOW that God's commandments were not empty threats;
- REASON #2. So that the tribe of LEVI would remain the official ministering body for the Temple, thus preserving the covenant God made with this tribe.

VI. The "covenant of life and peace" was FIRST bestowed on a priest named Phinehas
NOTES:

VII. The EXCELLENCE of the Levitical Priest:

1. He led by principles (Dt. 6:6-9; 33:8-11; Neh. 8:7,8)

2. He was prudent (Dt. 17:8,9; 19:17,18)

*see also the comparison to the Messiah during the Kingdom Age (Is. 11:3-5)

3. He practiced what he preached

4. He prevented sin by turning "iniquity away from iniquity"

5. He prescribed the Law (NOTE the word "keep" = "to guard or preserve the Law from perversion")

6. He proclaimed the Law

VIII. The Priests' CORRUPTION

Malachi pointed out had there were 4 WAYS in which the priests had broken their covenant - relationship with God:

1) They had departed from the prescribed obligations of the office;

2) Their instruction was destructive;

3) They desecrated their covenant - relationship with God;

4) They were deceptive in their execution of Justice.

IX. THREE KINDS of CHRISTIAN WORKERS (I Corinthians 3:9-17):

1. The Master Builder

2. The shoddy Builder

3. The Destructive Worker

X. In becoming "contemptible and base before all the people" (v 9), these priests actually reaped what they had SOWN! For they had shown a similar contempt for the "table" of God! (Galatians 6:7; Heb 12:6)

XI. The Believer can avoid chastening by repenting the moment he sins.

XII. When the Believer sins, he/she has a choice to make:

1. Through self - examination to remove the SIN out of his life; OR,

2. He can wait until God does it through chastening.