

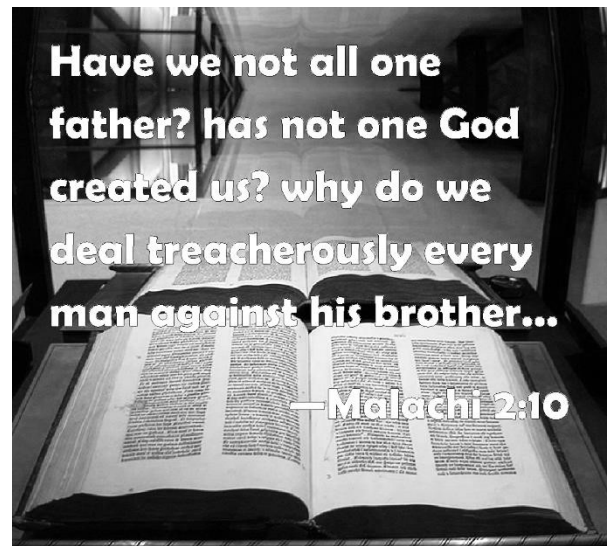
THE BOOK OF MALACHI – “MESSENGERS OF THE LORD”

Trinity Lutheran Church – Norman, OK.

Date: 3-17-19 Lesson: 5

Theme: As messengers of the Lord:

- Then and now, proclaim to each generation
The Law and The Gospel
- Properly distinguished - but boldly spoken



A. THE TEXT: (Malachi 2:1-17)

(1) "And now, O priests, this command is for you. (2) If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to **my name**, says **the Lord of hosts**, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart. (3) Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it. (4) So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that **my covenant with Levi** may stand, says **the Lord of hosts**.

(5) **My covenant** with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him. It was a **covenant** of fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of **my name**. (6) True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with **me** in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. (7) For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of **the Lord of hosts**.

(8) But you have turned aside from **the way**. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted **the covenant of Levi**, says **the Lord of hosts**, (9) and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep **my ways** but show partiality in your instruction."

(10) Have we not all **one Father**? Has not **one God created us**? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning **the covenant of our fathers**? (11) Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned **the sanctuary of the Lord**, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.

(12) May **the Lord** cut off from the tents of Jacob, any descendant of the man who does this, who brings an offering to **the Lord of hosts**! (13) And this second thing you do. You cover **the Lord's altar** with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. (14) But you say, "Why does he not?" Because **the Lord** was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

(15) Did he not make them one, with a portion **of the Spirit** in their union? And what was the **one God** seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. (16) "For the man who hates and divorces, says **the Lord, the God of Israel**, covers his garment with violence, says **the Lord of hosts**. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless." (17) You have wearied **the Lord** with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in **the sight of the Lord**, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is **the God of justice**?"

B. STUDY GUIDE

1. The priests were supposed to announce blessings (**Num 6:23-27**), but because of their unfaithfulness and rebellion, they will become curses on the people (**Dt 28:15**). Like offal and entrails they will become, which was to be taken outside and be burned (**Ex 29:14; Lev 8:17; 16:27**).
 2. From the tribe of Levi, the priests that were chosen are supposed to be faithful. (**Dt 10:8; Nu 3:5-13; Neh 13:29**).
 3. The covenant of peace and life was made with Phinehas, grandson of Aaron. Phinehas' zeal was shown in executing two offenders guilty of idolatry and immorality before the Baal of Peor. (**Nu 25:1-13; Dt 30:19,20**).
 4. The priests were tasked with teaching the people the Law of Moses (**Lev 10:11; Pr 1:8; Zeph 3:4; Hag 2:11**).
 5. To walk in peace and uprightness means to be loyal to God's Word (**Ps 37:37**) and to turn people away from sin (**Rom 11:14; Titus 1:9; Jas 5:19,20**).
 6. The violation of the covenant included unfaithful teaching but also intermarriage with the pagans who had turned them away from the way of the Lord. (**Ezra 9:1,2; 10:18-22; Neh 13:23-29**).
 7. In matters of law, they had shown partiality and caused others to be despised and humiliated before the people. (**Lev 19:15; Dt 10:17**)
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8. The people then are rebuked for marrying pagan women and divorcing their proper Israelite spouses. The daughters of foreign gods would always pull their spouses away from the true God – the Lord. (**Ex 34:15,16; Dt 7:3,4; 1 Kings 11:1-6; Josh 23:12,13**)
 9. But there is in reality only One God and Father who created us all. (**Ex 4:22; 19:5; Dt 32:6; 2 Ki 17:15; Job 4:17; Is 43:1; 63:16; Jer 31:32; Mt 5:16; 6:4,18; Lk 11:2; 1 Cor 8:6**)
 10. Because they have broken their marriage covenants and have not truly repented, the Lord will no longer listen to their prayers, or accept their offerings – even though they weep, lament, and wail. What the Lord wants is changed hearts and obedience. Marriage was a covenant before God. (**Gen. 2:18-25; Ex 20:14; Dt. 30:19; 1 Sam 20:23; Prov 2:17; Is 8:1,2; Ezek 16:8; Mt 19:1-9; Rom 7:1-13; Heb 13:4**)
 11. God hates divorce and a man doing violence to his wife. (**Is 50:1; Mal 3:5; 1 Cor 7:12-16; 2 Cor 6:14**)
 12. The Lord – the God of justice is wearied by those who do evil and call it good. Before the eyes of the Lord, He is not pleased by this. (**Gen 18:25; Job 8:3; Is 43:24; Ps 5:4; Ezek 18:25**)
Note: The simple reality of sin is that it is rebellion against what God has commanded and said. So God calls the coin heads, man calls it tails. God calls it white, man calls it black. God calls it evil, man calls it good. Take the 10 Commandments of God, flip it over and teach the opposite and that is sin and the way of the sinful world since the original Fall of Man (**Gen. 3**).
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C. LIFE APPLICATION:

How can we then listen, take to heart and give honor to God's name - the Lord of hosts?