



6 A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? 7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. 8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts. 9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts. 10 Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. 11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts. 12 But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. 13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD. 14 But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen. (Mal 1:6-14)

These last six verses are a farewell warning of God to His people, Israel. They did not heed, in the least, this warning so, truly, God sent them no more prophets, and there was no king in Israel until the Coming King of Kings some five hundred years future. The last Old Testament prophet, Malachi, left them in a night of darkness that lasted more than 500 years. But at the morning of that dark night came the Light of the World at Bethlehem.

The Lord has admonished the people for their lack of love and reverence of Him; now, He turns His inquiry to the priests who bear the greater responsibility, always, for waning faith in the Old and New Testament Churches. If the head is rotten, it is certain that the body will follow in that corruption. 6 *"A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name.*

*And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?"* When the pulpits of America were bastions of spiritual power and strong faith, no ACLU attorney would have dared questioned the Constitutionality of prayer in school. The very men who WROTE our Constitution advocated prayer and Bible Reading in school and considered it an absolute necessity to a free people – and it is. See how far our freedoms and liberties have fallen since the silence of churches allowed that Constitutional guarantee to be breeched! Our youth do not honor, fear, or love God because they have not been taught in their churches of WHO God is. He has become like unto a rich old uncle that will turn his head from every misbehavior and even join in from time to time. Since when did the Church cease to teach the true God of Heaven? Since when did the pastors cease to preach, not only the grace, but also the justice of God to our youth. The pastors no longer fear God's wrath. They believe the dark secrets of their greedy hearts are hidden from the Lord God. They no longer consider Him their Father, but some sterile and distant observer of mankind. In fact, the greater modern Church DOES despise the Name of Christ. They have proven it by their lukewarm religion.

A friend wrote once that the first four Commandments reflected man's responsibility to God, and the last six his responsibility to his fellow men. That is slightly wrong, my friends. The first five Commandments reveal our responsibility and duty to God, and the last six our duty and responsibility to man. The fifth is a dual purpose Commandment that commands our duty to God our Father, and to our earthly mothers and fathers. (Exodus 20:12) Do we fear God our Father as we fear our fathers at home? Are we careful in our behavior not to sully the reputation of our Heavenly Father by our own foolish and sinful behavior?

The pastors prove their disdain for God and His Word by the disrespectful means by which they practice their worship and teaching. 7 *"Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible."* Our forms of worship have become profane and contaminated by the music and social values of the world. We have failed to maintain a REVERENCE for God in our worship. The Lord's own Table is no longer considered Holy. We feel that we can come to the Lord's Table bearing every kind of vengeful and hateful thought against our brothers and sisters. 8 *And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts."* King Darius and successor Persian Kings had provided choice animals to the Jews returning to Jerusalem for Temple sacrifices, yet they offered only the sick, lame, and blind of their herds to God. God asks them if they would dare make such offerings to the earthly ruler? God puts great value on the widow's mite, but not great value on the rich miser's mite. How does this apply to us today? Do we give God the best fruits of all our labor and possessions? When a neighbor's house burns down, do we give them our paltry and worn garments, our outdated canned goods – or do we give them at least as good as what we have ourselves? Do we give our best tithe in time to God – not just in money?

Please note the slovenly attitude of the Jews returning to Jerusalem. They blame God for the squalid conditions. They say that He has brought them back barren and not given in the same proportion as before they were led away captive into Babylon. Seek out the root of their misery. They were disobedient and sinful in old Jerusalem. God warned them through the prophets but they would not hear them. So God had them taken away, lock, stock, and barrel, to Babylon. There they hung their harps upon the willows by the rivers of Babylon and wept bitterly. *"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the*

*willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”* (Psalms 137:1-3) In time, God relented and allowed their return to Jerusalem. Now they blame God even for His mercies! There are the rivers of Babylon which lie ahead in wait for any nation who forgets their God who has saved them – including our own beloved America. 9 **“And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.”** The heart of the prophet, Malachi, is much grieved at the apostasy of his people, for he knows the ways and Mind of God. He dreads the great shame and judgment which will befall Jerusalem absent their unconditional repentance before the Throne of God. He begs these stiff-necked people to appeal to God for mercy, for He will not regard their past persons as justification to allow their sins. There are Godly ministers left in this country, too, that know full well that the hand of judgment of God is already raised and ready to fall on our own beloved land lacking a deep and contrite spiritual movement among those only who call themselves by His Name.

Malachi now touches the exposed nerve of the pastors of his day by pointing directly to a revealing point of their motivation. 10 **“Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.”** These pastors are no different from the great majority of American pastors today – they will not lift a finger to serve the Lord without remuneration or benefit! Our modern pastors have most generally neglected to hear the admonition of Peter: *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”* (1 Peter 5:2-4) The pastors have attempted to foist their own ways and words upon the people driving them, rather than leading them. They have shorn the sheep of their wool and made profit thereby.

God next declares, through His prophet, that He has a greater plan than for a mere patch of sand bordering the Mediterranean – His Name shall go forth among the Gentiles from as far as one can travel to the West and the same in the direction of the East – the whole globe will proclaim His blessed Name! 11 **“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.”** Incense was burned at the altar of the Temple to symbolize the prayers of the people rising to God. In every nation, tribe, and tongue, prayers shall be offered up to the LORD and His name shall be glorified. **“And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”** (Matt 3:9) God has spoken, and God has done! Today the Gospel has been preached in the native dialect to more than 95% of the world’s population. Sons and daughters by way of the adoption have come into the household of Abraham as the true sons and daughters of the Promised Seed (Jesus Christ). It is by the DNA of faith that we are accounted true sons and daughters and not by lineal descent. **“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.”** (Romans 4:13) **“That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”** (Romans 9:8) Please stop your calculations of endless genealogies and heed the Word and Promise of the Lord: **“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** (Gal 3:29)

*"Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain!"* (Exodus 20:7) When we sing the beautiful and scripture-based hymns, we aver our love and allegiance to God; turn about and deny Him right away with our actions. We pray piously for the Lord's Kingdom to come, we claim God as our Father, we say the words to hallow His Name – yet our hearts are empty of the conviction to back those words up. We have taken the Lord's Name in vain at every hymn and prayer which has no root of faith in our hearts. **12 *But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.*** Those who most advertise their faith are often the ones most guilty of profaning His Name. How can any possession of the Lord be polluted? If the Table of the Lord is polluted, it is the greasy and grimy hands of sinners that have touched it without faith.

Are any weary in the service of the Lord? I hope not for to be weary in doing good is not doing good. There is no burden that we bear for the Lord – He bears it all. If He allows us to wet the lips of a thirsty little child, it is His blessing that He has placed in our hearts. I recently read that a minister was admonished by the board of elders for quoting too much from the Bible. They told the minister that the people were too impatient to bear hearing so much Bible – "just get to the point of the story without so much Bible quotes." The Words of the BIBLE ARE the story. The emendations of man are simply descriptive of the essence of God's Holy Word. **13 *Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.***

**14 *But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.*** You, too, may be sitting by a warm fire tonight smugly believing that these words of the prophet have expired on the apostate Jews. We have withheld our best gifts from the Lord and sacrificed them to the god of mammon. We have cast aside that art and music of Bach and da Vinci and accepted the trite dribblings of Picasso and Schonberg. We have set aside the Ancient Landmark of God's Received Word for the poisoned books of Babylon. While the Jews linger in false security and murmurings, even the heathen without the camp fear the Name of the Lord. Did you know that the school officials of Russia beg missionaries to bring Bibles into their schools and teach their children? What about in the "Home of the Brave, and the Land of the Free? Do our unfaithful and prideful lusts deceive God in America? I am afraid not. Repent, or go down with the dust of Ozymandias.