



8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. 9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law. 10 Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? 11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. 12 The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts. 13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. (Mal 2:8-13)

The Lord, through His prophet Malachi, has critically admonished the priests for their many faults and failures to provide the fruits of truth and wisdom to the people of Israel. They have spoken where they should not have, and have failed to speak at times they should have done. In our own day, how shamelessly do we observe ministers of God profaning His sure word by condoning those things that God condemns, and remaining silent on the weightier matters of the Word?

In today's text, the rebuke of God continues against the priests. They have departed from the old path wherein our fathers walked (*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.* Jer 6:16), and have abandoned the Ancient Landmark of Truth. "*Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.*" (Prov 22:28) The Ancient Landmark has been set to measure all property lines. If it is moved ever so slightly, everyone's property lines become a matter of dispute. It is the same principle that applies to the altering of God's Holy Word. 8 "*But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.*" The priest have not only omitted to enforce a reverence for God's own Law, but have added sundry burdens of their own to it.

9 "*Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.*" The Law was

stringently enforced against some - usually the destitute of influence - and lightly administered toward those of renown. Politics is forever politics. Political motives have no place in Godly government. The priest have been made examples of contempt for the people. They are held in as low esteem as their faithlessness has justified. What of our modern ministers who are subjects of sex scandal and fraud? They have done much damage to the work of the Lord.

The next verse is not to be taken as being addressed to the world, but to the People of God: **10 "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"** Frankly, we do not ALL have the same Father. There are but two families on earth - that of God and the second of Satan. We cannot occupy any middle road here. We either belong to the family of God or to the Adversary of our Souls. The second statement DOES apply to all peoples. God has created us all. Now the attention is back to the family of God: "Why do we deal deceitfully with those who are of the Household of God. It is shameful to admit, but I have witnessed more shameless conduct INSIDE the Church than out. Our modern churches have refuted the faith of our fathers such as the Reformers and gone whoring after the 'feel good - easy believism' religion.

**11 "Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god."** The counsel of God toward Holy Matrimony is sure and real. We all become very like those with whom we share the greatest intimacy. The imperative for believers to marry only fellow believers is designed to protect us from the peril of apostasy. God has chosen Israel as a people set apart - not because of their race or righteousness, but because they were the nation that initially believed and followed. Abraham was their father - he believed God and looked for the coming of the Savior. He was, in fact, a Christian by faith. But many descendants of the flesh departed from that faith. They were not true Israel for Israel is the nation set apart for His own treasure. Israel is a nation without borders and without a human bloodline. It is the same scarlet thread of faith running from generation to generation that defines the People of God - not race. The Tribe of Judah had committed a serious offense - they had married off to women of other faiths polluting their own faith. Not only did they do wrong in marrying those of diverse faiths, but they left the honor and respect for their own women who were brought up to fear the True and Living God. The Church, too, has left her First Love and gone after lesser gods of tin and tinsel.

**12 "The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts."** All deviant sexual pursuits lead to loss of faith and favor with God. Those who whore after 'strange flesh' of whatever category (heterosexual or homosexual) will be cut off from out of the land the Lord has given him. The social elite and the degenerate addict are alike cast off from among the People of God.

**13 "And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand."** Emotionalism in worship will always lead to an irreverence for the Lord of the Altar. Excessive weeping (and even laughing of late) in the House of the Lord is not an appropriate means of reverent expression. The hearts of many such people, being evil and insincere, will not be accepted by God. Do not forget Cain! He, too, brought an offering before the Lord at the appointed day; however, unlike the lamb of Abel, Cain brought forth the fruit of his own hands. Our good works will not save us. He also brought forth his offering as the

fruit of a cursed source - the earth. God said to Adam: ". . . *cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*" (Gen 3:17)

We may take heed from this account that our offerings must come from a broken and contrite heart - not broken cisterns of greed and envy!