

# MALACHI

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KFIR WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY - SESSION 2  
CHAPTER 2

# REVIEW

**Religious formalism**

**Entitlement**

**Serving God is just a job**

**Do I get reimbursed? Overtime etc.**

“Now, you **priests**, this commandment is for you. <sup>2</sup>If you will not listen, and if you will not take it to heart, **to give glory to my name,**” says Yahweh of Armies, “then I will send the curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have cursed them already, **because you do not take it to heart.** <sup>3</sup>Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and will spread dung on your faces, even the dung of your feasts; and you will be taken away with it. <sup>4</sup>You will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant may be with Levi,” says Yahweh of Armies.

## COMMENT

Religious formalism - surface emotions and outward signs, head knowledge but no heart!

God’s name had been disgraced and made to appear shabby and despised by the way actions of the priests. **“A form of godliness,” without its power (2 Tim 3:5).**

God’s name is serious business, and nothing pollutes it more than the misconduct of those whose business it is to honor it. The 2nd commandment: **Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord in vain**

Sacrificed animals still had excrement in their systems, and God said this should be burned outside the sanctuary (Exodus 29:14). Here, he’s “rubbing their noses in it.” Even more dreadful is that they would be removed from His presence, along with the dung, entrails, et al. (Lev 8:7; 16:27).

<sup>5</sup>“My covenant was with him of **life and peace**; and I gave them to him that he might be reverent toward me; and he was reverent toward me, **and stood in awe of my name**. <sup>6</sup>**The law of truth was in his mouth**, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips. **He walked with me in peace and uprightness**, and turned many away from iniquity. <sup>7</sup>**For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Yahweh of Armies.**

## COMMENT

**“life and shalom,”** God’s gifts to obedient persons.

**The task of the servant of God: he boldly expounds the Law of God as it is found in His Word—all of it—whether or not it is popular or relevant. Faithful proclamation of God’s Word will “turn many to righteousness” (Dan 12:3).**

**“Walking with”** implies a more intimate fellowship with the Lord than is implied in “walk after” (Deut 8:19; 13:4; 2 Kgs 23:3; Jer 7:9; Hos 11:10). Cf. Enoch (Gen 5:22, 24) and Noah (Gen 6:9). This expression is used sparingly to refer only to those who had an unusually close communion with God.

## **The example of Levi.**

What a priest should be

God sprinkled the priests (tribe of Levi) throughout Israel.

Levi was shown to be an example of:

- Reverence: **He feared Me and was reverent before My name.**
- Knowing God's Word: **The law of truth was in his mouth.**
- Godly character: **He walked with Me in peace and equity.**
- Preserving and promoting God's Word: **Should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth.**

**The law of truth was in his mouth:** The priests had a special responsibility to hold and spread the word of God (2 Chronicles 31:4, Nehemiah 8:7-9).

**The lips of a priest should keep knowledge:** Leaders should be knowledgeable messengers of God's word.

8 But you have turned away from the path. **You have caused many to stumble in the law. You have corrupted the covenant** of Levi," says Yahweh of Armies.  
9 "Therefore I have also made you contemptible and wicked before all the people, according to the way you have not kept my ways, but have had respect for persons in the law.

## COMMENTS

When we do not seek first God's glory and totally love and respond to His Word, then our culture is in desperate trouble.

What does it mean to 'walk in His ways?' What are His ways?

Big difference between KNOWING and DOING

<sup>10</sup> Don't we all have one father? Hasn't one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

## **COMMENTS**

When you lower the standards of a loving and holy God - it infects and corrupts the family.

Stay tuned ... Marriages come under attack! And take a good look at the impact of divorce on families today!

<sup>11</sup> Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has **profaned the holiness of Yahweh** which he loves, **and has married the daughter of a foreign god**. <sup>12</sup> **Yahweh will cut off, to the man who does this**, him who wakes and him who answers, out of the tents of Jacob, and him who offers an offering to Yahweh of Armies.

## COMMENTS

Holiness = separation

The dangers of an ungodly intermarriage are well documented in the Old and New Testaments.

- **Israel married women from Moab** and brought the curse of God upon the people (Numbers 25).
- **Solomon married foreign women** who took his heart away from God (1 Kings 11:1-10).
- **Ahab married Jezebel** – a foreign woman – who led Israel into new depths of depravity (1 Kings 16:29-33).
- Paul says that believers and unbelievers should not be joined together (2 Corinthians 6:11-18).

**God's command against mixed marriages in Israel had nothing to do with race, but with faith.** There are foreign wives in the genealogy of Jesus – Rahab (Jericho prostitute) Ruth was a Moabite who married a Jewish man named Boaz; but she forsook Moab's gods for the LORD (Ruth 1:16).



13 This again you do: you cover Yahweh's altar with tears, with weeping, and with sighing, because he doesn't regard the offering any more, neither receives it with good will at your hand. 14 Yet you say, 'Why?' Because Yahweh has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion, and the wife of your covenant. 15 **Did he not make you one**, although he had the residue of the Spirit? **Why one? He sought godly offspring.** Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. 16 **One who hates and divorces**", says Yahweh, the God of Israel, "covers his garment with violence!" says Yahweh of Armies. **"Therefore pay attention to your spirit, that you don't be unfaithful.**

## COMMENTS

God has set apart marriage for a special meaning, a special purpose in the life of His people.

When we sin against our marriage or our marriage vows, we sin against an institution that God has established. Marriage is God's idea, not man's; He loves marriage; He formed and established the first marriage as a pattern for every one afterwards (Genesis 2:20-25).

BTW - We are not allowed to define marriage any way that pleases us; God has established it and we must conform to what He has established. He does not say that he hated divorcees ...

### **One Puritan commentator summarizes:**

She whom you thus wronged was the companion of those earlier and brighter days, when in the bloom of her young beauty she left her father's house and shared your early struggles, and rejoiced in your later success; who walked arm in arm with you along the pilgrimage of life, cheering you in its trials by her gentle ministry; and now, when the bloom of her youth has faded and the friends of her youth have gone, when her father and mother whom she left for you are in the grave, then you cruelly cast her off as a worn-out, worthless thing, and insult her holiest affections by putting an idolater and a heathen in her place.

17 You have wearied Yahweh with your words. Yet you say, 'How have we wearied him?' **In that you say, 'Everyone who does evil is good in Yahweh's sight, and he delights in them;' or 'Where is the God of justice?'**

## COMMENTS

Don't say that God is good with those who do not live according to His ways.

### **The fourth question: Where is the God of justice in this unjust world?**

The people of God in Malachi's day were depressed and discouraged because it seemed like the wicked prospered and had it better than the godly. This filled them with doubt and unbelief.

### **You have wearied the LORD with your words:**

[The charges of 2:17 will be answered in the first six verses of the next chapter...]