

MALACHI: Live Fully Devoted

Lesson Four • Malachi 2:1-9

The High Cost of Spiritual Leadership

Warning to Spiritual Leaders

If you don't GLORIFY God's name in your life and ministry, then you will SUFFER God's curse on your life and ministry.

"And now, O priests, this commandment is for you. If you will not hear, and if you will not take it to heart, to give glory to My name," says the Lord of hosts, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings." Malachi 2:1-2

The High Cost of Spiritual Leadership

1. The Curse of Priestly FAILURE Is to Be Avoided at All Costs!

"If you will not hear, and if you will not take it to heart, to give glory to My name," says the Lord of hosts, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, because you do not take it to heart. Behold, I will rebuke your descendants and spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your solemn feasts; and one will take you away with it. Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant with Levi may continue," says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 2:2-4

Priestly Failure to Avoid

CLOSED EARS (failure to listen to God's word) and HARD HEART (failure to care about God's glory).

God's Curse On Israel's Priests:

- DEVASTATION: God will rebuke the priests' descendants.
- HUMILIATION: God will smear dung on the priests' faces.
- REJECTION: God will remove the priests from service in the temple.

"But you have departed from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the Lord of hosts. "Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people, because you have not kept My ways but have shown partiality in the law." Malachi 2:8-9

The Fatal Flaws of Israel's Priests:

- The priests DEPARTED from God's ways.
- The priests DISTRACTED the people from God.
- The priests DEMONSTRATED partiality in the law.
- The priests DISREGARDED God's covenant.

2. The Blessing of Priestly SUCCESS Is to Be Followed at All Costs!

"My covenant was with him [Levi], one of life and peace, and I gave them to him that he might fear Me; so he feared Me and was reverent before My name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." Malachi 2:5-7

The Christ-like Example of Levi:

- Levi was a man of Christ-like COMMITMENT.
- Levi was a man of Christ-like CHARACTER.
- Levi was a man of Christ-like COMMUNICATION.
- Levi was a man of Christ-like CONSISTENCY.
- Levi was a man of Christ-like COURAGE.

The New and Better Levi

As our great high priest, JESUS CHRIST is the new and better Levi.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. Hebrews 4:14 ESV

Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for His own sins and then for those of the people, since He did this once for all when He offered up Himself. Hebrews 7:25-27 ESV