

## I Will Curse Your Blessings: Malachi 2:1–9

### Scriptures for Today:

***Malachi 2:1-9** And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. 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. 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.*

### Introduction

We are back in the book of Malachi. This is the 39<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible. The last book in the Old Testament Scriptures. I want you to think about how far we've come in the Bible. Think back to the book of Genesis (where we see the creation of all things) then you have roughly 3,600 years of human history that leads up to this book of Malachi. A lot of things happened between that time.

It's important for YOU to understand those things. If someone asked you what happened in the Old Testament? What is the Old Testament even about? Would you be able to explain it? That's important.

People today will get so emotionally invested in movies, tv shows and fantasy worlds. There are those who memorize and can name every character from the marvel comic book universe, or can recite every line of dialog from every Star Wars movie ever created, or can name all 1,025 Pokémon from memory.

People will put so much effort into those things, that mean absolutely nothing, but they can't memorize and study God's Word. No one wants to put any effort into understanding things that actually matter.

God's Word is way more exciting than a marvel comic book or some fantasy world. It's actual truth and real history that will help you forever into the future. So what has happened up to this point in Malachi? What has happened in the Old Testament scriptures (3,600 years of history) these are the things you want to memorize and understand.

We have gone through more in-depth overviews of the events in the Bible in past sermons, but I want to give you a very high-level recap. In a nutshell, what has happened leading up to Malachi?

When you read from Genesis to Malachi, you are reading the history of man's sin and God's unwavering faithfulness. In the beginning God created everything good, but man sinned and rebelled against the creator. Because of the wickedness of man, God destroyed every living thing with a world-wide flood. But He spared Noah, his family and the animals aboard the Ark. After mankind had begun to repopulate the earth, God called Abraham out of a pagan land, and He made a promise to Him. (All nations would be blessed through his seed) God also raised up a physical nation from the loins of Abraham. The nation of Israel. He delivered them from Egypt, gave them His law, brought them into the promised land, and a king was established to rule over Israel. But again and again the people rebelled. So God sent prophets to warn them. When they didn't listen, He brought judgment, and sent them into captivity. Yet He preserved a remnant of His people and brought them back after 70 years of being in captivity. That's where we're at in this book of Malachi.

Even after severe judgment, man will continue to disobey and dishonor God.

The name Malachi means "my messenger". Malachi was a messenger of God. And by the end of this book the message is very clear: man still needs a Savior, and God is still faithful to send one.

## **Recap Malachi 1:1-14**

Last time we studied the book of Malachi we looked at chapter 1:1-14. I want to do a quick summary of what we learned last time...

- **We saw how God declared His love, but Israel doubted it.**

God started with assurance, but instead of receiving it, the people questioned it. *"I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?"* God has already proved His love for us, but because life is hard, we start acting like He has done nothing for us. Understand if God didn't love you, then you would have never existed.

- **The priests despised God's name through polluted worship.**

Their worship was outwardly religious, but inwardly careless and disrespectful.

It is possible to still show up to church, sing the songs, and go through the motions while your heart is far from God.

- **They offered God their leftovers instead of their best.**

They gave Him what was weak, damaged, and unwanted rather than something worthy.

Many people give God leftovers in their life. The leftovers of their schedule, leftover attention, leftover energy after everything else has gotten the best.

- **Their sacrifices revealed hearts that did not fear God.**

The real issue was not just the offering in their hand, but the attitude in their heart.

What we do with God's house, God's Word, and God's time often reveals what we truly think of Him.

If you come to church and smoke in the bathrooms and play games on your phone the entire time while His Word is being preached it shows that you have zero fear of God in your life.

- **God reminded them that He is a great King worthy of honor.**

He was not to be treated like an afterthought, because His name is great and dreadful.

Imagine treating the Creator of all things like garbage. That's how many people treat God.

If a billionaire showed up outside in a limousine the entire neighborhood would show up and give him respect and worship him. But God? Trash. God could make that billionaire and every single thing that he owns disappear just by thinking about it. Or with the breath of His mouth.

But people would rather show honor to a man instead of God who has all power.

So in Malachi chapter 1, God exposes the dishonor and empty religion. In chapter 2 we see a direct rebuke of the ones who are responsible, the Priests.

## Verse 1

**Malachi 2:1** And now, O ye priests, this commandment *is* for you.

Right off the bat, this chapter opens with a powerful statement. This commandment is for the priests. The spiritual leaders of the land. The priests were supposed to be the ones who honored God's name, taught the law, handled holy things carefully, and helped the people worship rightly.

But from what we saw in chapter 1, they were not doing that. They were the ones entrusted with the truth, and instead of protecting the people, they were leading them in corrupt worship. And that is still true today.

There are millions of so-called pastors and religious leaders in this world, and the majority of them are NOT leading people into truth — they are leading people into compromise, false doctrine, worldliness, and damnable heresy.

So God is calling out and openly rebuking these priests. He is about to give them a command. It's not a suggestion. It's not "You can do this if you feel like it" This is a direct word of authority from God himself. And it's not just for the priests of the past, it's for all pastors and spiritual leaders today. What is that command?

## Verse 2

**Malachi 2:2** If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay *it* to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart.

This verse gives us the command and the warning. God tells these priests exactly what He requires of them: **hear His word, take it to heart, and give glory to His name.**

Notice that God does not merely say, “**If ye will not hear.**” He also says, “**if ye will not lay it to heart.**” In other words, this is not just about hearing with the ears. It is about receiving with the heart. These priests may have heard God’s law outwardly, but they were not taking it seriously inwardly. They were handling holy things without holy fear.

That is still the problem today. It is not that people have never heard the truth. It is that they do not lay it to heart. There are pastors that can hold a Bible, quote verses, stand behind a pulpit, and speak religious sounding words, but they do not truly care about giving glory to God’s name. They care about popularity, money, reputation, numbers, comfort, and pleasing men.

When God commands to give glory unto His name, that is what the priests were failing to do. Their ministry was supposed to magnify and honor God, but instead they dishonored Him.

When pastors add to the gospel, they are not giving glory to God. They are giving glory to man. When you add things to the gospel the focus is taken off Jesus and onto yourself. “I prayed a prayer” “I stopped sinning” “I submitted myself to God” I...I...I...I...You have to slow down and think about what you are saying. This is one of the most dangerous and subtle deceptions throughout all human history. When you glorify yourself in the name of Jesus.

That is what is happening in this world. It’s been happening for a very long time. Man wants to take glory from God and bring glory to himself.

What happens when you will not hear, when you will not lay it to heart, and give glory unto His name?

...I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay *it* to heart.

That is a frightening statement. The things they thought were signs of favor would become objects of judgment. For example, the money that a preacher gains by spreading a false prosperity gospel will become a curse and it eventually brings destruction.

Even their blessings would be cursed. Why? Because they dishonored God and did not bring glory to His name. And this was not just a future threat. The judgment had already begun. God said I have cursed them already because they refused to take God’s command seriously.

We see continued consequences in the next verse...

### Verse 3

**Malachi 2:3** Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it.

The language in this verse is vivid, humiliating, and severe. It shows you that God does not play games.

When He says, “I will corrupt your seed,” He is threatening their future increase and provision. This could refer to the increase of the land — their harvest, fruitfulness, and material supply — but it may also include their offspring and posterity. In other words, God is saying that the very things they depend on for blessing, continuation, and future stability will be under His judgement.

Then He goes on to say that He will spread dung upon their faces. This is shocking language on purpose. When the priests offered sacrifices, the dung of the animal is unclean and was to be removed and burnt with fire outside of the camp. So God in effect is saying, “You have treated my worship like filth, so I will publicly shame you with the very filth connected to those sacrifices.”

This is a picture of utter disgrace. The priests who should have been clean in handling holy things would instead be covered in uncleanness. God is showing that He is not mocked.

Like if you decide to disregard everything that God says and go out into this world and commit fornication, and do drugs, and live recklessly, then you might end up with a disease. You might end up being publicly shamed. You might end up with severe consequences that you will deal with for the rest of your life. Don’t dishonor God and invite that into your life.

**Malachi 2:3** Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, *even* the dung of your solemn feasts; and *one* shall take you away with it.

The same way that the dung was removed from the sacrifice and carried outside the camp, the priests would be treated like the filth they had become associated with. They would be taken away with the dung. It’s a picture of rejection and being cast out in shame.

### Verse 4 – 6

**Malachi 2:4-6** And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. **5** My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. **6** The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

In these verses, God is reminding these priests what the priesthood was supposed to be.

Levi was one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and God set that tribe apart for His service. The priests came from the tribe of Levi, specifically through the line of Aaron, so they were the ones appointed to handle the holy duties of worship.

So when God brings up **His covenant with Levi**, He is reminding these priests that their office was never meant to be casual, corrupt, or polluted. It was meant to be holy. It was meant to be a ministry marked by **life, peace, reverence, truth, and righteousness**.

The priesthood was designed to be a blessing, and why did the Levites receive that blessing?

... and I gave them to him *for* the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. **6** The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

Levi had fear and reverence for God. The law of truth (God's Word) was in his mouth. Iniquity was not found in his lips. He did not speak corrupted things like how the world speaks.

So the point in these verses is that God is holding up Levi as the pattern, and these priests in Malachi's day had fallen far short of that pattern. Instead of fearing God, they despised His name. Instead of speaking truth, they corrupted worship. Instead of turning people away from iniquity, they were helping lead them into it.

The pattern that Levi upheld in the days of Moses, is the pattern that we should all uphold in our own lives. Whether you're a pastor or not.

## Verse 7

**Malachi 2:7** For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

God is continuing to describe what a priest is supposed to be and revealing the shortcomings that they currently had.

**When it says "the priest's lips should keep knowledge."** That means a priest was supposed to preserve the knowledge of God's truth. He was not supposed to corrupt it, change it, or treat it lightly. He was supposed to guard it carefully and faithfully.

Then God says, **"and they should seek the law at his mouth."** In other words, when the people wanted to know what God said, they should have been able to go to the priest and hear the truth. The priest was supposed to be a reliable source of God's Word.

Pastors today are not reliable sources of truth because they don't stick to God's Word. For example, The way to be saved from eternal punishment in hell is the most important doctrinal truth that all pastors should want to get right. Because if you don't get it right, you're not going to Heaven.

You should be able to go to any pastor and ask them "What must I do to be saved?" And what should they tell you? **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.** But instead, you'll get all kinds of different answers.

You can't rely on the majority of pastors today to relay the simple message of salvation without adding something or taking away. You're supposed to be a messenger of God, but you're bringing another message.

It's very hard to find pastors that are sticking to the Bible.

## Verse 8

**Malachi 2:8** 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 priests had left the path they were supposed to be walking in. They had moved away from truth, away from faithfulness, and away from the fear of God. They were no longer walking in the way God had appointed for them.

And that is always where corruption begins. A man does not become a false teacher overnight. It usually starts with subtle compromise. He stops fearing God in all things. He slowly stops taking the Word of God seriously. He begins to drift from truth, and eventually that drift becomes open corruption.

## Verse 9

**Malachi 2:9** 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.

That means God brought them low. The men who held a respected office had become despised. The ones who were supposed to be honored as teachers of truth had become vile because of their unfaithfulness. Instead of being examples of holiness, they had become objects of shame.

Just because someone has a title of Pastor does not protect them from disgrace when he dishonors God. These priests had a title, but God stripped away the dignity that should have gone with it.

Again, this happened because they had not kept the ways of God and were partial in the law. They were not consistent with how they handled God's Word.

There are many Pastors that will preach certain things to the congregation but never apply the same standards to themselves and their families. That is twisting, bending, and corrupting the law of God.

In Malachi 2:1–9, God confronts the priests because they had failed in the very things they were called to do. They did not hear, they did not take God’s word to heart, they did not honor His name, they departed from the way, they caused many to stumble, and they were partial in the law. Instead of being messengers of truth, they became agents of corruption. And God makes it clear that corrupt spiritual leaders do not escape His notice or His judgment.

## Application

- **God holds spiritual leaders to a high standard.**

The priests were not judged lightly because they were handling holy things. Pastors, Husbands, and Fathers, God is holding you to a higher standard. Don’t compromise and lead people into corruption like the priests in Malachi were doing.

**Jeremiah 23:1** Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

- **God’s people need discernment about who they listen to.**

Not everyone in a spiritual position is faithful. This passage reminds us that religious titles do not guarantee truth. Beware of tiktok prophets and prophetesses that speak lies in the name of Jesus. Do not believe everything you hear. Check it with the Bible. Check it carefully and diligently.

- **God’s glory must be the goal of ministry.**

The central issue was that these priests were not giving glory to God’s name. Ministry that is built around ego, popularity, comfort, or numbers is already off course. And there are a lot of churches that are built around that. If a ministry becomes centered around a man, it’s time to start running the other way. You glorify God by pointing others to Jesus Christ and not yourself. Not another man.

- **God cares about truth in your mouth and integrity in your life.**

Levi had the law of truth in his mouth, and he walked with God in peace and equity. Your life should reflect those same characteristics. Replace the things of your past, the things of the world, with the good things of God.

Ask yourself: Do I fear God enough to receive His Word in my heart, or have I become casual with the things of God? Remember to give glory to God in everything in your life through obedience and pointing others to Jesus. Let’s Pray