

MALACHI # 2

Seven questions of the backslider

‘HOW HAVE WE SHOWN CONTEMPT FOR YOUR NAME?’

Malachi 1 ⁶ “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?” says the Lord Almighty. “It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.

“But you ask, ‘How have we shown contempt for your name?’

I. THE BACKSLIDER DOESN’T OFFER THEIR BEST IN WORSHIP

A. They insult the character of God by giving him second rate sacrifices.

1. Defiled food

⁷ “You place defiled food on my altar.

“But you ask, ‘How have we defiled you?’

2. They offer God what they wouldn’t give to a governor.

a. Blind animals

“By saying that the Lord’s table is contemptible. ⁸ When you **bring blind animals for sacrifice**, is that not wrong?

b. Crippled and diseased animals

When you sacrifice **crippled or diseased animals**, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?” says the Lord Almighty.

⁹ “Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?”—says the Lord Almighty.

B. God will not accept second rate worship!

1. God says, “close the door to the church!”

¹⁰ “**Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors**, so that you would not light **useless fires on my altar!** I am not pleased with you,” says the Lord Almighty, “and **I will accept no offering from your hands.**

2. God says, “I will seek others who will worship me properly!”

¹¹ My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty.

II. THE BACKSLIDER DREADS WORSHIP IN THEIR HEART!

A. Their worship was a **burden**

¹² “But you profane it by saying of the Lord’s table, ‘It is defiled,’ and of its food, ‘**It is contemptible.**’” ¹³ And you say, ‘**What a burden!**’ and you sniff at it contemptuously,” says the Lord Almighty. “When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?” says the Lord.

B. Their worship was **contemptible**

Contemptible may imply any quality provoking scorn or a low standing in any scale of values □ a *contemptible* liar □ . ¹

1. Contemptible because they had acceptable sacrifices that they would not give.

¹⁴ Cursed is the cheat **who has an acceptable male in his flock** and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord.

2. They vow they are giving their best!- and vows to give it,
They were good at declaring it but not actually doing it.
They were being hypocritical.

but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,” says the Lord Almighty, “and my name is to be feared among the nations.

III. THE BACKSLIDER IS CURSED

A. Cursed blessings

2 “And now this admonition is for you, O priests. ² If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name,” says the Lord Almighty, “I will send a curse upon you, and **I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me.**

¹Merriam-Webster, I. (1996, c1993). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*. Includes index. (10th ed.). Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster.

B. God will rebuke our descendants

³“Because of you I will rebuke your descendants ;

C. God is insulted and will scatter them again among the nations.

..... I will spread on your faces the **offal** (**1 : the waste or by-product of a process: as a : trimmings of a hide²**) from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it.

IV. BACKSLIDING OCCURS WHEN THERE IS NO EXAMPLE FROM THE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

1:6 “It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name.

A. The priest would not confront the people about what they were offering to the Lord.

⁴And you will know that I have sent you this admonition so that my covenant with Levi may continue,” says the Lord Almighty. ⁵“My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. ⁶True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin.

⁷“**For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty.** ⁸**But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,**” says the Lord Almighty. ⁹“So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people,

B. The priest compromised the word.

“because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law.” NIV

They continued to accept poor commitment from the people. In so doing the work of the Lord became grievous and a burden to them.

The vitality of our faith is only as good as the value of our worship offerings to the Lord.

²Merriam-Webster, I. (1996, c1993). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*. Includes index. (10th ed.). Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster.

Are you giving God your best or leftovers?

Do you find worship a joy or a drag?

Do you find yourself wanting to do less for the Lord? What are you giving Him?