



Esteeming His Name

The LORD Our God

The Context of Malachi

- 460 – 450 BC to post-exilic Judah still under Persian rule
 - Before - peace & prosperity in Babylon
 - After - poverty, famine, conflict & oppression in Jerusalem
- Serious adversity has been going on for a long time.
 - Many decades with no sign of relief.
- ^{NAS} **Malachi 1:2** "I have loved you," says the LORD.
 - Word for 'love' here is the basis for God's choice of Israel.
 - ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 4:37** Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power

The Structure

1. God's Love 1:2-5
2. Denunciation of the Clergy 1:6-2:9
3. **Idolatry and Intermarriage 2:10-16**
4. The God of Justice 2:17-3:5
5. Withholding Tithes 3:6-12
6. The Righteous and the Wicked 3:13-18
7. Day of the Lord 4:1-6

Idolatry and Intermarriage

Malachi 2:10 – 16

The Disputation Speech

- A disputation speech form has four elements: assertion, questioning, response, and implication.
 1. Assertion (by Malachi) → Covenant is profaned by being “faithless to one another” (i.e., intermarriage and divorce; v. 10); sanctuary is desecrated by intermarriage (v. 11); pagan manner of worship results in divine rejection (v. 13).
 2. Questioning (by Israel) → “For what reason?” (v. 14a)
 3. Response (by Malachi) → “Because the LORD has been a witness ...” (v. 14b)
 4. Implication → The people must preserve their spirit and not be unfaithful. (v. 15-16)

a he who is one father and one God created his people;
general condemnation of unfaithfulness (10)

b specific sin condemned: unfaithfulness via
intermarriage (11)

c curse: being cut off in spite of bringing
offerings (12)

c' curse: rejection of offerings given in
emotional worship (13)

b' specific sin condemned: unfaithfulness via
divorce (14)

a' one made the one; general condemnation of
unfaithfulness (15–16)

➤ *Douglas Stuart*

One Father and God

- ^{NIV} **Malachi 2:10** Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us?
- This is not a statement that 'all people are God's children because he is the creator of all'.
 - ^{ESV} **John 1:12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - ^{NIV} **Romans 8:14** because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
 - ^{NIV} **1 John 3:1** How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

One Father and God

- ^{NIV} **Malachi 2:10** Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us?
- This is a statement that the audience is the elect covenantal people of God.
 - *"the national covenant is understood in terms of a kinship relationship with Yahweh and with one another"* – Petterson
 - ^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 6:4** "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - ^{NAS} **Malachi 1:6** A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor?

Covenantal Conduct Matters

- ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 30:15** "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; ¹⁶ in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it...¹⁹ "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,
- ^{NAS} **Malachi 2:2** "If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart.

The Warning Against Idolatry

- ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 30:17** "But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.
- ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 5:6** 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ⁷ 'You shall have no other gods before Me.
- ^{NAS} **Leviticus 20:26** 'Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine.

The Warning Against Intermarriage

- ^{NAS} **Deuteronomy 7:3** "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. ⁴"For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. ⁵"But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. ⁶ "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

The Second Warning

- ^{NAS} **Joshua 23:12** "For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, ¹³ know with certainty that the LORD your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

But They Didn't Listen

- ^{NAS} **Malachi 2:11** "Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD which He loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god."

The Other Problem

- ^{NAS} **Malachi 2:14** ... the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. ¹⁵ ... Take heed then, to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. ¹⁶ "For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."
 - Human cost: a divorced woman had three options; move in with relatives, turn to prostitution, starve to death
 - Spiritual cost: covenant breaking dishonors God and brings curses upon the individual and the tolerant community

The Core Problem – Love of Self

- The people pursued what made them feel good inside above all else choosing happiness over holiness.
- Inappropriate Marriage – disobeys and dishonours God, loving self more than loving God.
 - ^{NIV} **Matthew 22:37** Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.
- Divorce – disobeys and dishonours God and harms others, loving self more than loving God or neighbour.
 - ^{NIV} **Matthew 22:39** And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Conclusions

Consecrated to the LORD Our God

- ^{NIV} **2 Corinthians 6:14** Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." ¹⁷ "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." ¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." **7:1** Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.