

## THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS

Introduction: Malachi 2:5-7 reminder of the calling of the Levitical priesthood

- vv.2-4 & 8-9 rebuke of priests and description of what they are charged to do

### The Covenant of the LORD (Malachi 2:5a-b)

- **My covenant** (Heb. bayreet) – an alliance, pledge, promise, treaty, constitution
- The results and benefits would be the giving of **life and peace**
- The purpose was that that he might **fear Me** – it is of grace, for He **gave it to them** – not earned or deserved

### The Priest's Disposition toward God (Malachi 2:5c-d)

- As a result, the priest **feared His face** and stood in awe (shattered, broken, dismayed) of God's Name.
- **My Name** - this was seen in the worship, the sacrifices, the service of the temple, the praises given to God – 1Kn8:29

### The Priest's Relationship toward God's Word (Malachi 2:6a-b)

- The **law of truth** was in his mouth – He spoke God's Word
- **Injustice** was not found on his lips – in speaking and judging, it was that of justice, equity, rightness

### The Priest's Way of Life (Malachi 2:6c)

- He **walked with Me** in peace and equity (or righteousness) – not theoretical, but **evidenced practically** in life

### The Priest's Relationship towards the People (Malachi 2:6d-7)

- **Turned many away from iniquity** - for the lips of a priest should **keep (or guard) knowledge**
- And people **should seek** the law from his mouth -he is **the messenger of the LORD** of hosts
- Through declaring His covenant

### Jesus, Our Great High Priest (Hebrews 3:1 - 4:14 - 6:20)

- The **great problem** is that all merely human priests failed and had sin
- Jesus as our great High Priest – He **perfectly fulfilled** this role, perfect embodiment of all these things
- **Perfect** toward God, God's Word, way of life, the people – they **crucified** Him – He Himself **became the sacrifice**

### The New Covenant Priesthood (1Peter 2:9 - Revelation 1:6 - 5:10)

- When I read this passage, my thoughts turned to my role as **pastor** - quickly they turned to **the people of God**
- Previously, this role was **only fulfilled** by adult Jewish males of the tribe of Levi
- **But now every man, woman, boy and girl** who is a believer and follower of Jesus is made a part of this priesthood
- We **fulfill that role** (that we already have) as we **increasingly conform** to our great High Priest Jesus
- **Toward God** as a corporate gathering - What is our "worship service"? Ephesians 4:12
- A worship of gathered priests in God's special presence to offer worship – where His Name dwells – Matthew 18:20
- It is also a gathering for priestly training – my function is that of a trainer, not a higher priesthood with greater access, or higher rank
- We do not do this alone, but are a kingdom; the emphasis isn't on the individual, but our corporate identity
- **Way of life** - we are always living a life of service to the Lord – Romans 12:1
- There are no "part-time" ministries or ministers; in your calling you are a priestly representative of the Kingdom
- This gives dignity to all those things you do in ordinary life – no secular/sacred divide
- **Towards other people** - God's Word – filled with the Word to minister to one another Col3:16
- Praying for others, interceding and mediating God's mercy to them
- There is one Mediator, but we are His body mediating as Him – Heb 2:17-18 (merciful, faithful) 4:15 (sympathize)
- For this, we should study the character and disposition of Christ toward others and how He deals with them
- Not only speak the Word to them, but pray for them - for some we may be the only ones praying for them