

Malachi 2:1-9

GOD DECLARES HIS COVENANT OF LIFE TO THE PRIESTS

- I. The background.
 - A. God's covenant is first life and peace within the Godhead, and then with His chosen people in Christ
 1. This covenant is a bond of close friendship, evidenced in the word "covenant" (to pass through).
 2. The covenant is a relationship in which He infuses into them the life of Christ.
 - B. Our text speaks of that covenant being with Levi (5,8).
 1. God gave the "covenant of peace" to Phinehas when he was zealous for God and His holiness (Num. 25:12,13).
 2. The blessings of the covenant for us are "life and peace" (5).
- II. This makes very evident the horribleness Israel's sin and especially of the Levites (the priests).
 - A. The commandment (1) refers to the word of condemnation and judgment which Malachi brought.
 - B. The priests led Israel in the corruption of sacrifices.
 1. Since ("if") the priests will not hear, God gives them a "commandment" (curse).
 2. They were not zealous for God and did not shut the temple doors (1:10) and insist on holiness to the Lord.
 - C. God's curse comes because they refuse to hear God's rebuke and lay it to heart (2).
 1. God speaks this as "Jehovah of hosts," i.e., Who controls all of creation for His purposes.
 2. God's curse is as a command because God's anger is displayed in His command of creation: crops ("seed").
 3. And God would spread the dung of their feasts on their faces (3), bringing shame and dishonor upon them (9).
- III. What is the calling or duty of those in God's covenant?
 - A. As God's friend, they are to reverence or fear God, to speak His truth, to walk with Him, and to turn away from iniquity (5,6).
 1. A friend of God loves Him, but also is in awe of Him and are bows before His revelation of Himself.
 2. Our awe of Him makes us afraid to speak any wrong or unrighteous thing.
 3. This is particularly the duty of the priesthood.
 - B. This duty is one God gives to us (5a) in His grace. It is not a condition but a fruit of the covenant.
 - C. While we fall short, God is faithful to preserve His covenant and to keep us in it as His friends, for He is Jehovah!