

Malachi 1:6-14

The Lord of Hosts...He is in charge, a mighty general...the God of angel armies. Last time we learned that this title carried with it the following reality.

1. The Lord of Hosts has the freedom, right, and power to bestow His love, mercy, and grace on whomever He chooses.
2. Likewise, The Lord of Hosts has the freedom, right, and power to bestow His anger, wrath, and judgement on whomever He chooses.

Today, in our text, we will see that His title "*The Lord of Hosts*" implies that He is so gloriously holy that His mighty Name will be magnified, great, and reverently feared from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

This text is about worship. Worship is to ascribe to something or to an individual honor and respect. It is to proclaim their worth.¹ They were doing just the opposite in this text.

READ/PRAY

Let us see 4 realities in this text.

I. Despising God's Name v6

The term despise in this context conveys an the attitude of ongoing disrespect, which explains why God refers to Himself here as a father.

1. If you ask most Christians today what it means to them that God is their Father, they would likely almost all say, "It means that he loves me." And this would be true. But that is not all that the fatherhood of God implies for us.
2. Very few people today would likely say that the fatherhood of God implies to them that God is to be honored and revered and respected.
 - a. Yet this is exactly what we see emphasized in the first commandment with a promise.
 - b. Exodus 20:12 *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged*

in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

The fatherhood of God is brought into the discussion, not to assure them of his love (he has already done that), but instead to humble and frighten the priests, because they are despising their father's name.

1. If the focus on the God's fatherhood is insufficient, he includes the analogy of servant and master.
2. If I am a Master, shouldn't I be respected?
3. But you are despising my name.

¹ Christ Centered Exposition. Page 213

The term despise in this context conveys an attitude of ongoing disrespect. It also refers to the act of conveying insignificance or worthlessness upon an object, idea, or individual.²

1. It is the same word used when Esau traded his birthright for some lentil stew!
2. Genesis 25:27-34
3. Isn't it ironic that God had just demonstrated His love for them by contrasting His treatment of Esau with His treatment of Jacob?
4. And now they are treating Him more like Esau did than Jacob did in despising His Name.

II. Defiling God's Altar v7-9

To offer blind, crippled, or diseased animals was sin because it violated the law of God.

1. Exodus 12:5. *Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.*
2. Leviticus 1:10 *But if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall offer it a male without defect.*
3. Leviticus 22:22 *Those that are blind or fractured or maimed or having a running sore or eczema or scabs, you shall not offer to the LORD, nor make of them an offering by fire on the altar to the LORD.*
4. To offer such animals showed a lack of respect for the greatness of God.

They definitely would not have offered such animals to the governor.

v9

1. The term entreat could literally be translated "to smooth over."³
2. It just doesn't work that way. While we can't merit any favor from God, we should not think for a second that we can be god except for the times when we decide we need a bigger God.

Robby Gallaty put it this way: *"In modern times God may have reason to say something to you like this: You offer your best to Uncle Sam, but you offer less to the work of God. You spend all of your time watching college football, but you spend minimal time reading My Word. You spend all your time in your hobbies, but you devote little time to praying, seeking, memorizing, and meditating. And now you solicit favor of God?"*⁴

III. Displeasing God v10-12

God was so repulsed by this disgraceful worship that he pleaded for at least one priest to have the decency to shut the temple doors and stop this disgraceful worship.

This is not the first time he has felt this way about worship.

² Christ Centered Exposition. Page 214

³ Christ Centered Exposition. Page 215

⁴ Ibid.

1. Amos 5:21-24 “I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. 22 “Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; And I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. 23 “Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. 24 “But let justice roll down like waters And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

2. It would be better to shut the doors than to worship uselessly.
 - a. There is a Hebrew word behind that phrase "uselessly" that carries a lot of weight.
 - b. The word is *hinam*.
 - c. It is used, for example, in 2 Samuel 24:24 in a way very similar to this verse.

2 Samuel 24:18-25

1. I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God *hinam*—which cost me nothing.”
2. God was displeased with their useless offerings.

IV. Disdaining God’s Worship v13-14

We have seen the actions. These verses reveal the attitude.

1. They dread worship! It is so tiresome to them!
2. It is tiresome to many in this room. You disdainfully sniff at it, but you check it off.
3. That is exactly how they were treating worship in Malachi.

The priests had viewed their service as a system of checking boxes or punching cards and they just wanted to get their work done in order to return home to relax.⁵

1. Can you imagine such an attitude in the worship of the Lord of Hosts?
2. Here is this great God, “*The Lord of Hosts*” so gloriously holy that His mighty Name will be magnified, great, and reverently feared from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.” and these priests were weary of worshipping Him.

Conclusion:

Let’s think on this reality. The Lord of Hosts is so gloriously holy that His mighty Name will be magnified...

1. **Magnified v5**
 - a. Psalm 96

⁵ Christ Centered Exposition. Page 218

2. Great v11

- a. The name of your Father which you dishonor with sick sheep and mangy goats—that name is one day going to be revered and held in highest esteem by every nation of the world and in every place on the earth.

b. Revelation 7:9-12 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."*

3. Reverently Feared v14b

Psalms 47:2-3 *For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. 3 He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet.*

From Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

Questions for Reflection:

1. What do we learn about God the Father from this text? What about God the Son? God the Holy Spirit?
2. What is the main theme of the text?
3. What are some characteristics of useless worship today?
4. How had God shown Himself to be a father to Israel? How did Israel fail to treat Him as a father?
5. Are there any commands to obey? Are there any promises to believers?
6. To what, or to whom, are you tempted to give your worship, rather than The Lord of Hosts?
7. Was there anything from this sermon that was difficult to understand or that didn't make sense to you? Discuss it with the group to try and get a better understanding.
8. What do you believe was the most impactful part of the sermon Sunday? Discuss.
9. How do you plan to apply some portion of what you learned to your life? For example, "In response to this sermon, I will _____"