

The Dreadful King – Malachi 1:14

I. Introduction:

- A. Do you see the word “**voweth**” in this verse?
1. *“Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and **VOWETH**, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.”*
 2. If I am not mistaken, that word takes us from Israel’s **required** sacrifices to their **freewill** offerings.
 3. This may have involved sacrifices related to special promises, like the dedication of the Nazarite.
 4. Even if the earlier verses were speaking about sin and trespass offerings, “**voweth**” suggest, perhaps, peace and thank offerings.
 5. In other words, these Jews were not under any pressure to make these offerings.
- B. Is that an important distinction? I think so.
1. It takes us back to Ananias and Sapphira, and their freewill offering of money.
 2. In **Acts 5**, when this married couple tried to deceive the church about the nature of a large financial gift, the Lord, who is never deceived, struck them both dead.
 3. They weren’t being forced to give anything to God’s work, and they certainly didn’t have to lie.
 4. Their offering was corrupt because they were trying to paint a picture which wasn’t true: a portrait of generosity, self-sacrifice and concern for the progress of the church.
 5. They were cursed by God, because they were deceivers, and the sovereign King took their lives.
 6. And that, by the way, was judgment on people who professed to be children of God.
- C. With that in mind, please turn to **Leviticus 22**, one the scriptures to which, I think, **Malachi** was referring.
1. *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*
 2. *Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;*
 3. *Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.*
 4. *But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.*
 5. *And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.*
 6. *Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.*
 7. *Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted. Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.”*
- D. Now, let me ask you a rhetorical question: To whom was Israel offering these freewill sacrifices?
1. It was to Yahweh, Jehovah, the great “**I am that I am?**”
 2. These offerings were being presented to “**the LORD**” spelled with all capital letters.
 3. In **Leviticus**, the people were thanking the God who had **delivered them** from **Egypt**, through the waters of the **Red Sea**.
 4. They were honoring the God who **showed** them **His love** by giving them **His law**.
 5. They were thanking the Lord for His **miraculous supply** of **water** in the desert and for their **daily manna**.
 6. Not to mention the fact, they should have been praising Him for **forgiving** their **transgressions**.
- E. The Jews in Malachi’s day should have been making their vows and thanking the same **LORD**.
1. But now, He was **also the God** who had **brought them out** of their **captivity** in Babylon and Assyria.
 2. And yet, these more recent Israelites were disregarding the rules of the sacrifice.
 3. They were offering “**a corrupt thing;**” blind, lame and sick animals.
 4. When they were directed to sacrifice males of the flock, they were offering females, many of which were past their prime.

5. And the Lord declared, ***“cursed be the deceiver:”*** the man who was lying about his sacrifice.
6. And then, God explained the authority by which He cursed them and slew people like Ananias & Sapphira.
7. ***“For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.”***

F. There is our message for this evening. Jehovah is still the great and dreadful king.

II. God describes Himself three ways in this chapter: Father, Master and King.

- A. ***“A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts.”***
1. Jehovah is a Father, because He has given us life. He is the Creator of all things.
 2. Then for Israel, He chose those people out of all the nations of the earth, adopting them as His own special children.
 3. And today, He made a similar choice to call and to save you, Christian.
 4. He is our Father in the sense of Creator, but even more personally, He is our Father through the new birth.
- B. You might also say that God employed Israel to become His servants and to glorify His name.
1. They were to bear in their bodies the mark of His covenant with them.
 2. They were to be testimonies of His grace and power before the heathen nations.
 3. And you might say they were well-paid for their service.
 4. But the people were not faithful to their responsibilities. The Master was not being honored or feared.
 5. ***“If then I be a father, where is mine honour? & if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts.”***
 6. Similarly, Christians today have been saved and employed to glorify the Lord.
 7. ***“Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (I Peter 2:9).***
 8. But, the question is: are we serving Him as we should?
- C. After describing Himself as a Father and master, now the Lord uses another title.
1. ***“For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.”***
 2. What is it to be a king?
 3. There is a book which sits on my desk; a book which I use every week, sometimes several times during the preparation of a single sermon. ***Roget’s Thesaurus*** is a 500 page book of synonyms.
 4. And for the word ***“king,”*** Roget supplies ***“ruler, monarch, emperor, SOVEREIGN, royalty”*** and ***“MASTER.”***
 5. The Hebrew word used here is translated ***“king”*** two thousand, five hundred, eighteen times (2518).
 6. There is no mystery in the word. It means ***“sovereign master.”***
- D. The **LORD** is a **true king**; the **ONLY** true king.
1. And if you stop and think about it, Jehovah’s deity demands that He be nothing less.
 2. He is absolutely sovereign, with both the authority and the ability to do whatever He chooses to do.
 3. And He is that king by natural right.
 4. He didn’t conquer another king, usurping his position and sitting upon someone else’s throne.
 5. Jehovah has always been the sovereign king, even when there were no subjects in His kingdom.
 6. But there **are** subjects, and for more than six thousand years there has been no doubt of His kingship.
- E. This King is ***“the Lord of hosts,”*** and ***“hosts”*** is the most common translation of the Hebrew word.
1. But it is also translated ***“army,” “soldiers”*** and ***“company”*** as in a division within an army.
 2. Jehovah is the ruler over an army of angels, which carry out His will on a daily basis.
 3. He is king over every corner of His creation, from hurricanes and tornados, to army ants and killer bees.
 4. His authority includes the ground we walk on, which He has from time to time ordered to open up in order to swallow and execute specific sinners.
 5. Yahweh is king over hail stones, rain drops, locusts and flocks of quail. His armies are vast and varied.
 6. And ultimately His armies cannot be defeated.

F. *"The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Exodus 15:18).*

1. The word *"reign"* is a verbal cousin to *"king"* in our verse. *"The Lord shall be king for ever."*
2. Jehoshaphat prayed before the people of Israel *"And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?" (II Chronicles 20:6).*
3. *"Who is this king of Glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory" (Psalm 24:10).*

G. Of course, this means that it is **foolish** to **resist Him**. It is **DISASTROUS** to resist this King.

1. *"They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."*
2. **Jeremiah 10:10:** *"The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and everlasting king; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation."*
3. There are dozens of scriptures just like these.

III. **It is foolish to resist the Lord because, not only is He a KING, He is a GREAT king.**

A. In a world filled with **petty** kings, **tribal** kings and **titular** kings with no power whatsoever, there is Jehovah.

1. There are people who claim to be king, ruling for a few moments before they are gone.
2. There are people who claim to be king, but they don't have the strength to resist the next would-be king.
3. But then there is the King of all kings, and the Lord of a mighty host – an undeniable, undefeatable army.

B. Do you remember our earlier message when I spent so much time showing that the Name of God is not just a name? The name of God is not merely an appellation or name-tag.

1. It is a reflection of God Himself.
2. God's name, in itself, is an ambassador of the Lord with all the authority of the Lord
3. Now, go back to **verse 11**, looking for the word *"great"* as in *"I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts."*
4. *"For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my NAME shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my NAME shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts."*
5. This Hebrew word *"great"* can be found about 500 times in the Old Testament.
6. Strong' Concordance says that according to the context it can mean **large (in magnitude and extent)**.
 - a. It can mean **great** in **number, intensity, sound, importance** or **age**.
 - b. All of these can be applied to Jehovah in His own special way.

C. And when that Hebrew word **is** applied to God, a great study is opened up to the Bible student.

1. For example in three verses, **Job** tell us Jehovah *"doeth GREAT things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number"*
 - a. He *"doeth GREAT things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number."*
 - b. *"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; GREAT things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend."*
2. **David** says that God is a great king in providing salvation to those He chooses to bless (**Psalm 21:5**).
 - a. Later he says, *"For thy mercy is GREAT unto the heavens, & thy truth unto the clouds" (Psalm 57:10).*
 - b. *"For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone" (Psalm 86:10).*
 - c. *"For great is thy mercy toward me: & thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell" (Psalm 86:13).*
3. Another psalmist said, *"Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!" (Psalm 71:19).*
 - a. *"Who is so great a God as our God?" (Psalm 77:13).*
 - b. *"The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Psalm 111:2).*
4. I could go on for half a hour with quotes about the greatness of our God & King, but I'll stop with two more.
5. Please turn to **Psalm 95:1-5**.
 - a. *"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.*
 - b. *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.*
 - c. **For the LORD is a GREAT GOD, and a great King above all gods.**

- d. *In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.*
- e. *The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.*
- f. *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker."*

6. And then there are the words of Paul in ***I Timothy 5:16***.

- a. Jehovah *"is the blessed and only **POTENTATE**, the King of kings and Lord of lords;*
- b. *who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto;*
- c. *whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."*
- d. The word "**potentate**" is "**dunastes**" (doo-nas'-tace) which means "**powerful one**" or "**mighty one.**"

IV. The Lord our God is a KING, the GREAT KING, and His name is DREADFUL among the heathen.

- A. Just as some people speak of "**Jesus**" in too light a way, others speak of God as "**awesome**" far too lightly.
1. Yes, He is awesome, but He is so much more than that that I think we should use that word sparingly.
 2. Please turn to ***Psalm 48:1***: "**Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.**"
 3. And the preceding ***Psalm*** says, "**O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is **TERRIBLE**; he is a **GREAT KING** over all the earth.**"
 - a. *He shall **subdue** the people under us, and the nations under our feet.*
 - b. **HE shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah."**
 4. Not only is God great and greatly to be praised, the LORD most high is "**terrible.**"
 5. That word is the same Hebrew word translated "**dreadful**" here in ***Malachi***.
 6. It is used in ***Psalm 99*** as well:
 - a. *"The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.*
 - b. *The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people.*
 - c. **Let them praise thy **GREAT and TERRIBLE NAME**; for it is holy."**
 7. Again, it is not the name "**Jehovah**" which is terrible; it is the God who bears that glorious name.
- B. This Hebrew word is translated "**dreadful**" five times.
1. But 188 times it is rendered "**fear**" and "**afraid**" 78 times; Jehovah is "**terrible**" nearly a hundred times.
 2. The word refers to someone who is **truly** awe inspiring; who deserves absolute reverence.
 3. ***Psalm 89:7***: "**God is **GREATLY** to be **FEARED** in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in **REVERENCE** of all them that are about him.**"
 4. ***Psalm 111***: "**Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.**"
 - a. *The **WORKS** of the LORD are **GREAT**, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.*
 - b. *He sent **REDEMPTION** unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name."*
- C. But what does God mean here in ***Malachi*** when He says, "**my name is dreadful among the HEATHEN?**"
1. This is where ***Malachi*** comes back to you and me.
 2. The great King is not only the monarch over Israel but over the entire universe.
 3. The Lord may plague, judge and chastise His special nation, but He does the same throughout the world. Just look at New Orleans in recent weeks. Look at Haiti.
 4. No, the heathen may not acknowledge Jehovah as King of kings and Lord of lords, but He doesn't need that acknowledgment to be Who He is.
 5. As I said earlier, He is king over every corner of His creation, from hurricanes and tornados, to army ants and killer bees.
- D. But amidst the darker fact, there is a bright light.
1. Take a close look at the last clause of ***verse 14***.
 2. ***"I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen."***
 3. Notice that the verb "**is**" is in italics.

4. One of my commentaries suggested that it should be understood as agreeing with **verse 11**.
 - a. *“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name **SHALL BE** great among the Gentiles;*
 - b. *and in every place incense **SHALL BE** offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name **SHALL BE GREAT** among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.”*
 5. Even more than in Malachi’s day, Jehovah is a *“a great King...”* among the heathen **today**.
 6. He is **a great Saviour King** among the heathen.
- E. Speaking personally, there once was a day when I was as lost and destitute as any man in the most remote part of New Guinea or Siberia or Nigeria.
1. There once was a day, when the great God and King, came to me, terrifying me with pronouncements of His judgment upon me for my sin.
 2. And in the process, He brought me to my spiritual knees before the cross.
 3. There was a day, when I was just a teenager, that I knelt before the Lord and vowed my allegiance as a subject to His Kingship.
 4. This heathen teenager, found the Great King to be terrible, so terrible that I had no place to run.
 5. So I simply melted before Him, beseeching Him for mercy.
 6. Again, **Psalm 89:7** declares, *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.”*
- F. This morning we were asked *“Do you love the Lord?”*
1. This evening I ask, *“Have you ever trembled before the Lord; the great King, whose name is worthy of dread and awe?”*
 2. If you have never been afraid before God, truly fearful of His wrath toward you for your sin, then if that doesn’t change, you will at some point be crushed by His sovereign authority.
 3. Before He will be your Saviour, you must see yourself as a sinner before His wrath.
 4. Before Christ saves you, you must see God as dreadful.
 5. And that should bring you to repentance and faith in the great Redeemer.