The wickedness of Israel

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev J.M.Macpherson

[0:00] I'd invite you to turn again to the prophecy of Malachi and in the first chapter we'll read again at verse 6. Malachi chapter 1 at verse 6.

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 says the Lord of hosts unto you O priests that despise my name? And ye say wherein have we despised thy name?
And actually for our consideration this evening I'd like to go on right to the end of the chapter this passage where God speaks through Malachi to priests and people.
Now you'll notice that the prophet Malachi begins this chapter by directing his words to the whole people of Israel. The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.
This people that had experienced in tremendous measure the blessing of God. They had been slaves in Babylon and yet God had brought them back triumphantly to their own land. And there in Jerusalem they were able to re-establish their nation and their worship. But still the years were passing.
[1:37] They had been conscious of the blessing of God. They had real cause to praise God. But the years were passing and the thrill that they felt when they came back from Babylon was growing it seems somewhat tarnished. They weren't feeling now the great things they felt then.

Religion and religious practice was becoming rather burdensome to them. They had thought that they would see immediately the re-establishment of the kingdom of Solomon in all its glory. But it wasn't working out like that.
And so as you read through the prophecy of Malachi you'll find that there is a very severe word of God to a people who had grown weary in their dedication. A people who had become careless and slipshod in their worship.
But then as Malachi goes on with his message he speaks as I say first of all to the whole people. He then from verse 6 and on into about the middle of verse 2 he directs his words particularly to one section of the people namely to the priests. In verse 6 he speaks to you O priests that despise my name.
And you press in chapter 2 now O ye priests this commandment is for you. It looks as if reading through Malachi's words it looks as if he himself probably wasn't a priest.
[3:13] The way he speaks to them would suggest that this was a man who himself was not a priest. And I suppose that this tells us something of the courage of this man of this prophet Malachi.

Even as Amos had done so long before he spoke out against the religious establishment who bore the name of the priests of God and yet who were not worthy of the God whose name they bore.
But particularly I think that what we can draw out of this and it's the line that I want to follow this evening is that Malachi or the Lord through Malachi was stressing the fact that greater privilege all the people were a privileged people. But the priests they were those who had been given a particular ministry.
And as they had been given this particular ministry and this particular privilege so they were doubly responsible before the Lord. And of course there is a particular word that comes to those who have any responsibility here in this congregation or in the Church of Christ. There's a particular message to ministers, to elders, to deacons, to Sunday school teachers, to those who have any office in the Church that there is a particular responsibility and that the Lord will call for particular account to be given.
You remember how in Ezekiel's great vision we're told that the angels who had to come with judgment had to begin, says the Lord, at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men that were before the house, that is, that is, before the temple. And they first were called to give their

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

account. Or as Peter puts it, judgment begins first at the house of God to those who have greater privilege. But I don't this evening want to direct my words merely to one group within the Church. You'll remember how the New Testament tells us that in our dispensation, ushered in by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, all God's people are priests.
[5:36] Every Christian is a priest before God. And there is therefore a very real sense in which God's words to the priests of Israel are God's words to us if we are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as the priests here are called to self-examination. Well that is what is happening. Malachi says to them, you priests, this word is for you.

Consider the way you're behaving as priests. Consider how you're carrying out your responsibilities as God's representatives among the people. Take your work. Stand back, as it were, from what you're doing.
Look at these sacrifices you're offering. Examine all that you are and all that you do in the light of the word of God. So surely tonight, as tonight we seek to prepare ourselves, as we seek to examine our own lives and our own hearts in the light of the privilege that is ours of sitting down together at the table of the Lord, I suggest that the words given to these priests are words for us who are a royal priesthood, the people of God in this generation. And I'd like to suggest that in these verses from verse 6 on to verse 14, that Malachi expresses his thoughts with regard to these priests and with regard to what God requires the respect of them in a series of contrasts. There are three that I've tried to pick out from these verses.
And the first of them is this. He contrasts the respect given to men and the respect that should be given to God. On the one hand, there is the respect given to the one hand. And on the other, the respect that should be given to Almighty God.
And Malachi speaks very plainly. He turns to these people and says in verse 6, Look at those who are children among you, you honour your fathers. Look at those who are servants among you, they honour their masters. But where is the honour that God, your heavenly Father, and God, your divine Master, requires and deserves?
[7:57] And then Malachi goes on, even more scathingly, to speak of their lack of respect for the God whose name they bore. He refers to their sacrifices. We'll notice in detail the defects in these sacrifices in a moment.

But referring to their sacrifices and the defects that they had, he said to them, Now suppose you were going to bring some gift to the governor, to your civil overlord.
Do you think you'd go to him with what you bring to God? Anything does for God. Was the attitude of these priests. Any animal that wouldn't sell in the marketplace. Any animal that wasn't worth very much at all. Well, let's give it to God. He's in heaven. He'll not see. He'll not notice.
After all, we won't hear what he says. And so what was no good for anyone else was given to God. And of course, neither God nor his prophets were fooled by such an attitude. And so you find Malachi's scathing words in verse 8. These sacrifices that you're offering, the blind, the lame, the sick, try offering them to your governor. And that is the way it's translated in the New International Version.
Here in our version it says, Offer it now unto thy governor. But you get the flavour of what Malachi says in this translation. Try offering that to your governor. See what he'll say.
[9:30] You wouldn't do it. Because you have respect towards men. Well, says the prophet, where is the respect? Where is the honour and the reverence? That you, as the children of Israel and of Israel's God, O to your Lord and Master. Now, of course, the one does not cancel out the other. Malachi is not saying that you should reverence God and not respect your earthly superiors. He's not saying that the son ought not to honour his father, but rather that they should both honour God. He's not saying that servants should cast off restraint with regard to their master. Nor is he suggesting that they shouldn't care less about the governor and what he thought. Far from it. What he is saying is, honour them. You do right in so doing.

But what about God? Honour him supremely, who is your sovereign Lord. And as we meet here tonight, in another communion season, when we're reminded of the Lord Jesus Christ, of his dying love and Calvary, when we're reminded of the sovereign mercy of our sovereign Lord, surely it is fitting that we should examine our own hearts and that we should ask ourselves, is the reverence, is the worship that you and I owe to our Lord, does it characterise us always? Could we examine our own lives since our last communion season?
Do we have for God that supreme reverence, that supreme bowing before his will that he desires?

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

I wonder if at times when there are opportunities of service and of worship, I wonder if at times as we look back over the months we have to say that we were ready to put out or cancel out our service of worship to God when other things cropped up. I wonder if the Lord and his worship, for those who profess his name, for those who are the royal priesthood, I wonder if these always had the supremacy.
And I wonder if the Lord, looking at my life or at your life over these past months, I wonder if he would be able to say that there was concern for other people and their welfare, concern for other affairs, respect to those who certainly should receive it. But the Lord, is that what has characterized our lives? And is there every time we come to meet, to worship him, is there the reverence of which the prophet speaks? Now I know that I do not speak here as from a height to you who are down below.
[12:52] I speak with a deep sense of failure and of shame. Because we all know how easily we come together in a service even such as this.

And how often we find that our thoughts wander so far from the word of God, and that the Lord, in whose presence we bow, is so far in reality from our worship, from our attention, from our desires. And tonight, surely, this Saturday night, as we prepare for that great feast, that commemoration of our Lord's dying love and Calvary, we are being asked if we are bowed before the Lord with the reverence that is truly his due.
Now of course the scriptures tell us and tell us again and again that as Christian people, we can and should be intimate with our God. There should be a true and a warm and a real fellowship with him.
He is in Christ our heavenly father. We approach him with the confidence of children to a father. But intimacy is never opposed to reverence. Intimacy is opposed to formality, not to a sense of reverence, as we come before the holy God. And so Malachi goes on to suggest here, what is the basis for true reverence?
[14:22] What is the basis for true worship? Now there's so much that could be said here, but I think if you look at verse 6, you'll notice that there is here particularly reference to relationships.

There's the relationship of the son to the father, of the servant to the master, and then of the children of God to their heavenly father. If I be a father, where is my honor? And those who bear his name, who are personally related to him.
And while I know that this evening we meet together particularly as the people of God, particularly those who have indeed professed his name, who love the Lord Jesus Christ, yet it may well be that some have joined with us in worship.
And you know in your own heart as you listen this evening that that's what's lacking. There cannot be true reverence where there is no true relationship, where there has been no coming to God as father through the Lord Jesus Christ.
And before we proceed I would encourage any who meet with the people of God tonight, and yet fear that they are not part of the family of God, they would come humbly, simply to the Lord Jesus Christ, and enter therefore into this new relationship through repentance and faith with God as their heavenly father.
[15:54] And so there is the respect given to men, and the respect that should be given to God. And our prayer must be that this weekend, God would solemnize our hearts and our worship, so that it would be truly the worship that is pleasing and honoring to him, our gracious God.

But let's go on to notice a second contrast that you have here in this chapter. It's a contrast between the offerings given to God, and the offerings that should be given to him.
The offerings that were given to him, on the one hand, and the offerings that ought to have been given to him, on the other. And you find this repeated again and again in this prophecy of Malachi. For example, in verse 6, at the end of the chapter, at the end of the verse, Malachi says to the priests that they were despising God's name through their offerings.
In verse 7, you offer polluted bread upon mine altar. Then you have the specific references in verses 7 and 8. How was the table of the Lord being made contemptible?
[17:12] Well, as we've seen, any old thing would do for God. That was the attitude of the people. Have we got a lamb for sacrifice? Well, the best lamb.

The lamb without blemish would fetch a good price in the marketplace. We can't give that to God. We can't take that to the church. Let's find something that isn't much good for anything else.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And let's offer it to the Lord our God. You offer the blind for sacrifice. You offer the lame. You offer the sick. And Malachi goes on to stress this deficient offering of the people of God.
At verse 12, You've profaned the table of the Lord because you say it is polluted. And the fruit thereof, even as meat, is contemptible. You've said also, Behold, what a weariness it is.
And you've snuffed at it, said the Lord of hosts. And here comes the type of offering that they were bringing. That which was torn. The lame. And the sick.
[18:13] Now these priests knew perfectly well. For they were, after all, well versed in the law of Moses. They knew that it was contrary to that law.

To bring animals that were in any way defective. For example, in Deuteronomy, in the law of God, It states in chapter 15, That if there be any blemish in any animal that was being brought to the altar, Or to the tabernacle or temple, If there be any blemish therein, As if it be lame or blind, Or of any ill blemish, Thou shalt not sacrifice it to the Lord thy God.
If anyone knew that these animals should not be offered, It was these priests. And yet they were the very ones, The custodians of the purity of the temple. They were the very ones who were flaunting or flouting the law of God in this respect.
While it may be that some people who brought these offerings, Had in mind that they were offering not so much to God, But to the temple, Or to the system, Or with regard to the ordinary people, To the priests.
But God didn't see it like that. The offerings that were made to his house, The offerings that were made to his worship, He saw them as made directly to himself.
[19:40] And before we go on to examine how this developed in practice, Isn't that a solemnizing thought for us? The offerings that we bring, Not merely the material offerings that we bring as our collections, But what we offer to the church of God.

We don't offer to a system. We don't offer to the free church, Or as we so often hear, To the offices in Edinburgh or so on. We offer to the living God.
And he sees what we bring, To our congregation, To our church, To our Christian service, As offerings directly to himself. And you see how God, Found offence, In these offerings, That they may well have considered, Were merely being offered to the temple.
And the language that's used here, Is strikingly strong. You have profaned my name. And he goes on to use an even stronger word, The table of the Lord is polluted.
Indeed I think that, In English, In our translation, It's hardly possible, To bring out the strength, Of the word that the prophet uses. It would not be exaggerating too much, To translate or paraphrase at least in English, By saying that they were, Spitting in the very face of God.
[21:07] This is the concept, That comes out in this word, The table of the Lord is polluted. And you find the same, Kind of idea in verse 13. They were coming along to the temple of God.

Oh what a weariness it is. All this worship, All these services, All these sacrifices, Certainly were the people of God, But how wearisome it is. And you have snuffed, Our version here says, You have snuffed at it.
But more accurately would be, You have snuffed at me. I don't suppose we'd say that in modern English. In modern English what we would say, And it gives the idea exactly, Is you have turned up your noses, At me.
There was the attitude, Of the people of God, Towards the God, Who had redeemed them from their bondage. The God who had brought them back. The God who was the beginning of the chapter says, The God who had loved them, In spite of their unworthiness.
They turned up their noses, At their living God. And so we're, Here tonight. We're here because, It's the communion season.
[22:19] We're here because, The Kirk session, I suppose, A long time ago, Or at least with regard to the change of date, Here very recently, Decided that it should be now.

And that the services should be held, In a certain way, In a certain manner. But we met here, Above all else, Because God has cited us, Into his presence.
And the worship is not only, To fulfill the custom, Of our congregations, To have our communion seasons, For which we thank God, And the blessing, That they have so often been.
But we meet here, In the presence of the living God. And you and I are called, To examine our hearts, As we prepare, To meet with him at his table.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And that we might recognize, That our worship, Is not to our congregation, Or to our church, Or to one another. But, To the living God. And that all, Must be seen in relationship with him.
[23:19] David, of course, Knew that, And expressed it so clearly, In the 51st Psalm. Against thee, Thee only, Have I sinned. In thy sight, Done this ill.

Had he not sinned, Against Bathsheba? Had he not sinned, Against Uriah? Of course he had. And he'd sinned, Against the people of God. And he'd given great cause, To the enemies of the Lord, To blaspheme.
But supremely, The sin was committed, Against God. The God, Who had redeemed him, By his grace. And we need to be brought, Again tonight, To see ourselves, In direct relationship, With our God.
We thank him, For the fellowship of saints. We thank him, For what communion seasons, Can mean, With regard to meeting together, In homes perhaps, Fellowship together, As families, And with other Christians.
We thank God, For the opportunity, To turn to his word, And to have fresh, Opportunities to hear, The preaching of his word. We thank him, For all of that. But, Says the prophet, And the prophet, To us, From God above all, You meet, With me.
[24:29] And as you prepare, Seek that you might do so, You, And your God. You're offering, Your presence here, Between yourself, And the living God.

And then the prophet goes on, And he says, Something exceedingly startling. Indeed, So striking are the words, Of verse 10, That one might hesitate, To believe, That they could actually come, From the Lord himself.
And yet they do. Now, In our own version here, It reads like this, Who is there even among you, That would shut the doors for naught? Neither do ye kindle fire, On mine altar for naught.
And that, Doesn't convey to us, Exactly what the prophet is saying. If you turn to any of the modern versions, You'll find, How strikingly, The concept is brought out.
I have here, For example, The translation of the revised standard version. And this is what God is saying, To his people. Oh, That there were one among you, Who would shut the doors, That you might not kindle fire, Upon mine altar, In vain.
[25:46] You see the idea? Here were all these people, A whole queue of them, Bringing their sacrifices. This one had a blind sheep, And that one had a lame goat.

And so they went, All the rubbish, That was no good for anything else, They were coming to God with it. And they were coming to the temple, They were coming to worship, They were coming to offer, Religious sacrifice.
And no doubt some of them felt, That they were doing God a favor, By coming to his house at all. And so there they were, And the prophet sees them, He sees the whole line of them, With their sacrifices.
People outside might have said, What a religious company, What a consecrated people. And the voice of God from heaven, Seeing them coming to his own house, Is a voice that says this, Would that there were someone, Who would shut the doors of my house, So that they would not kindle fire, On my altar in vain.
What a striking concept, That God in heaven, Would have prepared, That his people did not worship him, That the doors of the temple, Would be closed, That there would be no services, Of worship in his name, Rather than that these people, Should come and offer, Defective worship, Rather than that they should come, With their lips to worship him, While their hearts were far removed, Could it be, That sometimes God might be saying, To some of his own people, It would be better, If you weren't here in my house, Because you're not worshipping me, As you ought, There's a very real sense, Isn't there, In which we thank God, For everyone who comes to his house, And worships him, And we always say to people, If they say, Well I don't think I'll go to church, I don't get much out of it, Don't we always say to them,
[27:46] Yes come, Come, Because you'll be under, The preaching of the word, You'll be under the sound of the gospel, You never know, When there'll be a blessing, But here you have God saying, And of course it's to those, Who profess his name, This is directed to, In the New Testament dispensation, To Christian people, It's directed to us, And we are called on, On this day of self-examination, To examine our own lives, In the light of it, God says, I prefer you didn't come, If you're not going to come, With a heart disposed, To worship, Well it's not just Old Testament teaching, Our Lord said the very same thing, You remember in the Sermon on the Mount, He said,

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

If you come, With your gift to the altar, And there you remember, That your brother's got something against you, What do you do?

Do you carry on with your worship, Your singing, And your praying, And your reading, No you don't, Leave your gift on the altar, Go and be reconciled to your brother, And then come, And offer your gift, And I wonder, If God is speaking perhaps, To one of us here this evening, And God is saying now tomorrow, You are going to worship me, In that great high feast, That commemorates the greatest thing, That this world ever saw, The death of the Son of God, You are going to worship me, And I want you, To put right, What is wrong, I want you to put right, What in your Christian life, Is not pleasing to me, I want you, It may be in the terms, Of our Lord's words, In the Sermon on the Mount, I want you to go and be reconciled, To your brother, Is there bitterness, Is there envy, Is there an unforgiving spirit, Is there something, That I your Lord, Asked you to do, And you never did it, Or is there, In your offering, Is there a spirit, Of reluctance, Is there a spirit, Of grudgingness, Or is there a, Coldness and a deadness, That doesn't desire, Truly to worship, The living God, Well says the Lord, You go home, Do what Malachi said, Do what the Lord Jesus said, Go home, Get before God, In confession, In true examination, And put right, As God enables you to do, Put right what is wrong, That you may know, The joy, Of true worship, As these people, Could never know, While they brought offerings, Like that, To the God, Whose name, They profess to bear, There is the respect,

There is the respect, Given to men, And the respect, That should be given to God, There's the offerings, Given to God, And the offerings, That should be given to God, But then there's another, Contrast that we can find, In these verses, And there's the contrast, Between the people, Who worship God, And the people, Who should worship God, The people, Who were worshipping him, And the people, Who should be, Or would be, Worshipping him, And you'll notice, That there are, Several contrasts here, For example, In verse 11, It speaks of some people, It doesn't specify, Exactly, Who they are, We'll notice in a moment, Who they could be, This speaks of these people, 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, Sath the Lord of hosts, And then comes the next verse,

Beginning with the word, But you, Here is true worship, But you, You have profaned, My worship, And then again, You notice, The same type of contrast, In verse 14, Cursed be the deceiver, Who has in his flock a male, And vows and sacrifice, To the Lord a corrupt thing, For I am a great king, Sath the Lord of hosts, And my name is dreadful, Among the heathen, Here on the one hand, Is a deceiver, It's not a true worship, It's hypocritical, But on the other hand, There are those, Who take my name, As worthy to be feared, Even among the heathen, And isn't the reminder here, As we think of those, Who were not worshipping God, As they should, And others, Who were worshipping him, Described here, As Gentiles and heathen, Isn't the contrast, Obviously, Between those, Who were very privileged,

[32:47] And those, Who were not, On the one hand, You had the Jews, The people of God, Theirs was a testimony, Theirs were the oracles, Theirs was a priesthood, Theirs was a temple, They had all the revelation, Of the living God, And yet, What was their worship, How poor, How futile, How hypocritical, And then the prophet speaks, Of those, Who were Gentiles, Who were outside, The commonwealth of Israel, Who never had, These privileges, And he speaks of them, Offering worship, To the Lord their God, Those who should have worshipped him, Were not doing so as they ought, Those who were privileged, Were more accountable, I remember hearing, Some four or five years ago, Or reading rather, In a magazine of, A Christian radio broadcasting system, I think it was in Manila, In the Philippines, And they were talking there, About radio broadcasts,

Into China, Particularly at the time, When China was so, Hermetically sealed, To all gospel influence, And in this article, They were discussing, The types of programs, That they beamed into China, And it appears that, From letters that were smuggled, Out of China, And got to them, Commenting on the services, Or on the programs, It appears that, The most popular program, Among, The Christian people, Many of them, Hearing, In secret, The broadcasts from Manila, That the most popular programs, Were not those of, Christian news, And views, Were not, Those of, Christian music, Or hymns, Or so on, But they were a different type of program, It was a program where, A Chinese Christian, Would take the Bible, And would read, A dictation speed,

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

A chapter, Or more, Of the word of God, That was all, Just reading slowly, The scriptures, Now you might say, That that wasn't very interesting, We might feel that, That was perhaps rather boring, But there were these people, Hidden away, In different parts of China, Denied the privilege, Of public worship, Very few copies, Of the scriptures around, And there they were, Their ears glued, To their transistor sense, Copping down, The Bible, Perhaps just a chapter, Perhaps just a few verses, As it was beamed to them, From a Christian radio station, In the free world, You know when I first read that, It rebuked me, Because I thought of all the Bibles, That I have in my study, Different versions, And different languages, All the Bibles, That I've known, And I'm able to read,
And how little at times, The privilege is appreciated, Then I thought of the opportunities, Of worship, Here we can meet freely, We don't have to limit ourselves, To the Lord's day, We can meet any day of the week, We can meet whenever we like, We can worship God, And freedom, There are no armed guards, At the door, To take our names, And to discriminate against us, Because we worship God, And there were these believers, Avidly, Reading and hearing, The word of God, And this is what Malachi is saying, You, Who have all the privileges, What are you doing with them?
And there are the Gentiles, There are the heathen, My name is God, As great among them, I wonder if perhaps, There's a rebuke for some of us, Here this evening, And a call to treasure more, The privileges, That are ours, As the people of God, Well we can't leave, The reference here, To the Gentiles, And the heathen, Because it's rather a difficult one, I could just close, And say there's the contrast, But we want to know, Exactly what the scriptures mean, And some of you are perhaps asking, Who are these Gentiles?
[37:12] Who are these heathen? Who's the prophet speaking about? And if you turn to the commentaries, You'll find that the commentators, Find this exceedingly difficult, To decide, Who these Gentiles, Of verse 11, And who these heathen, Of verse 14 are, With whom is the prophet, Contrasting the people of God?

Well some suggest, Particularly those, Who would like to feel, That God's salvation, Is for everyone without exception, That we shouldn't be so exclusivistic, As they suggest, The evangelical churches, There are those who would say, Well it means the pagans, They worship God, According to their manner, Maybe they call them Allah, Maybe they call them the spirit, Of the great mountain, Or what have you, But amongst them, God's name is great, You'll find some, Who will suggest that, But, We who take the word of God, As truly, The word of God, Can never accept, That the prophet would be thinking, Along these lines, Because the apostle Paul, Reminds us, That the things which a Gentile sacrifice, They sacrifice to devils, And not to God, And it is only, Through the Lord Jesus Christ, That there is access, To the presence of God,
Then you'll find that others, Will say well, Probably the contrast was this, That prophet Malachi, Is speaking to the Jews, In Jerusalem, The Jews in Palestine, Those who were in their own land, But we've to bear in mind, That there were Jews, Scattered among the nations, There were Jews, As there still are today, In every nation under heaven, And that the idea here, Is that in every place, In other nations, Not just Israel, In Babylon, In Egypt, In Greece, In all the other countries, That there were Jews there, Who were worshipping God, The so called, Jews of the dispersion, And they suggest, That that is the contrast, Well it may be so, But I find that, Very difficult to harmonize, With the universality, Expressed in this text, The prophet is not merely thinking, Of Jews here and there, Surely he's not thinking, In such a limited way, But after all, Their numbers were small, Compared with all the Gentiles,
And all the heathens, And so we come to the suggestion, That what we have here, Is nothing less, Than a prophecy, Of the gospel, Of the universal kingdom, Of the Lord Jesus Christ, Now the objection, That's raised there, Is well, Surely that would be, Out of place then, What meaning, What force would it have, For these priests, If Malachi went among them, And said, You're not worshipping God, The way you should, But in every place, In sin shall be offered, Five hundred years from now, Well there's force, In that argument too, But I think that, What Malachi is saying, Is this, He's stressing once again, The contrast, You Jews, He says, You're favored, You're the most favored people, On the face of the earth, You've got everything, That God can offer you, But you don't live up to it, You're not receiving, You're not receiving, Your privileges, You're not living, As the people of God,
And therefore, You will lose, Your privileges, The day is coming, God has not revealed when, But the day is coming, When these privileges, Shall be taken from you, And given to others, Not only in Jerusalem, Of which you are so proud, But in every nation, And there will be an offering, And the

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

word used, For an offering here, In verse 14, Verse 11, Is not actually the word, For a bloody sacrifice, The sacrifice of the lamb, And so on, But it is a more general word, For a spiritual offering, Says the prophet, There will be offerings, And the offering, As he speaks of incense, Don't we remember, These great words, Of the apostle John, In Revelation, Where he speaks of the incense, That is lifted up, In the holy place to God, And the incense, It says, Is the prayer of the saints, The people of God, Of every nation, And kindred, And people,
[41:40] And tongue, Who through the Lord, Jesus Christ, Have been brought, Into fellowship with God, And so once again, There comes this reminder, That privileges, Are to be enjoyed, But privileges are also, To be treasured, And to be utilized, For one day, When privileges are despised, And this is not irrelevant, To us in our day, And in our denomination, Privileges, Can be lost, But let's close, With a wonder, Because it will remind us, Of what by God's grace, We shall do tomorrow, Let's close with a wonder, Of this great prophecy, How, Centuries before, The coming of Christ, In the midst of hypocrisy, And false worship, The glory of the gospel, Was perceived, And Malachi, By divine revelation, Was able to pierce,

Through the mists, That separated him, From Bethlehem, And Calvary, And he was able to say, There's a day coming, When people in every nation, Will worship God, A pure offering, Shall be offered to him, Among the Gentiles, And among the heathen, And you and I, Can praise God, That Malachi saw us, Saw us, In the plan, And the purpose, And the pattern of God, And thus we tonight, Can by the grace of God, Worship him, As we ought, And surely your prayer, And mine is that, All through this weekend, At all our services, In all our fellowship, The one with the other, We would therefore be enabled, To worship him, In spirit, And in truth, Let us pray.
O Lord, Our gracious God, We give thee thanks tonight, For the glory of the gospel, That opens blind eyes, And that teaches men, And women, Who of themselves, Cannot do it, How to worship God, But we here meet this evening, As the people of God, As those who profess thy name, And we pray, That we would allow, This searchlight of thy word, To shine into the deepest, Recesses of our hearts, And that if there has been, Defective worship, If we have not come to thee, As we ought to come, With hearts that are open, And with the consciousness, That all we have, And all we are, Are thine, That thou wilt, Tonight afresh, Take us, That thou wilt, Stir us anew, And though the stirring, May be painful, And although we may be brought,
And be forced to come, To a place of repentance, And confession, Of restitution, May we do so, That we might know, The blessing, Of true worship, May that blessing, Be ours, As we gather around, The table of the Lord, Not a table, As these people saw it, As contemptible, But a table, That is our joy, And our delight, For it speaks to us, Of our blessed Savior, Of his atoning love, Of his glorious resurrection, And of his presence, In the assemblies, Of his worshiping people, In his name we ask it, Amen.
Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host