

Malachi 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.

Analysis

But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Following the promise of pure Gentile worship (v. 11), God returns to Israel's profanation. **Ye have profaned it** (וְאַתֶּם מַהְלֵלִים אֶת־וָתָן, ve'attem mehallelim oto)—the verb חָלַל (ḥalal) means to profane, pollute, desecrate, treat as common. The priests treated God's holy name as common by their corrupt worship.

Their words reveal their hearts: **The table of the LORD is polluted** (שְׁלַחַן יְהָוָה) shulḥan Yahweh mego'al hu). They verbalized what their actions demonstrated—contempt for God's altar. **The fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible** (וְיִבּוּ נִזְחֵה אֶכְלָן) venivo nivzeh okhlo). יִבּוּ (niv) means fruit or produce; אֶכְלָן (okhel) means food. They despised the very sacrifices meant to honor God. This verbal contempt matched their actions—offering defective animals showed they truly believed God's table deserved no better.

Profaning God's name violates the third commandment (Exodus 20:7). The New Testament warns against similar profanation: treating communion unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:27-30), using God's name casually, claiming to know God while living in sin (Titus 1:16). How we treat worship reveals what we truly believe about God.

Historical Context

The concept of profaning God's name pervades Old Testament law. Israelites were forbidden from treating holy things as common (Leviticus 10:10, 22:2, Ezekiel 22:26). The priests' special calling was to distinguish between holy and profane, clean and unclean (Leviticus 10:10, Ezekiel 44:23). When those charged with maintaining holiness themselves profaned it, the entire covenant community was corrupted. Jesus confronted similar profanation when He cleansed the temple, accusing religious leaders of making God's house a den of thieves (Matthew 21:12-13). Paul warned Corinthian believers against profaning communion through unworthy participation (1 Corinthians 11:27-32). The principle remains: casual, contemptuous, or hypocritical worship profanes God's name.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How might we profane God's name through casual or contemptuous worship while maintaining outward religious observance?
2. What does our treatment of worship services, communion, prayer, and Scripture reveal about what we truly believe about God?
3. How does Christ's perfect reverence toward the Father provide both model and motivation for honoring God's name?

Interlinear Text

אָדָּנִי שְׁלָמִים | בְּאַמְرָכְךָ מִאָוֹת וְ מִפְלָלִים וְ אַתָּה □
H859 But ye have profaned H853 it in that ye say The table H136
H2490 H559 H7979

אֲכָלָו: נְבָזַה יְנִיבָה וְ הַזְּבָבָה מִגְּאָל
is polluted H1931 and the fruit is contemptible thereof even his meat H400
H1351 H5108 H959

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