

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** (וַאֲתֵם מְחַלְלִים אוֹתוֹ, ve'attem meḥallelim 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** (שֻׁלְחַן יְהוָה הוּא מְגֻאֵל, shulḥan Yahweh mego'al hu). They verbalized what their actions demonstrated—contempt for God's altar. **The fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible** (וְנִיבֹ נִיבְזָה אֶכְלֹ, venivo nivzeh okhlo). נִיב (niv) means fruit or produce; אֶכְל (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

וְאֵת־	מִחֻלָּלִים	אוֹת־וְ	בְּאֶמְרָכֶם	שֹׁלְחַן	אֲדָנִי
H859	But ye have profaned	H853	it in that ye say	The table	H136
	H2490		H559	H7979	
מְגֻאֵל	וְהָיָא	וְנִיב־וְ	נִבְזֶה	אֲכָלוֹ:	
is polluted	H1931	and the fruit	is contemptible	thereof even his meat	
H1351		H5108	H959	H400	

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