

Malachi 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

Analysis

Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed—the תועבה (to'evah, abomination) typically describes idolatrous practices that provoke God's revulsion (Deuteronomy 7:25-26). Malachi equates covenant-breaking with idolatry itself. **For Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved**—the קֹדֶשׁ (qodesh, holiness/sanctuary) likely refers both to the temple and to Israel as God's holy people, His treasured possession set apart from the nations.

And hath married the daughter of a strange god—נָכָר (nekar, foreign/strange) describes not mere ethnicity but pagan religious affiliation. These marriages weren't culturally diverse unions but covenant compromises that brought idolatry into Israelite homes. The violation wasn't racial but theological—taking wives who served other deities undermined Israel's distinct witness as Yahweh's covenant people, repeating Solomon's catastrophic error (1 Kings 11:1-8).

Historical Context

The returned exiles faced pressure to intermarry with 'the people of the land' for economic and political security. These marriages to women who worshiped Canaanite, Moabite, and Ammonite deities threatened to replay the pre-exilic apostasy that had led to Babylonian judgment. Ezra's discovery of this widespread

practice (Ezra 9:1-2) led to a covenant to put away foreign wives—a traumatic but necessary measure to preserve Israel's theological purity.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do modern 'mixed marriages' (believer with unbeliever) parallel the theological compromise Malachi condemns?
2. What 'strange gods' do contemporary Christians effectively 'marry' through compromising partnerships and alliances?
3. Why does God characterize covenant-breaking relationships as 'profaning' His holiness rather than mere personal choice?

Interlinear Text

בָּגַדְהָ	יְהוּדָה	וְתוֹעֵבָה	נְעֻשָׁתָהּ	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
hath dealt treacherously	Judah	and an abomination	is committed	in Israel
H898	H3063	H8441	H6213	H3478
וּבִירוּשָׁלַם	כִּן	חָלְלָהּ	יְהוּדָה	קֹדֶשׁ
and in Jerusalem		hath profaned	Judah	the holiness
H3389	H3588	H2490	H3063	H6944
אִשָּׁה	אֲהָבָהּ	וּבָעָהּ	בִּתּוֹ	אֱלֹהִים
which he loved	and hath married	the daughter	god	of a strange
H834	H157	H1166	H1323	H410
				H5236

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 21:8 (Parallel theme): But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

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