

# Malachi 2:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

## Analysis

**My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.** God describes the original covenant with Levi: **of life and peace** (חַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם, haḥayyim vehashalom). חַיִּים (ḥayyim, life) and שָׁלוֹם (shalom, peace/wholeness) characterized the covenant blessings. **I gave them to him** (נָתַתִּי לוֹ, natatti lo)—God initiated and bestowed these gifts. The purpose: **for the fear wherewith he feared me** (מֹרָא וַיִּירָאֵנִי, mora vayyira'eni). מֹרָא (mora, fear/reverence) describes proper covenant response. The original Levites feared God, showing reverent awe. **Was afraid before my name** (וּמִפְנֵי שְׁמִי נִחָת הוּא, u-mifenei shemi niḥat hu)—נִחָת (niḥat) means terrified, shattered, broken in reverent awe.

This contrasts sharply with the current priests who despise God's name (1:6). Where original Levites feared God, current priests treat Him with contempt. The covenant hasn't changed—the priests have.

## Historical Context

Phinehas received God's covenant of peace (Numbers 25:12-13) for his zealous defense of God's honor when Israel sinned at Baal-peor. His reverent fear of God's name contrasted with Israel's apostasy. Similarly, the tribe of Levi stood with Moses after the golden calf incident, executing judgment on idolaters (Exodus 32:25-29). This zealous reverence earned them priestly privileges. Yet by Malachi's

## Related Passages

## Study Questions

- ## Interlinear Text

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## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 37:26** (Covenant): Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

**Ezekiel 34:25** (Covenant): And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

**Numbers 8:15** (Parallel theme): And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for an offering.

**Numbers 3:45** (Parallel theme): Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle; and the Levites shall be mine: I am the LORD.

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