

Malachi, Covenant and Husbands

By Jim Seghers

Malachi (his name means "my messenger") was God's prophetic messenger of the Covenant, the intimate marital oath by which God weds himself to his people. He lived about four hundred years before Jesus. Worship in Israel was at an all time low. The priests, who had a sacred duty to guard and proclaim the truth, were giving false instruction. God was so offended with their violation of the Covenant that he threatened to take the dung from their sacrifices and spread it on their faces (Mal 2:3). This strong language was applied because the priests had lead the people into spiritual adultery.

When men break their Covenant fidelity with God it soon follows that they fall into another form of adultery by abandoning their wives (Mal 2:14). Because of this marital infidelity God turned a deaf ear to their prayers (Mal 2:13-14), just as Peter also prophesied (1 Pet 3:7).

The reason that God takes marriage so seriously is that he instituted it to model the preeminent family which is the Blessed Trinity and the Covenant relationship between Christ and his bride, the Church. Thus God sanctifies the marriage vow by personally witnessing that oath (Mal 2:14). God takes marriage so seriously that he attests: "I hate divorce" (Mal 2:16). Another reason God so detests divorce is because he so loves godly children (Mal 2:15).

The greatest gift a father can give to his children is a lifetime of loving fidelity to their mother. When my father was dying of cancer, I drove with him to Our Lady of the Lake Church, where he served as a deacon, to hear his last sermon. As we drove to church Dad said: "Son, after the devotion of the Mother of God, the greatest blessing of my life has been the love of your mother." As the tears streamed down my face I thought, what a wonderful legacy for a father to leave his son!

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