

Transforming Daily
“...feared among the nations...”
Malachi 1:14

Malachi is the last of the prophets prophesying just before the silent years and the intertestamental period. His message though proclaimed postexilic was still the same message of his predecessors and contemporaries. He frankly spoke the Word of the Lord to the people for them to repent from their waywardness and reestablish their rightful position as the people of God. Their calling and commissioning was to go forth and proclaim that there was a God in Israel. They failed. Therefore the fear of the Lord from other nations (as well from Israel) was practically nonexistent.

Malachi sets forth a series of logical and rhetorical questions regarding the rebellious condition and circumstances of the Jews, and then answers them with words from God. There is a legal tone and persuasion in his argument as if to be presenting his case before a judge (in point of fact, he was, The Judge, God). He meticulously and methodically removed any viable response from God's children except to repent. Repentance, on the whole, didn't happen, but the fulfillment of God's Word did and will. For the careful case that Malachi makes against the waywardness of the Jews, in it, he also preaches hope through none other than Jesus Christ (specifically ch.3). Christ came as Malachi prophesied and is yet to come again as Malachi prophesied.

As a child (and still to this day) I respected my father. I didn't always obey him (and paid the consequences for it), but I respected him. The natural result was that I talked about him (and my mother) to all my friends. I bragged about his 20+ years of service to this country (I'm doing it right now). I bragged about his strengths and his authoritarian ways (some of my close friends experienced it first-hand and they feared him too). Everyone who knew my dad from my lips or from the lips of my brother and sister didn't act around him the way they acted around the parents of other friends of mine. They knew he didn't make threats. Even my mother referred to him by his military rank when she disciplined me (us) by sometimes saying, "You wait 'till Sgt. O'Hara gets home!" You talk about fear. My dad had a distinct whistle (with which I have been genetically predisposed), and when I (we) heard it I had better been already running toward him or home before the ending of its report. You could hear that piercing sound three neighborhoods away. I definitely feared my father and I thank God for him and that healthy respect he (and my mother) instilled in me (us) to honor him (and her) and all proper authorities and laws.

Do you have a healthy respect for God? Do you fear Him with a biblical fear? Do you present Him to others? How do you present Him to others? Do you only emphasize his mercy and lovingkindness or do you also include all of His characteristics so that His name is feared among the nations?