

you?—said GOD.

1:14 A curse on the cheat who has an [unblemished] male in the flock, but vows and sacrifices a blemished animal to the Sovereign! For I am an emperor—said GOD of Hosts—and My name is revered among the nations.

2:1 And now, O priests, this charge is for you:

2:2 Unless you obey and unless you lay it to heart, and do honor to My name—said GOD of Hosts—I will send a curse and turn your blessings into curses. (Indeed, I have turned them into curses, because you do not lay it to heart.)

2:3 I will put your seed under a ban, aput your seed under a ban Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and I will strew dung upon your faces, the dung of your festal sacrifices, and you shall be carried out to its [heap].

2:4 Know, then, that I have sent this charge to you that My covenant with Levi may endure—said GOD of Hosts.

2:5 I had with him a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave to him, and of reverence, which he showed Me. For he stood in awe of My name.

2:6 bSee Hag. 2.10–13; cf. Lev. 10.8–11; Deut. 33.8, 10. Proper rulings were in his mouth, And nothing perverse was on his lips; He served Me with complete loyalty And held the many back from iniquity.

2:7 For the lips of a priest guard knowledge, And rulings are sought from his mouth; cFor the lips of a priest guard knowledge, / And rulings are sought from his mouth Or “For the lips of a priest are observed; / Knowledge and ruling are sought from his mouth.” For he is a messenger of GOD of Hosts.

2:8 But you have turned away from that course: You have made the many stumble through your rulings; dthrough your rulings By ruling falsely that an act was licit or an object ritually pure. you have corrupted the covenant of the Levites—said GOD of Hosts.

2:9 And I, in turn, have made you despicable and vile in the eyes of all the people, because you disregard My ways and show partiality in your rulings.

2:10 Have we not all one Father? eHave we not all one Father I.e., are we not members of the same household—and thus reliant upon each other? Or “father,” namely Jacob; cf. Ibn Ezra, Kimhi. Did not one God create us? Why do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?

2:11 Judah has broken faith; abhorrent things have been done in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned what is holy to, and desired by, GOD—and espoused daughters of alien gods.

2:12 May GOD leave to any man who has done this no descendants fno descendants Meaning of Heb. uncertain. dwelling in the tents of Jacob and presenting offerings to GOD of Hosts.

2:13 And this you do as well: gas well Lit. “a second time”; Septuagint reads “that I detest”; cf. v. 16. You cover the altar of GOD with tears, weeping, and moaning, so that [God] refuses to regard the oblation anymore and to accept what you offer. hwhat you offer Lit. “from your hand.”

2:14 But you ask, “Because of what?” Because GOD is a witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have broken faith, though she is your partner and covenanted spouse.

2:15 Did not the One make [all,] so that all remaining life-breath is that

One's? And what does that One seek but godly folk? So be careful of your life-breath,iso that all remaining life-breath ... careful of your life-breath
Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and let no one break faith with the wife of his youth.

2:16 For I detest divorce—said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel—and covering oneself with lawlessness as with a garmentjand covering ... with a garment
Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—said GOD of Hosts. So be careful of your life-breath and do not act treacherously.

2:17 You have wearied GOD with your talk. But you ask, “By what have we done so?” By saying, “All who do evil are good in the sight of GOD, who delights in them,” or else, “Where is the God of justice?”

3:1 Behold, I am sending My messenger to clear the way before Me, and the Sovereign you seek shall come to the temple suddenly. As for the angel of the covenantaangel of the covenant Apparently the messenger of the previous sentence is regarded as Israel's tutelary angel. that you desire, he is already coming.

3:2 But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can hold out when he appears? For he is like a smelter's fire and like fuller's lye.

3:3 He shall actbact Lit. “sit.” like a smelter and purger of silver; and he shall purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they shall present offerings in righteousness.

3:4 Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to GOD as in the days of yore and in the years of old.

3:5 But [first] I will step forward to contend against you, and I will act as a relentless accuser against those who have no fear of Me: Who practice sorcery, who commit adultery, who swear falsely, who cheat laborers of their hire, and who subvert [the cause of] the widow, orphan, and stranger, said GOD of Hosts.

3:6 cVv. 6–12 resume the thought of 1.2–5. For I am GOD—I have not changed; and you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be.

3:7 From the very days of your ancestors you have turned away from My laws and have not observed them. Turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you—said GOD of Hosts. But you ask, “How shall we turn back?”

3:8 Ought mortals to defraudddefraud Heb. qaba', a play on the name of Jacob (v. 6); cf. Gen. 27.36. God? Yet you are defrauding Me. And you ask, “How have we been defrauding You?” In tithe and contribution.eIn tithe and contribution I.e., the contributions to the priests from the new grain, oil, and wine; see Num. 18.12.

3:9 You are suffering under a curse, yet you go on defrauding Me—the whole nation of you.

3:10 Bring the full tithe into the storehouse,fstorehouse I.e., the public storehouse; see Neh. 13.10–13. and let there be food in My House, and thus put Me to the test—said GOD of Hosts. I will surely open the floodgates of the sky for you and pour down blessings on you;

3:11 and I will banish the locustsglocusts Lit. “devourer.” from you, so that they will not destroy the yield of your soil; and your vines in the field shall no longer miscarry—said GOD of Hosts.

3:12 And all the nations shall account you happy, for you shall be the most

desired of lands—said GOD of Hosts.

3:13 You have spoken hard words against Me—said GOD. But you ask, “What have we been saying among ourselves against You?”

3:14 You have said, “It is useless to serve God. What have we gained by keeping God’s charge and walking in abject awe of GOD of Hosts?”

3:15 And so, we account the arrogant happy: they have indeed done evil and endured; they have indeed dared God and escaped.”

3:16 In this vein have those who revere GOD been talking to one another. GOD has heard and noted it, and a scroll of remembrance has been written at God’s behest concerning those who revere GOD and esteem that name.

3:17 And on the day that I am preparing, said GOD of Hosts, they shall be My treasured possession; I will be tender toward them as a manha man I.e., a stereotypical householder. is tender toward a son who ministers to him.

3:18 And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between those who have served God and those who have not.

3:19 For lo! That day is at hand, burning like an oven. All the arrogant and all the doers of evil shall be straw, and the day that is coming—said GOD of Hosts—shall burn them to ashes and leave of them neither stock nor boughs.

3:20 But for you who revere My name a sun of victory shall rise to bring healing. ito bring healing Lit. “with healing in the folds of its garments”; in contrast to others “with healing in its wings.” You shall go forth and stamp like stall-fed calves,

3:21 and you shall trample the wicked to a pulp, for they shall be dust beneath your feet on the day that I am preparing—said GOD of Hosts.

3:22 Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses, whom I charged at Horeb with laws and rules for all Israel.

3:23 Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of GOD.

3:24 He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction. Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of GOD.