

God's Last Words (Malachi 4) – 7.30.17 #cccsermons

The Last Words of the Old Testament: a series on the book of Malachi

The book of Malachi is written as a **WAKE-UP** call for us to make sure our motives and actions are pleasing to the Lord. God wants to bless us, but first we must return to God.

- The last words given by God in Malachi 4 are in **love with instruction**, but they are only good if they are **HEEDED**.

One thing is clear, throughout the history of mankind, man has **FAILED** in his relationship with God. **The entire book of Malachi shows us a covenant-keeping God who still loves and pursues His people even though they have not remained faithful to Him or remained faithful to the covenants they took (divorce).**

Malachi 4:1

- The phrase “the day of the Lord” is used **19** times in the Old Testament and often conveys a sense of expectation, but in the New Testament, the day of the Lord is seen as day of **SUDDEN WRATH**. (see **1 Corinthians 15:52** and **2 Thessalonians 2:2**)

2 Peter 3:8-10 (NIV) ⁸ *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.* ⁹ **The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.** ¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.*

#1 Sometime soon, God is coming to REVEAL who He really is, the only true God in the universe.

- God's ultimate goal is that none should perish, but that everyone comes to repentance. God is not just giving us all a curse, but is giving us a **CHOICE**. To the wicked, God will come as a judge, but to the righteous, He will come as a faithful **FATHER**.

#2 Sometime soon, God is coming to REBUKE everyone who does not put their faith in Christ. (see also **Isaiah 2:17**)

- God's judgment will deal finally and **DECISIVELY** with all of His enemies. On that day, He will right the wrongs of life – punish the wicked and curse the land.
- **Be careful because how you live today determines how you will live ETERNALLY!**

Malachi 4:2

#3 Then, on this day, God will REWARD the righteous for their FAITHFULNESS.

- Just as the sun rises and spreads its wings across the horizon to bring warmth and light, this day will be filled with joy for the ones who revere the name of the Lord. This will be a “great and dreadful day” based on where you live today. **Malachi 4:5**)

Malachi 4:3

This is foreshadowing of when the righteous will join Christ in His final destruction of the ungodly (see **2 Samuel 22:44, Psalms 49:14 & 47:3, Micah 7:10, Zechariah 10:5, 1 Corinthians 6:2** and **Revelation 2:26-27 & 19:14-15**).

#4 We need to stop worrying about what is due to others and start worrying if we are READY! Stop judging others and start impacting your world with love and grace!

Malachi 4:4

#5. In order to be READY for the day of the Lord, we need to REMEMBER and learn from the past.

- The law of Moses was His revelation about His own holiness, and the holiness He expected from His people (see **Deuteronomy 6**). When God commands his people to remember the law, He is not calling them to just know the law, but to put it into practice. The Law was given to teach us how **SINFUL** we really are—how we all fall short of God's glory and how we need a personal Savior (see **Romans 6:23**). Jesus came 400 years later to fulfill the law and show the world how we should live. (see **Matthew 5:17**)

Malachi 4:5

#6. In order to be READY for the day of the Lord, God will send someone to REMIND you to be ready.

- During his days as a prophet, Elijah had turned the Israelites back to God at the time of their worst apostasy when Ahab and Jezebel had made Baal worship part of Israel's worship and his mission was to call Israel to turn from idols back to God and called them to repentance (see **1 Kings 16-2 Kings 2**).
- **Jesus clearly connected John the Baptist as the new Elijah to Malachi's prophecy** (see **Matthew 11:13-14, Luke 1:16-17** and **Matthew 3:2**).
- God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will send people and things with the spirit of Elijah in our lives to call us to repentance.

#7. In order to be READY for the day of the Lord, we need to REPENT.

Malachi 4:6

- The people of Malachi's day had forgotten to repent and look where they ended up – in a breakdown of the family unit. When people rebel and sin against God, there is fallout effects that affect **EVERYONE**.

#8 God's desire is to RESTORE the family before sending His judgment.

- God has the heart of a **FATHER**. (remember **Malachi 1:6** and **3:17**)
- There are many ways to know God, but the one most **INTIMATE** way is that of a Father. The way God has chosen for us to capture this aspect of Himself is through our **EARTHLY** fathers. This is why when you don't have a godly father in your life it makes it most difficult to capture that part of God.
- **Men, when we are not good fathers, we ROB our children of a model that helps them identify with God.**

As we see in Malachi, God's final words before the New Testament are words of warning and also a **CHALLENGE**.

- Be righteous and you don't have to worry about end times.
- Justice is coming and you will not have a say when the Judge comes back.
- Repent now before it's too late.