

Malachi 4.1-6

The Son Will Rise

1787 in Philadelphia, PA > Group of Citizens of Newly-formed Nation
 Gathered to write > CONSTITUTION > Define & Direct New Nation
 Geo. Washington > President of Convention > Sun Painted on Back of his Chair
 Oldest Delegate > Benjamin Franklin > Looked Daily at that Painted Sun
AS THE DIVERSE DELEGATES STRUGGLED TO REACH UNITY
Franklin: "I could never tell whether it was a Rising Sun or a Setting Sun"

Come in Scripture to a Setting Sun and a Rising Sun > Malachi chapter 4

END of OUR OT > based on book order of Greek Septuagint > Last Chapter OT
 Written to Jews > Living in Persian Colony of Judea > 450 B.C.

SETTING > Old Covenant > ANTICIPATES > Rising of Glorious New Covenant

1. The Sun is Going Down

a. On our Self Righteousness > People Regularly Practicing their Religion

Sacrificing Animals > Saying Prayers > Sending in their Offerings
 "having a form of godliness but denying its power" 2 Tim 3.5

No matter HOW BAD WE MAY BE > Look GOOD COMPARED to Other GUY

JESUS told about: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector.'" Luke 18.10-11

NEW CAKE MIX > ONLY Add Water > Stir > Bake > Enjoy Great Cake!
 PRODUCT TEST > FAILURE > NOT ENOUGH WORK > Too Easy for Cook
 Changed Formula > Add Water AND ONE EGG > Now Cook MAKING CAKE!

Relation w/GOD > Look at WHAT I DID! > God did 99% of Work > I Laid EGG!
 Sin of LEGALISM > Proud Notion WE EARN FAVOR with God > Our WORKS

WHAT Righteousness do WE HAVE to BE SELF RIGHTEOUS ABOUT?

3.2 "Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears?"

Some object to LENT > for SOME SELF IMPROVEMENT > Self Mortification
 LENT > We DESPERATELY NEED JESUS! Utterly Lost apart from His Grace

“The only thing we contribute to the plan of salvation is the sin to make it necessary.”
 Eric Alexander

OT Prophets > God’s PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS > God vs. Nation

Malachi’s LEGAL BRIEF > Irrefutable Evidence of Israel’s Rebellion against God

1.6 "priests, who show contempt for my name”

1.7 "You place defiled food on my altar”

1.13 "you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices”

2.1,2 “priests...do not listen...you do not set your heart to honor my name”

2.8 “you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant”

2.11 “Judah has desecrated the sanctuary the LORD loves, by marrying the daughter of a foreign god”

2.14 “you have broken faith with (the wife of your youth), though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant”

2.17 “You have wearied the LORD with your words...’Where is the God of justice?’”

3.5 "sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.

3.7 “Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them”

3.8 "you rob me...In tithes and offerings”

3.13-15 "You have said harsh things against me," says the LORD... "You have said, `It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape."

ESCAPE? ARE THEY REALLY GOING TO ESCAPE GOD'S JUDGMENT?

4.1 "All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty."

b. On our Excuses

ROMANS Paul > APOSTOLIC LEGAL BRIEF > Jew and Gentile GUILTY

3 Chapters of Grim Evidence against Us > CONCLUDED:

3.19 "every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God"

BUT Malachi's listeners DO NOT have WISDOM to be SILENT in their GUILT

7 Outbursts of Self JUSTIFICATION > Hired Expensive DEFENSE ATTORNEY

JOHNNY COCHRAN of Judea: "if the glove don't fit, you have to acquit"

1.2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, `How have you loved us?'

1.6 "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, `How have we shown contempt for your name?'

1.7 "You place defiled food on my altar. But you ask, `How have we defiled you?'

2.17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. "How have we wearied him?'

3.7 Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, `How are we to return?'

3.8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, `How do we rob you?'

3.13 "You have said harsh things against me," says the LORD. "Yet you ask, `What have we said against you?'

GOD answers their WHINING 3.18 “you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not”

Paul: to SELF RIGHTEOUS RELIGIOUS PEOPLE // 500 years after Malachi
 “Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God; if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth-- you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?” Romans 2.17-23

c. On Guilty Sinners 4.1 "Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace."

7 Complaints > But God does NOT WAVER: 3.6 "I the Lord Do NOT CHANGE"
 Always OMNISCIENT / SOVEREIGN / HOLY / GRACIOUS / JUST

JUSTICE DELAYED IS NOT JUSTICE DENIED > in God's Perfect Timing

3.2,3 PURIFYING JUDGMENT > REPENTANCE > RESTORATION

“he will be like a refiner's fire...he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness”

PUNISHING, FINAL JUDGMENT > NO 2nd CHANCE: 4.1 " All the arrogant & every evildoer will be stubble... Not a root or a branch will be left”

TIMETABLE? 4.5 “great and dreadful day of the LORD”

Imagine Gov't of Kazakhstan > Japanese co. build BULLET TRAIN across Nation
 Order Placed > Price Requested > Price INCREDIBLY INEXPENSIVE > SOLD!

Little Problem> Man in Map Dept. in Tokyo MISTAKE > Kyrgyzstan not KZ
 State of Art TRAINS > PRECISE RAILS > EXCELLENT PLAN > HONESTY
 UNKNOWN > LAND where TRAINS WOULD TRAVEL

Brought all Trains & Tracks > Started to build across Steppe of Kazakhstan
 REALIZED KAZAKHSTAN MUCH BIGGER THAN PLANNED IN TOKYO

OT Prophets > Looking at the Maps in Tokyo > WRONG MAPS

Day of the Lord > REAL EVENT > COMING > But KZ is Bigger than Imagined!

OT > One Great Event > DAY OF THE LORD > ONE Great and Terrible DAY

John Baptizer > Old Testament Prophet > written about in the New Testament
 In PRISON > DOUBTED > Is this Jesus really the Messiah?
 Expected Him to be Killing Romans – Not Curing and Converting Them!

4.5 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes."

ELIJAH > Great impact on hearers > Called Holy Fire Down on God's Enemies
 Taken Alive to Heaven > thus he Still Lives to Serve God

WAS JOHN the Baptist this Elijah? BIBLE says YES and NO

JOHN HIMSELF Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was... "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." John 1.19-21

JESUS: "all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear."
 Matthew 11.13-15

JOHN fulfills the Promise of Malachi > But not Reincarnation, or same as Elijah

JOYCE BALDWIN "Whatever John's understanding of his role may have been, he believed that the Messianic age was being ushered in, and that only through a process of testing by fire could anyone escape the final judgment. He undoubtedly knew the message of Malachi and was profoundly influenced by it. In the life of Jesus the expectation of John was not fulfilled. An interval separated the first and second comings and the day of grace was extended to delay final judgment. This does not mean, however, that judgment has been averted."

GOD'S UNFOLDING of His PROMISES > ONE DAY is TWO ERAS, EPOCHS
 Each Marked by Coming (Advent) of Jesus Christ

First Coming > Characterized by MERCY > Gentle Jesus, Meek and Mild

DEFINED HIS FIRST COMING: "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."
 John 3.17

Second Coming > DIFFERENT STORY > Jesus the Judge, Fearsome and Mighty
 "...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power" 2 Thess 1.7-9

AS Laid out BULLET TRAIN Tracks > Long, Long way across the Steppe of KZ
 So far, it is 2000 years long, how much longer? ONLY GOD KNOWS!

GOD is PATIENT > But He is NOT DISTRACTED > Terrible Day is Coming!

4.3 "Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the LORD Almighty."

2. The Sun Will Rise

GRIM > Worst Possible News > Unending Torment, Eternal Separation from God
 The Darkest Hour, is Just before the Dawn

4.1,2 "that day that is coming will set them on fire...But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings"

Blessed Three Letter Word – BUT - Might Adversative in Scripture

Romans 3 Chapters Relentless Attack > Unarguably Guilty before a Holy God
 "But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known" 3.21

"we were by nature objects of wrath. *But* because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ" Ephesians 2.3-5

SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS > Rising for the RIGHTEOUS REMNANT
 PROPHECY: Vindication of Righteousness > Righteous God & all hidden in Him

LUTHER "Under the Law there is weakness and condemnation; under the wings of Christ, under the Gospel, there is strength and salvation"

"My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations...the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail." Isaiah 51.5,6

a. On those who Revere God's Name

4.2 "But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise"

NOTICE WHAT MALACHI DOES NOT SAY –

For those who TITHE / who NEVER DIVORCED / who say LONG PRAYERS
...bring Squeaky Clean Animals for Sacrifice...Sun of Grace Rises on GOOD

Clear Message of OT and NT > Salvation is by Grace through Faith >

"know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ"

Galatians 2.16

God's 1st Word: 1.2 "I have loved you" / "We love because he first loved us."

1 John 4.19

GOSPEL for People who DO NOT DESERVE it > CAN NEVER DESERVE!
HUMBLED / OVERWHELMED / FEAR / AWESTRUCK / REVERE His NAME

b. On those who Remember > 4.4 "Remember the law of my servant Moses."

Malachi > "If you will NOT hear ME, then HEAR MOSES!" > King's Command

Law cannot Save but Law Guides the Saved > Pathway of Sanctification

13 Times in Deuteronomy > God says thru Moses > REMEMBER!

Moses > LAWGIVER > UNABLE to Lead People of God into Promised Land

JOSHUA > God is Savior > Leads them Safely into Promised Land

BUT > "Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone...Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face" Deuteronomy 34.7-12

The Man > LIKE HIS LAW > Remains FULL OF STRENGTH

Law Reflects Righteous Character of Unchanging God / SURE FOUNDATION

Moses & Elijah > Great Lawgiver & Great Prophet > met WORD made FLESH
Mt of Transfiguration "Moses and Elijah, talked with (radiant) Jesus" Mt 17.1-3

JOHN: "those who had been victorious...sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. " Revelation 15.3,4

NEW COVENANT BELIVERS SING > Song of Moses AND the Lamb

EASTER MORNING > Women went to tomb of Jesus > Angels said:

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: `The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words. Luke 24.5-8

JESUS: "Remember the words I spoke to you" John 15.20

Apostle Paul says to Bishop Timothy: "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel" 2 Timothy 2.8

AMAZING Apostle and Bishop could FORGET JESUS > Can You? I Do!

Three Servants > Entrusted with Talents from their Master > 2 Blessed, 1 Cursed
Why 1 Cursed? DID NOT REMEMBER > "this guy is not serious, not coming back...No Worries...Hide this Talent Safely under a Mound of Earth"

REMEMBERING is Daily Duty > Look to the Past to Guide our Future

GAVE US SACRAMENT BECAUSE WE DO FORGET -

"This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." Luke 22.19

Christian Friend in Hawaii > Great, Grandfather near 80 > Long Time Believer
"Our church went to see the film "The Passion of the Christ" on opening day. We bought 163 seats in the theater. I just don't have the words to explain what it meant to me. It was something I will never forget."

c. On those who Reconcile > TRUE RELIGION: Starts in the Home

4.6 "He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers"

5th Comm > HOME is the School of the Community > World in MINIATURE

LEARN > Love, Trust, Respect, Listening, Authority, Vision for God & His World

"JESUS grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Luke 2.52

WORLD > We need to Kill People to get them to Stop Killing People

JESUS > Prince of Peace > LASTING PEACE to this FIGHTING WORLD
 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.” Matthew 5.9

ONLY JESUS CAN CHANGE HEARTS > Bitter, Unforgiving, Killing Hearts

“For he himself is our peace...He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.” Ephesians 2.14,17

CHURCH > created to be God’s Peace Agency >

“God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.
 2 Corinthians 5.18-20

JESUS: The world will know you are my disciples IF

- You do not bite and devour one another
- You manage to sit in the same big room for an hour a week without fighting
- You exchange superficial pleasantries the few times you meet
- NO! - BY YOUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER! – CAN WE DO THIS?

d. On those who Rejoice in Him > “God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinth 9.7

4.2 “And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.”

NEVER SEEN > Cows jumping for Joy > Hard to Imagine

COWS I SEE > Lying on my Dinner Plate > PROBABLY NOT JOYFUL END

CALVES > Cooped up in dark confines of Pen > Leap for Joy > Freedom & Light

More MISTAKES I make in Christian Life > Can’t Serve with JOY > Don’t Try!

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” Philippians 4.4

BE WISE FATHER AND PASTOR in MY HOME > Start to Whine and Yell

American Teenage Sons: “Dad, why are you so STRESSED!?”

STRESSED! WHAT DO YOU MEAN I AM STRESSED!!!! They are Right!

Communicate MORE ME > BIG, MEAN, & UGLY > than Joyful, Loving Jesus

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”
John 15.11

Back in 1787 > Difficult Constitutional Convention finally Ended Successfully
Old Benjamin Franklin said: “I have often looked at that sun painted on Mr. Washington’s chair and wondered whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.”

SUN SETS ON OLD COVENANT > Last Words of Old Covenant
4.6 “or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Last words of New Covenant Promise of Blessing for God’s People!

“He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.
Revelation 22.20,21

What’s the Difference? The Grace of the Lord Jesus has LAST WORD!

Malachi 4

1. "Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them.

2. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.

3. Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the LORD Almighty.

4. "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

5. "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.

6. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."