

# Malachi 4 Commentary

MALACHI 3

MALACHI  
COMMENTARIES

<b>THE ORACLE OF THE WORD OF JEHOVAH THROUGH MALACHI</b> (Malachi 1:1) (Malachi means "My Messenger" or "Messenger of Jehovah") <a href="#">Click for EXCELLENT TIMELINE - Go to Page 42</a>				
Mal 1:1-5	Mal 1:6-2:9	Mal 2:10-3:15	Mal 3:16-4:3	Mal 4:4-6
Love of God for Israel Rejected!	Rebuke of Sins of Priests: Illicit Practices Indifference	Rebuke of Sins of People: Mixed Marriages Divorces Robbing God	Blessing to All Who Fear Jehovah God's Wrath on the Wicked	Remember the Law Promise of... Elijah, Restore Hearts Warning of... Day of the Lord
PRIVILEGE OF ISRAEL	POLLUTION OF ISRAEL		PROMISE TO ISRAEL	
PAST CARE	PRESENT COMPLAINT		FUTURE COMING (See also Mal 3:1-6)	
GOD'S COMPASSION for Israel	GOD'S COMPLAINT Against Israel		GOD'S CONSOLATION to Righteous Remnant GOD'S CONDEMNATION of Wicked	
			Mal 3:16 Book of Remembrance	Mal 4:1 Coming of Messiah Mal 4:4 Coming of Elijah
	GOD'S LOVE SADLY SPURNED!		GOD'S GRACE STILL OFFERED!	
<b>PLACE: JERUSALEM</b>				
<b>TIME OF WRITING: Difficult to Date but... Circa 445-420BC</b>				

NOTE: Note that in the Hebrew Bible (and even the Septuagint (Lxx) chapter 4 is treated as a continuation of Malachi 3, so that Malachi 4:1 is labeled Malachi 3:19, etc. Note also that the last verse in most English Bibles (Malachi 4:6) is transposed in the Hebrew version, so that the last verse in the Hebrew version, Malachi 3:24 is not Malachi 4:6! Some explain that the Hebrew scribes did not want to end the OT with the word "curse!"

**MacKay adds** - In the Hebrew text there is no chapter division here, and 4:1–6 are counted as 3:19–24. In many respects this is preferable, because there is no break in thought between Mal 3:18 and 4:1.

**Eugene Merrill** - Restoration through YHWH (3:22-24 [EB 4:4-6]) Many scholars, following the Greek version, place v. 22 after vv. 23–24, presumably to allow the book to end on a more positive note (see Introduction, pp. 385–86). Others argue that vv. 23–24 are

an addition to the original composition, the uncomfortable juxtaposition between vv. 22 and 23 and the unexpected reintroduction of the "Day of YHWH" theme being principal reasons. The MT tradition knows nothing but the present arrangement, however. ([Malachi Commentary recommended](#))

Remember that all the OT writings are of value to our spiritual life and growth, Paul writing...

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction (teaching), that through perseverance and the encouragement of the **Scriptures** (Refers here to the entire OT) we might have hope. (Ro 15:4)

**Comment** - Here is my "loose paraphrase" of this passage: Malachi was written for our instruction that thru the perseverance and the encouragement of the God of Malachi the thoughts and actions of Israel in Malachi we too might have hope in the midst of our trying circumstances. (Real Life Version)

**Corollary** - If you don't believe the Bible (and if you don't read and study the OT) you will be hurting for hope and confidence in the future.

**Ray Stedman:** The Old Testament is really the richest commentary ever written on the New Testament. If you are coming to a place where faith is beginning to fail and your heart finds itself in the grasp of doubt, then turn to the record of God at work with men of the Old Testament. You will find, as you read thoughtfully, that your faith will begin to flame up again because "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God," {cf, Ro 10:17}. It's as the Word of God rings in our ears that faith is created in our hearts to lay hold of the truth we hear, and to make it available in our lives.

Now these things (What things? 1Cor 10:4-5) happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. (1Cor 10:6)

Now these things (What things? 1Cor 10:7, 8, 9, 10) happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1Cor 10:11)

As **Robert Rayburn** says the

minor prophets are for many of us *terra incognita*, unknown territory, and I want to overcome your sense that the message of these prophets is inaccessible, inscrutable, or too far removed from the issues of your own lives. I love to help you see how down-to-earth, how practical, how helpful, how relevant the prophets are. They were, after all, just the best preachers of their time.

**G Campbell Morgan:**

The prophecy reveals a sensitive God, and a stultified (proved to be of unsound mind, cause to appear absurd) people. Malachi declared the sensitiveness of Jehovah, and charged the people with lack of sensitiveness, hardness, callousness. The people were not conscious of their own shortcoming. They imagined they were perfectly satisfying the Divine heart, and fulfilling the Divine requirement. The book presents the picture of a people having a form, while they are devoid of power; fulfilling all the external requirements of religion, but being utterly without the internal experience; maintaining the sacramental symbols, while destitute of the spiritual grace of which those symbols should be the sign. It should be remembered that this message was delivered not to Judah, and not to Israel, if by Israel we mean the Northern kingdom. The burden of the word of the Lord was to Israel. Malachi spoke not to the ten tribes or to the two; not to the North, or to the South, as in separation from each other, but to the whole nation. When these people had returned from Babylon under Zerubbabel, and when later another contingent had returned in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the returning remnants were made up of members of all the tribes.

In the last book of the inspired history of these people, the book of Nehemiah, we saw them without a king, without a priest, and without prophet; and moreover, without any Messianic hope. To people in that condition Malachi delivered his message. As the book of Nehemiah was the last page of inspired history, the book of Malachi is the last page of inspired Hebrew prophecy.

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**Here is a summary of truths about the Day of the Lord in Malachi 3 and Malachi 4:**

## THE DAY OF THE LORD IN MALACHI 3-4

MALACHI 3	MALACHI 4
3:1 Who can endure & stand in the <b>DAY</b> of His coming? (Joel 2:11 "who can endure?")	4:1 <b>DOL</b> – Coming, Burning Like a furnace
3:1 <b>Day of Lord's coming</b> ~ <b>Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming</b>	4:1 <b>All arrogant &amp; evildoer chaff</b> → burn (destroy)
3:1 Suddenly (cf "like a thief" 1Th 5:2, 2Pe 3:10)	4:2 Those who fear His Name – healed by Sun of Righteousness = <b>MILLENNIUM</b>
3:2 Lord's 2 <sup>ND</sup> Coming is like Refiner's Fire, Fuller's Soap	4:2 They will skip about like calves = <b>MILLENNIUM</b>
3:3 As a Smelter & Purifier of Silver – He will purify & refine sons of Levi for righteous offerings = <b>MILLENNIUM</b>	4:3 Righteous will tread down the wicked
3:4 Offering of Jews will please Lord = <b>MILLENNIUM</b>	4:5 Will send Elijah before the <b>Day of the Lord</b>
3:5 <b>Day of Lord</b> brings judgment on sinners in Israel	4:5 Great & Terrible <b>Day of the Lord</b>
3:6 "I do not change" - Israel is not consumed	4:6 Elijah's coming brings reconciliation
3:16 Those who feared the LORD were remembered	
3:17 <b>ON THAT DAY</b> (DOL) They will be His own special treasure	
3:18 Will distinguish righteous and wicked	

Zechariah 13:8-9 "It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That **two parts in it will be cut off and perish**; But the **third will be left in it**. 9 "And I will bring the **third part through the fire**, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

Here is a summary of truths on the Day of the LORD from the New Testament and 4 other Old Testament books...

2 Th 2:1-12	Acts 2:15-21	1Th 4:13-5:11	2Pt 3:1-13	Isaiah 13	Obadiah	Amos 5	Joel 1-3
<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 1 The APOSTASY 2 Restrainer removed 3 M of Lawlessness REVEALED (S of D) <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 1 The APOSTASY removed 2 Restrainer removed 3 Man of Lawlessness REVEALED (S of D) 4 Opposes/exalts self over "gods" 5 Takes seat in Temple ~ "God"	<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 20 Sun → Dark Moon → Blood Great & glorious <b>DAY OF THE LORD:</b> 21 Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved (rescued).	<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 1 Like a thief in the night (surprise) (v2) 2 THEY saying peace & safety (v3) 3 Suddenly – like labor pains (v3) 4 No escape (v3)  9 Believer's Destiny: NOT for wrath <b>THEREFORE</b> 11 Encourage & build up ONE ANOTHER	<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 7 Heavens & earth reserved for fire 7 Day of judgment 7 Destroy ungodly 9 Repentance 10 Like a thief 10 Heavens pass away with a roar Elements destroy Earth/works → burn DAY OF GOD 12 Heavens → burn Elements → melt  11 Application: -Holy/godly 12 Looking → Living 13 Looking for NH RIGHTEOUSNESS DWELLS (VERTICAL VISION)	<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 6 Wall/howl 6 Near 6 Destruction 6 From Almighty <b>Reaction to DOL?</b> 7-8 All men hands limp, hearts melt, terror, pain & anguish, writhe like labor pains, aghast, flushed <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 9 Coming, cruel, anger, land desolate, sinners exterminated. 10 Cosmic signs – stars, sun, moon 11 Punish world 12 Men scarce 19 – Babylon like Sodom & Gomorrah 20 – Never inhabited, no tents	<b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 15 Near for all nations 15 Pay back 16 All nations cease to exist 17 BUT - On Mt Zion escapees, 17 Mt Zion holy 17 Jacob possess possessions (Millennium) 18-Israel like fire No survivor-Edom 19-20 – Extent of Israel's possessions 20 The Kingdom will be the LORDS (Millennium) Cf Rev 11:15 "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."	722BC Assyria takes Israel exile = NEAR FULFILLMENT of D.O.L.  18 Foolishly longed for <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 18 Darkness, not light 18 Gloom, no brightness 19 No escape  <b>Way of Escape</b> 3x- Seek the Lord that you may live (5:4, 6, 14)	1:15 <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> Near, destruction, from the Almighty 2:1 <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 2:2 Darkness, gloom, clouds & darkness, army like dawn on mts. -Never anything like it, nor will there be after it. (cf Mt 24:21) 2:11 <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> Great & very awesome; Who can endure??? 2:12-18 Tells who can endure! (return ~ repent) 2:19ff THEN – Lord zealous for Israel → will never make them a reproach among the nations (Millennium) 2:28-31 – See Acts 2 2:31 <b>DAY OF THE LORD</b> 32 Call → Delivered 3:1 Restore fortunes of Israel (Millennium) 3:2 God gathers nations to Valley of Jehoshaphat for judgment (See next chart)

Here are the youtube discussions based on the Precept study of Revelation Part 4, lessons 7 and 8...

- [What the Bible Teaches About the Day of the Lord - Part 1](#)
- [What the Bible Teaches About the Day of the Lord - Part 2](#)

Malachi 4:1 "For behold, **the day is coming**, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and **the day that is coming** will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch."

- **the day:** Mal 4:5, 3:2 Eze 7:10 Joe 2:1,31 Zep 1:14 Zec 14:1 Lk 19:43, 21:20 2Pe 3:7)
- **burning::** Ps 21:9,10 Na 1:5,6 Zep 1:18 Mt 3:12 2Th 1:8)
- **and all the arrogant:** Mal 3:15,18 Ex 15:7 Ps 119:119 Isa 2:12-17, 5:24, 40:24, 41:2, 47:14 Ob 1:18 Na 1:10)
- so that it: Job 18:16 Am 2:9

**THE DAY OF THE LORD**  
**A DAY OF DIVISION**  
**RIGHTEOUS vs WICKED**

**Brian Bill** outlines this short chapter as follows...

- \* The day of the Lord (Malachi 4:1a)
- \* The Fate of the Faithless (Malachi 4:1b-2)
- \* The Reward of the Righteous (Malachi 4:3)
- \* The Call to Obedience (Malachi 4:4)
- \* The Promise of Reconciliation (Malachi 4:5-6)

The Septuagint is rendered by Brenton "For, behold, a day comes burning as an oven, and it shall consume (phlego - future active indicative) them; and all the aliens, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that is coming shall set them on fire, saith the Lord Almighty, and there shall not be left of them root or branch." It is interesting to note that the verb phlego (not used in NT, 8x in Lxx = Ex 24:17; Dt 32:22; Ps 104:4; Pr 29:1; Jer 20:9; 23:29; Da 7:9; Mal 4:1) Brenton renders as "it shall consume" is used in Ex 24:17 to describe "the Lord... as burning fire on top of the mountain." (Also Brenton's English Translation).

**For** - This **term of explanation** should always **prompt** a **pause** to **ponder** what the writer is explaining. You will be surprised what your Teacher the Spirit might reveal! This discipline will usually "force" you to re-read the preceding context. In this case the previous passage is a future promise given to those who feared Yahweh (Mal 3:16)...

So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. (Mal 3:18)

**John MacArthur** agrees writing that "The first 3 verses continue the thought of the closing verses of the previous chapter, elaborating on God's punishment of the wicked and His deliverance of the godly (cf. Mal 3:1-5). This eschatological reference to the Day of the Lord (cf. Is 13:6; Joel 2:11, 31; Zep 1:14) is injected 4 times into the prophet's final words (Mal 3:17; 4:1, 3, 5). It anticipated the return of the Lord Jesus in judgment (cf. Rev 19:11-21)." ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

So now in Malachi 4:1, the "for" explains when and how this distinction between the righteous and the wicked will transpire. Given this close association of the end of Malachi 3 and the beginning of Malachi 4, **W A Criswell's** comment is instructive...

In most of the manuscripts and editions of the Hebrew Bible, the whole of Malachi 4 is treated as a continuation of Malachi 3. Several editions, however, leave a blank space between the two, so as to warrant a chapter division in the English versions. (**Ed Note:** Remember that the chapter divisions are not inspired, but are man-made, and sometimes create an "artificial" division between subject matter that is clearly closely related. Such would appear to be the case in the Chapter insertion here in Malachi.)

**Brian Bill** - In the Hebrew Scriptures, there is no chapter four in the book of Malachi. This division was added later. The last six verses are a continuation of chapter three that we studied together last week.

**Behold (hinneh) the day is coming** - It is only fitting that the interjection **behold** is inserted at this crucial juncture in Malachi, as it serves to call the reader's attention to the awesome events the prophet will describe and to which every reader should pay special attention!

**Behold (02009) (hinneh)** is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) **Hinneh** generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so **hinneh** is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read Ge 6:13)! **Hinneh** is a marker used to enliven a narrative, to express a change a scene, to emphasize an idea, to call attention to a detail or an important fact or action that follows (Isa 65:17, Ge 17:20, 41:17). The first use of **hinneh** in Ge 1:29 and second in Ge 1:31 - "And God saw all that He had made, and **behold**, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." **Hinneh** is often used in the idiom "**Here I am**" in Ge 22:1, 7, 11 Ge 27:1, 18, Ge 31:11, Ge 46:2 Ex 3:4 1Sa 3:4, 3:16, 12:3, 2Sa 1:7, Isa 52:6, Isa 58:9. **Hinneh** is used most often to point out people but also to point out things (Ge 31:41, 17:4). God uses **hinneh** to grab man's attention before He brings destruction (Ge 6:13, 17). God uses **hinneh** when He establishes covenants (Ge 9:9, 15:12, 17 [when Jehovah cut the Abrahamic covenant], Ge 17:4, cp Ge 28:13, 15), when He provided a sacrificial substitute for Isaac (foreshadowing His giving us His only Son!) (Ge 22:13). **Hinneh** marks the "chance (The Providence of God)" arrival of Boaz at the field where Ruth was gleaning (Ru 2:4-read about this "chance romance" - Indeed, "Behold!"). **Hinneh** is used to announce the Lord's sending of a child as a sign and a prophecy of Immanuel-Emmanuel, the Messiah (Isa. 7:14-note). In fact **W E Vine** says that it is notable that when **behold** (**hinneh**) is used in Isaiah, it always introduces something relating to future circumstances.

**Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have

observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Hinneh** is translated in the **Septuagint** with the interjection **idou** (strictly speaking a command in the second person **aorist imperative, middle voice**) a demonstrative particle (used 1377 times in the Septuagint and NT) which is found especially in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke "and giving a peculiar vivacity to the style by bidding the reader or hearer to attend to what is said: **"Behold! See! Lo!"** (Thayer) The command is calling for urgent attention. Do this now! Don't delay! It could be loosely paraphrased "Pay attention!" or "Listen up!" to arouse attention and introduce a new and extraordinary fact of considerable importance.

Uses of **idou** in Matthew and Luke =

Mt 1:20, 23; 2:1, 9, 13, 19; 3:16f; 4:11; 7:4; 8:2, 24, 29, 32, 34; 9:2f, 10, 18, 20, 32; 10:16; 11:8, 10, 19; 12:2, 10, 18, 41f, 46f, 49; 13:3; 15:22; 17:3, 5; 19:16, 27; 20:18, 30; 21:5; 22:4; 23:34, 38; 24:23, 25f; 25:6; 26:45-47, 51; 27:51; 28:2, 7, 9, 11, 20; Luke 1:20, 31, 36, 38, 44, 48; 2:10, 25, 34, 48; 5:12, 18; 6:23; 7:12, 25, 27, 34, 37; 8:41; 9:30, 38f; 10:3, 19, 25; 11:31f, 41; 13:7, 11, 16, 30, 32, 35; 14:2; 15:29; 17:21, 23; 18:28, 31; 19:2, 8, 20; 22:10, 21, 31, 38, 47; 23:14f, 29, 50; 24:4, 13, 49

**Hinneh in NAS Usage:** after all(1), behold(938), go(1), here(41), how(5), if(18), if he sees(1), if the has indeed(1), indeed(11), lo(16), look(3), now(3), now\*(1), see(4), surely(2), there(2), unless(1).

**Hinneh - 994v -**

Gen 1:29, 31; 6:12f, 17; 8:11, 13; 9:9; 12:11, 19; 15:4, 12, 17; 16:2, 6, 11, 14; 17:4, 20; 18:2, 9f, 27, 31; 19:2, 8, 19ff, 28; 20:3, 15f; 22:1, 7, 11, 13, 20; 24:13, 15, 30, 43, 45, 51, 63; 25:24, 32; 26:8f; 27:1f, 6, 18, 36, 39, 42; 28:12f, 15; 29:2, 6, 25; 30:3; 31:2, 10f, 51; 32:18, 20; 33:1; 34:21; 37:7, 9, 13, 15, 19, 25, 29; 38:13, 23f, 27, 29; 40:6, 9, 16; 41:1ff, 5ff, 17ff, 22f, 29; 42:2, 13, 22, 27f, 35; 43:21; 44:16; 45:12; 46:2; 47:1; 48:1f, 4, 11, 21; 50:5, 18; Exod 1:9; 2:6, 13; 3:2, 4, 9, 13; 4:6f, 14, 23; 5:16; 7:16f; 8:2, 21, 29; 9:3, 7, 18; 10:4; 14:10, 17; 16:4, 10, 14; 17:6; 19:9; 23:20; 24:8, 14; 31:6; 32:9, 34; 33:21; 34:10f, 30; 39:43; Lev 10:16; 13:5f, 8, 10, 13, 17, 20f, 25f, 30ff, 34, 36, 39, 43, 53, 55f; 14:3, 37, 39, 44, 48; Num 3:12; 12:10; 14:40; 16:42, 47; 17:8; 18:6, 8, 21; 20:16; 22:5, 11, 32, 38; 23:6, 11, 17, 20; 24:10f, 14; 25:6, 12; 32:1, 14, 23; Deut 1:10; 3:11; 9:13, 16; 13:14; 17:4; 19:18; 22:17; 26:10; 31:16; Josh 2:2, 18; 3:11; 5:13; 7:21f; 8:20; 9:12f, 25; 14:10; 22:11; 23:14; 24:27; Judg 1:2; 3:24f; 4:22; 6:15, 28, 37; 7:13, 17; 8:15; 9:31, 33, 36f; 11:34; 13:3, 5, 7, 10; 14:5, 8, 16; 16:10; 17:2; 18:9, 12; 19:9, 16, 22, 24, 27; 20:7, 40; 21:8f, 19, 21; Ruth 1:15; 2:4; 3:2, 8; 4:1; 1 Sam 2:31; 3:4ff, 8, 11, 16; 4:13; 5:3f; 8:5; 9:6ff, 12, 14, 17, 24; 10:2, 8, 10f, 22; 11:5; 12:1ff, 13; 13:10; 14:7f, 11, 16f, 20, 26, 33, 43; 15:12, 22; 16:11, 15, 18; 17:23; 18:17, 22; 19:16, 19, 22; 20:2, 5, 12, 21ff; 21:9, 14; 22:12; 23:1, 3; 24:1, 4, 9f, 20; 25:14, 19f, 36, 41; 26:7, 21f, 24; 28:7, 9, 21; 30:3, 16, 26; 2 Sam 1:2, 6f, 18; 3:12, 22, 24; 4:8, 10; 5:1; 9:4, 6; 12:11, 18; 13:24, 34ff; 14:7, 21, 32; 15:15, 24, 26, 32, 36; 16:1, 3ff, 8, 11; 17:9; 18:10f, 24, 26, 31; 19:1, 8, 20, 37, 41; 20:21; 24:17; 1Ki 1:14, 18, 22f, 25, 42, 51; 2:8, 29, 39; 3:12, 15, 21; 5:5; 8:27; 10:7; 11:22, 31; 12:28; 13:1ff, 25; 14:2, 5, 10, 19; 15:19; 16:3; 17:9f, 12; 18:7f, 11, 14, 44; 19:5f, 9, 11, 13; 20:13, 31, 36, 39; 21:18, 21; 22:13, 23, 25; 2 Kgs 1:9, 14; 2:11, 16, 19; 3:20; 4:9, 13, 25, 32; 5:6, 11, 15, 20, 22; 6:1, 13, 15, 17, 20, 25, 30, 33; 7:2, 5f, 10, 13, 15, 19; 8:5; 9:5; 10:4, 9; 11:14; 13:21; 15:11, 15, 26, 31; 17:26; 18:21; 19:7, 9, 11, 35; 20:5, 17; 21:12; 22:16, 20; 1 Chr 9:1; 11:1, 25; 17:1; 22:9, 14; 28:21; 2 Chr 2:4, 8, 10; 6:18; 9:6; 13:12, 14; 16:3, 11; 18:12, 22, 24; 19:11; 20:2, 10f, 16, 24, 34; 21:14; 23:3, 13; 24:27; 25:19, 26; 26:20; 27:7; 28:9, 26; 29:9, 19; 32:32; 33:18f; 34:24, 28; 35:25, 27; 36:8; Ezra 9:15; Neh 5:5; 6:12; 9:36; Esth 6:5; 7:9; 8:7; Job 1:12, 19; 2:6; 3:7; 4:3; 5:17, 27; 9:19; 13:18; 16:19; 32:12, 19; 33:2, 7; 38:35; 40:15f; Ps 7:14; 11:2; 33:18; 37:36; 39:5; 40:7, 9; 48:4; 52:7; 54:4; 55:7; 59:3, 7; 73:12, 15, 27; 83:2; 87:4; 92:9; 119:40; 121:4; 123:2; 127:3; 128:4; 132:6; 133:1; 134:1; 139:8; Prov 1:23; 7:10; 24:31; Eccl 1:14, 16; 2:1, 11; 4:1; 5:18; Song 1:15f; 2:8f, 11; 3:7; 4:1; Isa 3:1; 5:7, 26, 30; 6:7f; 7:14; 8:7, 18, 22; 10:33; 12:2; 13:9, 17; 17:1, 14; 19:1; 20:6; 21:9; 22:17; 24:1; 25:9; 26:21; 28:2, 16; 29:8, 14; 30:27; 34:5; 35:4; 36:6; 37:7, 11, 36; 38:5, 8, 17; 39:6; 40:9f; 41:15, 27; 42:9; 43:19; 47:14; 48:7, 10; 49:12, 22; 51:22; 52:6, 13; 54:11; 58:9; 59:9; 60:2; 62:11; 65:1, 6, 13f, 17f; 66:12, 15; Jer 1:6, 9, 15, 18; 2:35; 3:5, 22; 4:13, 16, 23ff; 5:14f; 6:10, 19, 21f; 7:8, 11, 20, 32; 8:8f, 15, 17, 19; 9:7, 15, 25; 10:18, 22; 11:11, 22; 12:14; 13:7, 13; 14:13, 18f; 16:9, 12, 14, 16, 21; 17:15; 18:3, 6, 11; 19:3, 6, 15; 20:4; 21:4, 8, 13; 23:2, 5, 7, 15, 19, 30ff, 39; 24:1; 25:9, 29, 32; 26:14; 27:16; 28:16; 29:17, 21, 32; 30:3, 10, 18, 23; 31:8, 27, 31, 38; 32:3, 7, 17, 24, 27f, 37; 33:6, 14; 34:2, 17, 22; 35:17; 36:12; 37:7; 38:5, 22; 39:16; 40:4, 10; 42:4; 43:10; 44:2, 11, 26f, 30; 45:4f; 46:25, 27; 47:2; 48:12, 40; 49:2, 5, 12, 15, 19, 22, 35; 50:9, 12, 18, 31, 41, 44; 51:1, 25, 36, 47, 52; Ezek 1:4, 15; 2:9; 3:8, 23; 4:8, 14, 16; 5:8; 6:3; 7:5f, 10; 8:2, 4f, 7f, 10, 14, 16f; 9:2, 11; 10:1, 9; 11:1; 12:27; 13:8, 10, 12, 20; 14:22; 15:4f; 16:8, 27, 37, 44, 49; 17:7, 10, 12, 18; 18:14, 18; 20:47; 21:3, 7; 22:6, 13, 19; 23:22, 28, 39f; 24:16, 21; 25:4, 7ff, 16; 26:3, 7; 28:3, 7, 22; 29:3, 8, 10, 19;

30:9, 21f; 31:3; 33:32f; 34:10f, 17, 20; 35:3; 36:6, 9; 37:2, 5, 7f, 11f, 19, 21; 38:3; 39:1, 8; 40:3, 5, 17, 24; 42:8; 43:2, 5, 12; 44:4; 46:19, 21; 47:1f, 7; Dan 8:3, 5, 15, 19; 10:5, 10, 13, 16, 20; 11:2; 12:5; Hos 2:6, 14; 9:6; Joel 2:19; 3:1, 7; Amos 2:13; 4:2, 13; 6:11, 14; 7:1, 4, 7f; 8:1, 11; 9:8f, 13; Obad 1:2; Mic 1:3; 2:3; Nah 1:15; 2:13; 3:5, 13; Hab 1:6; 2:4, 13, 19; Zeph 3:19; Hag 1:9; Zech 1:8, 11, 18; 2:1, 3, 9f; 3:8f; 4:2; 5:1, 7; 6:1, 12; 8:7; 9:4, 9; 11:6, 16; 12:2; 14:1; Mal 2:3; 3:1; 4:1, 5

**The day is coming** - Notice that in one verse Malachi twice says the **day is coming** which should be ample warning to his readers to prepare to meet their Maker! And for good measure, Malachi again mentions the **day** in Mal 4:3 and Mal 4:5. **To what day is Malachi referring?** The **Day of the Lord**. In context this **day** is associated with the rising of the **Sun of Righteousness** (Mal 4:2). As discussed in more detail below, this phrase is most likely an allusion to Messiah's **Second Coming**, at which time He will "heal" the land of Israel and will establish His 1000 year (Millennial) kingdom.

**Steven Cole** comments - Malachi mentions this coming day four times in the closing verses of his prophecy (Malachi 3:17; 4:1, 3, 5). Walter Kaiser points out (Malachi: God's Unchanging Love [Baker], p. 102) that this "day of the Lord" was both "near" and "at hand" for each of five Old Testament prophets working in four separate centuries: Obadiah 15 and Joel 1:15; 2:1 in the ninth century; Isaiah 13:6 in the eighth; Zephaniah 1:7, 14 in the seventh; and Ezekiel 30:3 in the sixth. Each of these prophets saw fulfillments in specific events of his own times, and yet each of these prophecies has a still yet unfulfilled future nuance. Thus Kaiser concludes that "the day of the Lord" encompasses a number of successive judgment events throughout history, all of which depict some aspect of the final climatic fulfillment at the culmination of history. In other words, there have been a number of precursor days of the Lord (such as the destruction of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar and again under Titus) that point ahead to the final great and terrible day of the Lord at the end of history (Mal. 4:5). ([Malachi 4:1-3 - The Coming Day](#))

**Herbert M. Wolf - The Day of the Lord** . In the prophetic books the day of the Lord signifies the time when God intervenes in the affairs of nations to judge the wicked and rescue the righteous. In Malachi the judgmental aspect is emphasized, in that the day of the Lord is a "dreadful day" in which evildoers will be set on fire (Malachi 4:1,5). Much of the judgment connected with the Messiah will take place at Christ's second coming, but in Malachi 3:2-4 it is the priests and Levites who are refined and purified. Perhaps Christ's severe criticism of religious leaders followed by the destruction of the temple in a.d. 70 shows how judgment can be tied in with his first coming also. For those who revered his name and received him as Savior, Christ's coming brought spiritual and even physical healing (Mal 4:2-3; see Acts 3:8). ([Malachi, Theology of - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)) (**See also** [Day of the Lord, God, Christ, the - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

There are 23 mentions of the specific phrase **Day of the LORD** in the NASB. Note that not every use of this phrase speaks of the future **Day** when God intervenes with bestowal of His righteous wrath upon a sinful, rebellious world. However, most do refer to this **Day**, which is frequently described as "**near**" (10x) and as "**coming**" (4x)!

Isaiah 13:6 Wail, for **the day of the LORD** is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

9 Behold, **the day of the LORD** is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.

Isaiah 58:13 "If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy **day of the LORD** honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word,

**Comment:** Not a reference to the future, eschatological day of God's righteous wrath.

Ezekiel 13:5 "You have not gone up into the breaches, nor did you build the wall around the house of Israel to stand in the battle on **the day of the LORD**.

Ezekiel 30:3 "For the day is near, Even **the day of the LORD** is near; It will be a day of clouds, A time of doom for the nations.

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! For **the day of the LORD** is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty.

Joel 2:1 Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For **the day of the LORD** is coming; Surely it is near,

11 The LORD utters His voice before His army; Surely His camp is very great, For strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, And who can endure it?

31 "The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome **day of the LORD** comes.

Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For **the day of the LORD** is near in the valley of

decision.

Amos 5:18 Alas, you who are longing for **the day of the LORD**, For what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light;

20 Will not **the day of the LORD** be darkness instead of light, Even gloom with no brightness in it?

Obadiah 1:15 "For **the day of the LORD** draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.

Zephaniah 1:7 Be silent before the Lord GOD! For **the day of the LORD** is near, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests.

14 Near is the great **day of the LORD**, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly.

Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible **day of the LORD**.

Acts 2:20 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS **DAY OF THE LORD** SHALL COME.

1 Corinthians 5:5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:2 For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord** will come just like a thief in the night.

2 Thessalonians 2:2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

2 Peter 3:10 But **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

**Ryrie** agrees that is **day... coming** is "**The Day of the Lord**." Ryrie draws our attention to a similar, but more detailed, description of the Day of Jehovah by the prophet Zephaniah...

Near is the great **day of the LORD**, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the **day of the LORD**! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. 15 A **day** of wrath is that **day**, A **day** of trouble and distress, A **day** of destruction and desolation, A **day** of darkness and gloom, A **day** of clouds and thick darkness, 16 A **day** of trumpet and battle cry, Against the fortified cities And the high corner towers. 17 And I will bring distress on men, So that they will walk like the blind, Because they have sinned against the LORD; And their blood will be poured out like dust, And their flesh like dung. 18 Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to deliver them On the **day** of the LORD's wrath; And all the earth will be devoured In the fire of His jealousy, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a terrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth. (Zeph. 1:14-18).

**Burning like a furnace** - This **simile** (see discussion of the value of observing and interrogating **terms of comparison**) gives us a vivid picture of this fateful day. Notice the full orb picture painted by use of these related terms "**burning... furnace... chaff... set them ablaze**."

## **JEHOVAH... A REFINER'S FIRE**

He is either a Refining Fire or a Consuming Fire! (Hebrews 12:29)

**THOUGHT** - WHAT IS GOD TO YOU - A REFINER OR A CONSUMER?

In Malachi 3:2-3, God purges and cleanses His people with a "refiner's fire" which contrasts with the **burning... furnace** here in Malachi 4:1 where the wicked will be destroyed in the fire of God's judgment.

**Henry Morris** on **burning like a furnace** - During the future day of the Lord, among other judgments of God, there will be great heat (Joel 1:19; Isaiah 24:6; Revelation 8:7; 16:8,9).

**Jamieson** - The language is abrupt, "Behold, the **day** cometh! It burns like a furnace." The abruptness imparts terrible reality to the picture, as if it suddenly burst on the prophet's view. ([Malachi 4 Commentary](#))

**All... every** - Both words are translations of the Hebrew particle **kol**, (which occurs about 5000x in the OT) which usually signifies

the "whole of something." The **Septuagint (Lxx)** uses the Greek word **pas** (pantes = masculine plural) to translate both uses of **kol**. **BDAG** says that **pas** "pertains to totality with focus on its individual components, each, every, any." As a lawyer might say "There are no exception clauses for the arrogant or evildoers!" However because of the great mercies of God, there is an "exception clause" which is available - **repent** and **believe** (Jesus words in Mk 1:15 where both calls are **present imperative** or commands)...

The Lord is not slow about His promise (that He is returning, and His return brings sure judgment - 2Pe 3:4, 7), as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish (**apollumi** = not annihilation but separation from the presence of God and loss of purpose for all eternity!) but (thank God for this term of contrast) for **all** (Greek = pas) to come to repentance (**metanoia**) (a "repentance without regret", not accompanied by remorse or regret [see 2Cor 7:9-10] but a genuine change of heart and mind which is accompanied by a change of direction of one's life - heavenward, not "hell-ward" so to speak, a bringing forth of fruit in keeping with repentance - Lk 3:8). (2Pe 3:9-note)

**All the arrogant** - Note the contrasting descriptions of those who **fear My Name** (Mal 4:1) and **all** (no exceptions) **the arrogant** and every evildoer (Mal 4:2) **All the arrogant** clearly includes the arrogant in Malachi 3:15-note (same Hebrew word "zed" both passages) The focus is on their pride, the ultimate sin of rebellion against God in Whose image they are made. Pride was the root of the fall of their father the devil (cp Isa 14:13-17, Jn 8:44). The proverbial "acorn" does not fall far from the "tree!"

**Arrogant** (**02086**)(**zed**) an adjective meaning proud, insolent, presumptuous (Ps 19:13), having a sense of self-importance (inflated view of one's self), insolent, being self-willed, and often exaggerated by defiance and rebelliousness (Pr 11:2, Jer 49:16; 50:31-32; Ezek 7:10).

**Leon Wood** summarizes the three aspects of **zed**, presumption, rebellion, willfulness - Because a person is proud he **presumes** too much in his favor, especially in the sense of authority... Because the person is proud he asserts his own will to the point of **rebelling** against one in authority over him... The third, closely related to the second, carries the additional element of **willful** decision. If a person so asserted himself and killed his neighbor, his own life was required as punishment." (TWOT)

**Zed** - 13 verses -Ps 19:13; 86:14; 119:21, 51, 69, 78, 85, 122; Pr 21:24; Isa 13:11; Jer 43:2; Mal 3:15; 4:1 - **Usage**: arrogant(9), arrogant men(1), presumptuous(1), proud(2).

Psalm 19:13 Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

Psalm 86:14 O God, arrogant men have risen up against me, And a band of violent men have sought my life, And they have not set You before them.

Psalm 119:21 You rebuke the arrogant, the cursed, Who wander from Your commandments.

Psalm 119:51 The arrogant utterly deride me, Yet I do not turn aside from Your law.

Psalm 119:69 The arrogant have forged a lie against me; With all my heart I will observe Your precepts.

Psalm 119:78 May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie; But I shall meditate on Your precepts.

Psalm 119:85 The arrogant have dug pits for me, Men who are not in accord with Your law.

Psalm 119:122 Be surety for Your servant for good; Do not let the arrogant oppress me.

Proverbs 21:24 "Proud," "Haughty," "Scoffer," are his names, Who acts with insolent pride.

Isaiah 13:11 Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.

Jeremiah 43:2 Azariah the son of Hoshai, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there';

Malachi 3:15 'So now we call the arrogant blessed; not only are the doers of wickedness built up but they also test God and escape.'

Malachi 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch."

**Every evildoer** - Note clear association of **arrogant** and **evildoer** - Pride is the root sin, but their evil deeds are the rotten fruit.



**Will be chaff** - Not "like chaff" but (speaking metaphorically) **chaff**. **Chaff and Stubble** (figuratively speaking) were useless for any good and godly purpose. **Chaff and stubble** were easily consumed by fire (cf Isa 5:24, 47:14, Joel 2:5, Obad 1:18, Nah 1:10, Mal 4:1).

This will come about when the Stone returns and all arrogance and evildoers will become like chaff

"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found (ALL THE GODLESS NATIONS AND PERSONS - THIS IS NOT ANNIHILATION BUT DESTRUCTION FOREVER OF THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH WE WERE CREATED - TO GLORIFY GOD cf 2 Th 1:5-9). But the STONE (MESSIAH) that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Da 2:35, 45+)

**Chaff** (07179) (**qas/qash**) refers to **stubble** (short stumps of grain minus the fruit heads, remained in the ground after harvesting, dry and easy to burn, of little value), **chaff** (the seed covering and debris separated from the seed in threshing [cf this literal sense in Ex 5:12] and figuratively that which is comparatively worthless). The majority of the OT uses of **qas/qash** are figurative uses or **terms of comparison** (especially as a **simile**; "as [or like] chaff" = Ex 15:7, Ps 83:13 or "as [or like] stubble" = Job 41:48, Isa 40:24, 47:14, Obad 1:18, Nah 1:10), most of these figurative uses referring to Divine judgment.

- [Bible Dictionary Discussions of Chaff](#)

**Stubble** - The stumps of wheat, rye, barley, oats or buckwheat, left in the ground; the part of the stalk left by the scythe or sickle.

**Chaff** (Webster, 1828) - The husk or dry calyx of corn, and grasses. In common language, the word is applied to the husks when separated from the corn by **threshing**, riddling or **winnowing**. Refuse; worthless matter; especially that which is light, and apt to be driven by the wind. In scripture, false doctrines, fruitless designs, hypocrites and ungodly men are compared to chaff. Ps 1:4. Jer 23:28. Isa 33:11. Mt 3:12.

**Qas/Qash** - 16 verses - Usage: chaff(5), straw(1), stubble(10).

Exodus 5:12 So the people scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather **stubble** for straw.

Exodus 15:7 "And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as **chaff**.

Job 13:25 "Will You cause a driven leaf to tremble? Or will You pursue the dry chaff?"

Job 41:28 "The arrow cannot make him flee; Slingstones are turned into **stubble** for him. **29** "Clubs are regarded as **stubble**; He laughs at the rattling of the javelin.

Psalms 83:13 O my God, make them like the whirling dust, Like **chaff** before the wind.

Isaiah 5:24 Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes **stubble** And dry grass collapses into the flame, So their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; **For** (Don't miss this critical term of explanation) they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 33:11 "You have conceived chaff (Hebrew = chashash), you will give birth to **stubble**; My breath will consume you like a fire.

Isaiah 40:24 Scarcely have they been planted, Scarcely have they been sown, Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, But He merely blows on them, and they wither, And the storm carries them away like **stubble**.

Isaiah 41:2 "Who has aroused one from the east Whom He calls in righteousness to His feet? He delivers up nations before him And subdues kings. He makes them like dust with his sword, As the wind-driven **chaff** with his bow.

Isaiah 47:14 "Behold, they have become like **stubble**, Fire burns them; They cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame; There will be no coal to warm by Nor a fire to sit before!

Jeremiah 13:24 "Therefore I will scatter them like drifting straw To the desert wind.

Joel 2:5 With a noise as of chariots They leap on the tops of the mountains, Like the crackling of a flame of fire consuming the **stubble**, Like a mighty people arranged for battle.

Obadiah 1:18 "Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau

will be as **stubble**. And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken.

Nahum 1:10 Like tangled thorns, And like those who are drunken with their drink, They are consumed as **stubble** completely withered.

Malachi 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be **chaff**; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch."

**So that** - Expresses purpose. What purpose? The purpose of the pouring out of God's fiery wrath. See more discussion of the value of pausing to ponder **terms of purpose or result** (be on the lookout for terms like so that [580 uses in NAS], in order that [161 uses], that [a common word but look for uses especially at the beginning of a clause, e.g., Ge 19:32], as a result [12 uses]).

**It will leave them neither root nor branch** - "It" refers to the "divine conflagration" so to speak. It will be thorough and complete and forever. The description implies there is no recovery after God's judgment!

## **THE DAY OF DIVISION AS DESCRIBED BY JESUS**

The Lord Jesus describes this day of division that would come burning "like a furnace" in His answer to the Pharisees when they asked Him about the Kingdom of God. One has to put on your rabbinical thinking cap to fully understand what they were asking about and what the average Jew in Jesus day (and even His own disciples) were expecting to transpire. Imagine this Man Who is able to do miracles, even some miracles that traditionally were thought to be only possible to accomplish by the Messiah (such as healing a leper or giving blind sight). So many were thinking this must be the Messiah, the One Who will bring in the Kingdom of God, so that Israel becomes the chief of the nations and the Messiah rules the world and the Jewish people will no longer be despised and persecuted by the Gentiles. So they were looking for a political Kingdom, and did not understand that first He must establish a spiritual Kingdom of God, which did transpire in every person who believed in Him. That was the internal Kingdom which they simply did not understand. But when Messiah returns a second time, He comes to establish His external Kingdom, the Messianic Kingdom when He will rule the earth and Israel will be the chief of all the nations of the world. And so that is what Jesus is describing in the following section from Luke 17:20-37-commentary where you will see just as in Malachi 4:1 a division is prophesied, Jesus gives more details on that division....

Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; 21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst (**THE INTERNAL, SPIRITUAL KINGDOM, THE "ALREADY BUT NOT YET" PHASE**)." 22 And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 "They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after them. 24 "For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. (THE SUDDENNESS OF THE SECOND COMING AND DESCRIBED HERE IN Malachi 4:1) 25 "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.(HIS CRUCIFIXION) 26 "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; 29 but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. (THE SECOND COMING WILL BRING ABOUT A DAY OF ETERNAL DIVISION) 31 "On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife. (IF YOU LOVE THE WORLD, YOU DO NOT LOVE GOD AND YOU WILL BE "JUSTLY REWARDED" - cp 1 John 2:15ff-note) 33 "Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it (SUMMARIZES WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE THE WORLD LIKE LOT'S WIFE). 34 "I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 "There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. 36 ["Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left."] 37 And answering they \*said to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered." (Luke 17:20-37-commentary)

**Malachi 4:2 "But for you who fear My Name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.:"**

- **Fear My Name** - Rev 11:18, 15:4, 19:5 Ge 22:12 Ps 36:1, 89:7 Ec 12:13,14
- **Note:** I have chosen to capitalize **Sun** as does the King James Version, the NKJV, the God News Version, the NLT. As discussed below not all commentators would agree that **Sun** should be capitalized.)

**KJV** - But to you that fear my name shall the **Sun** of righteousness arise, and healing shall be in **his** wings: and ye shall go forth, and bound as young calves let loose from bonds.

See related discussion - [The Sun of Righteousness Will Rise](#)

## **THOSE WHO FEAR GOD**

**But** - Hallelujah! O what a blessed turn the text takes! This **term of contrast** should always **prompt** us to **pause** and **ponder** what is being contrasted. There is a striking contrast between the **chaff** (unbelievers, doers of evil) and the "wheat," those who fear God and give Him the glory (Read Ps 1:1-3 versus Ps 1:4-5 and the summation in Ps 1:6). This is one of those good uses of "but" in Scripture (e.g., see discussion of "**But God**" in Eph 2:4-6-note, contrasted with Eph 2:1-3-note).

**Butler** - The next two verses are a vindication for the righteous. For now the wicked seem to prevail and produce the lamenting of Psalm 73 and Habakkuk 1; but the time will come with righteousness will reign and have power over evil. (Analytical Bible Expositor)

**Spurgeon** - What a change of figures! To the wicked "an **oven**"! (See Mal 4:1.) To God-fearing men a "**Sun**"! Our text was fulfilled at our Lord's first coming. It awaits a far larger fulfilment at His Second Coming. It is always true as a general principle, and it is felt to be true when the Lord Jesus spiritually draws near to His people.

**You who fear** - This "fear" speaks of respect and reverence, not dread. It is notable that the description of the **fear of God** is used even in the NT in the context of the Gospel, the Good News, and thus to "fear God" is synonymous in these contexts (so you need to check the context!) as a description of salvation by grace through faith in the Gospel of Messiah (cf Gal 3:8). And so the apostle John writes...

And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an **eternal Gospel to preach** ("gospelled the Gospel!") to those who live on the earth (see "[Earth Dwellers](#)"), and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "**Fear God, and give Him glory**, (Why?) because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." (Rev 14:6-7-note)

**When is this Gospel proclaimed to the entire world?** At the midpoint of the 70th week of Daniel, at the time the Antichrist assumes supreme power for 3.5 years, 42 months or 1260 days!

**Garland** comments on the **eternal Gospel**: The Gospel is founded upon the New Covenant, which is an eternal covenant (Heb. 13:20) resulting in eternal life (Isa. 51:6; Tit. 1:1-3).

**But for you who fear My Name** - To these (those who fear His Name) the promise is given and to no others. To fear God's Name is to reverence His great Name, to order our steps in accord with His holiness and righteousness. This same group has been previously described in Malachi 3:16. In context with what does Malachi equate fearing God's Name? Clearly it is used as a synonym for those who are saved, who have received imputed righteousness of Christ by grace through faith. Notice also the response or action of those who "fear" God's Name. They will "skip about like calves from the stall." Why? Because they are true believers in Messiah and thus have good reason to rejoice!

This is the fourth occurrence of the **fear of the Lord** in Malachi...

Malachi 1:14-note "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock, and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King," says the LORD of hosts, "and My name is **feared** among the nations."

**Comment:** Yes, it is feared, but not in the sense in this context that the nations are saved, as are those Jews in Mal 3:16-18.

Malachi 3:5-note "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage

earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien, and **do not fear Me**," says the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:16-note Then those who **feared the LORD** spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name.

**John Piper** commenting on the uses in Malachi 3 writes: To **fear the Lord** is to tremble at the thought of offending him by unbelief and disobedience (**ED: A HOLY "IMPEDIMENT TO UNHOLY CONDUCT!**). It is the feeling that God is not to be trifled with. (**ED: WHICH IS IN FACT WE DO EVERY TIME WE WILLFULLY SIN! OH MY. FORGIVE ME LORD!**) It is the very opposite of the attitude of the people in Mal 3:13-15 who speak with an incredible swagger: "It doesn't pay to serve God." Those who fear God shudder at the thought of speaking that way about their Majestic Father. Anything that dishonors God is anathema to those who fear God. ([I Will Spare Them as a Man Spares His Son - Sermon on Malachi 3:13-18](#))

Compare those who **fear God's Name** in the Revelation...

And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to **those who fear Thy Name**, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth. (Revelation 11:18<sup>[note](#)</sup>)

**Garland** writes: A healthy, reverent **fear** undergirds the attitude of those who trust in the Lord (Jos. 24:14; 1Sa 12:24; Ps. 34:9; 85:9; 102:15; 103:11; 115:13, 14; 147:11; Eccl 8:12; 12:13; Mic. 6:9; Luke 1:50; Rev. 19:5).

**Related Resource:** Name of the LORD is a Strong Tower: Summary

Notice that in Revelation 11:18, those who **fear** God's Name are **rewarded**, even as those who fear God's Name in Malachi 4:2 are "**rewarded**." Clearly the ones God describes in Malachi 4:2 are believers (in context of this prophecy addressed to Jewish readers, these are specifically Messianic believers, part of the **righteous remnant** of Israel). In short, these are those who **fear God's Name** and who believe in the Messiah, the **Sun of Righteousness**. Again in the Revelation we see an angel in mid-heaven giving God's final Gospel call to all those who live on the earth (see discussion of this unique term in the Revelation = "[Earth Dwellers](#)"). This appears to occur at the mid-point of the **Daniel's Seventieth Week**, that seven year period which some commentaries refer to as the Tribulation (NB: Only the last half is named "tribulation", and specifically is called the "**Great Tribulation**"). Here is John's record of what he saw in this fateful future day...

And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an **eternal Gospel to preach** to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." (Rev 14:6-7<sup>[note](#)</sup>)

**Tony Garland comments:** The angel **gospelled the gospel** to those below on the earth. Not only was his message one of good news, but the very fact of his delivery of the message was a manifestation of that good news. For this angel on his lonely mission above the ravaged earth below stands as a beacon to the grace and mercy of God. He has not left these on the earth during the final week of His wrath without recourse. In the midst of terrible devastation and turmoil, He has not left those who have not yet heard subject to the well-intentioned, but often ineffective, witness of men. He provides a supernatural messenger who will finally fulfill the gospel mandate to all the earth (see below). "There is no record that it is believed or heeded. It may not be. Noah was a 'preacher of righteousness,' in view of the coming flood; but no one believed him except his own family..." It seems unlikely that the words that John heard the angel say constitute the entire gospel message delivered to the earth dwellers. Rather, it summarizes what their response should be. The specifics of the gospel message itself are not recorded. The warning of the angel occurs before the institution of the mark of the Beast. Those who hear the angel and respond in faith are those who are found in the opening verses of the next chapter doing this very thing! "They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested." (Rev 15:3-4). These who hear and fear have victory over the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name. ([A Testimony of Jesus Christ - Revelation 14 Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur:** The angel is preaching the **good news concerning eternal life and entrance into the kingdom of God** (cf. Mt 24:14; 1Co 15:1–10). He is urging the people of the world to change their allegiance from the beast to the Lamb. It is also called in the NT the Gospel of God, the Gospel of grace, the Gospel of Christ, the Gospel of peace, the glorious Gospel, and the Gospel of the kingdom. It is good news that God saves by the forgiveness of sin and opens His kingdom to all who will repent and believe. The whole world will hear this preaching by the angel as God graciously calls all to salvation. (**Ed:** So just prior to the unleashing of God's final wrath in the "Bowl Judgments," in the midst of this coming consuming wrath, God "remembers mercy!" How kind is our God to give this gracious invitation to a world that fully deserves divine wrath!)... The last moment arrives to repent and believe before God's wrath is poured out. This is the book's first use of the word judgment, a term that has the same meaning as wrath. (MacArthur Study Bible)

**Disciple's Study Bible:** SALVATION, Fear of God--The eternal Gospel calls for all persons everywhere to **fear God** and **worship Him**. God the Redeemer is also the Creator and Judge. There is an awesomeness about salvation which we dare not overlook.

**Dave Roper** has some interesting comments on **fear My Name** - Malachi begins this section with the distinction between those who truly belong to God and those who do not. There are some people who do not fear the Lord, and they support one another in their conversation; and there is another group of people who do fear the Lord. That is the basic distinction-unobservable, but fundamental. There is no way you can look at a person and tell which group he belongs to. We do not wear fish stickers on our foreheads. But God makes the distinction. He sees the heart. He knows, and he writes the book. You cannot look at a person's circumstances and say, "My, that person must know God because he's blessed." Or, "Obviously this other person does not know God because he's not blessed."

**Marcus Dods** - They that **fear the LORD** with believing reverence wait for the manifestation of His righteousness, conscious that they love God (Jn 14:15), that they seek first His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt 6:33). ([The post-exilic prophets- Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi](#))

## SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Hail the heav'nly Prince of Peace!

**Hail the Sun of Righteousness!**

Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris'n with healing in His wings.

Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die.  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.

--Charles Wesley

**Sun of Righteousness** - This is a reference to the Messiah -- a presentation of the "scarlet thread of redemption" even as the OT closes. The Messiah shall radiate healing to the broken spirit and comfort Israel in her afflictions. As the dawn of the coming day will herald judgment to the proud and wicked, it will herald healing for those who fear the Lord. See related discussion - [The Sun of Righteousness Will Rise](#)

**NET Note on Sun of Righteousness** (NET Bible translates it "sun of vindication) - Here the Hebrew word **הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ הַצְּדִיקָה** (tsédaqah), usually translated "righteousness" (so KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT; cf. NAB "justice"), has been rendered as "vindication" because it is the vindication of God's people that is in view in the context. Cf. BDB 842 s.v. 6 **הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ הַצְּדִיקָה**; "righteousness as vindicated, justification, salvation, etc." The expression the **sun of vindication will rise** is a metaphorical way of describing the day of the LORD (ED: AND THE LORD OF THE DAY!) as a time of restoration when God vindicates his people (see 2 Sam 23:4; Isa 30:26; 60:1, 3). Their vindication and restoration will be as obvious and undeniable as the bright light of the rising sun.

### [Play hymn: Sun of My Soul, Thou Saviour Dear](#)

Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near;  
O may no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

-John Keble

**John MacArthur** - The reference is to the Messiah, "the Lord our righteousness" (Ps 84:11; Jer 23:5, 6; 1Co 1:30)

**J Vernon McGee** - The Sun of Righteousness in the Old Testament is the same person who is the Bright and Morning Star in the New Testament. However, Christ is never called the Sun of Righteousness in the New Testament, and He's never called the Bright and Morning Star in the Old Testament. We will look at this verse more closely in a moment and see the reason for this. When He comes to this earth to establish His kingdom, the wicked will be put down. He will break them into pieces like a potter's vessel. That is the language of Scripture, and it is just too bad if you don't like it.

**David Guzik** - In many passages God is related to a planet or star (Psalm 84:11, Isaiah 60:19, Revelation 22:16, Numbers 24:17). Here, the Messiah is not only a Sun, but also the Sun of Righteousness Who brings healing. ([Malachi 4 Commentary](#))

Eternal Sun of righteousness,  
Display Thy beams divine,  
And cause the glory of Thy face  
Upon my heart to shine.  
Light, in Thy light, oh, may I see,  
Thy grace and mercy prove,  
Revived, and cheered, and blest by Thee,  
The God of pardoning love.  
Lift up Thy countenance serene,  
And let Thy happy child  
Behold, without a cloud between,  
The Father reconciled.  
On me Thy promised grace bestow,  
The peace by Jesus giv'n;  
The joys of holiness below,  
And then the joys of Heav'n.

--Charles Wesley

**Warren Wiersbe** - Once again, Malachi returns to the theme of the coming Day of the Lord when God will punish all evildoers. Sinners will be burned up the way fire eats up the stubble; they will become like ashes under the feet of the saints! But the true believers will see the dawning of a new day as the "**Sun of righteousness**" rises (Luke 1:78-79). Then Jesus will reign as King of Kings and His people will frolic like calves let out of their stalls!

Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the **Sunrise from on high shall visit us**, TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace." (Lk 1:78-79)

**Henry Morris** - The "**Sun of righteousness**" is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ returning to His world in its darkest night. He is "the light of the world" (John 8:12), both physically ("upholding all things by the word of His power"--Hebrews 1:3) and spiritually ("the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"--2 Corinthians 4:6).

High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

**Steven Cole** - Some scholars do not interpret this as a reference to Jesus, but rather to the conditions that will exist in the millennium. But I think it is a reference to Jesus Christ. ([Malachi 4:1-3 The Coming Day](#))

**David Levy** - Does the phrase **Sun of righteousness** refer to God the Father, Christ at His Second Coming, or simply righteousness shining forth like the sun during the Kingdom age? The metaphor applies to all three. The righteousness of both God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son will shine on the believer during the Kingdom age. Christ, who is called the "day star" (2 Pet. 1:19 - "Morning Star") and the "bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16), will shine on the righteous as an everlasting light (Isa. 60:2, 19-20).

**Gotquestions** - "**Sun of righteousness**" can also be translated "**son of vindication.**" The context concerns the Day of the Lord, the time when God vindicates His people and judges sin. This vindication will be clear to all, like the bright light of the sunrise. ([Reference](#))

**Disciple's Study Bible** - The Old Testament closes with this chapter of expectation. Christians play on the English words **sun of righteousness**, which equals **Son of righteousness**, which equals **Jesus Christ**, the Light of the world (Lk 1:78; Jn 8:12). Christians are those who know that the true Light is now shining and that the darkness cannot put it out (1 Jn 2:8).

**John Piper** - Jesus Christ is a **Rising Sun**... When Malachi saw that (the Sun of Righteousness), God told him: the coming of the Messiah will be like that and the effect of His beauty will be healing. ([The Sun of Righteousness Will Rise - Malachi 4:1-3](#))

**Comment:** It is surprising that in his sermon on Malachi 4:1-3, Dr Piper makes no specific mention of the Second Coming of Messiah especially in view of the fact that Malachi is emphasizing judgment in Malachi 4:1. Also surprising is that there is no mention of Israel (the recipient of Malachi's message) nor of Messiah's earthly Millennial Kingdom. On Desiringgod.org Matt Perman writes that Dr Piper agrees that "[there will be a millennium](#)" ([Ref](#)).

It is interesting that such a staunch dispensationalist as **Charles Ryrie** (of Dallas Theological Seminary) does not see this as a reference to the Messiah, instead writing **sun of righteousness** is "An impersonal reference to the display of righteousness throughout the entire earth (as the sun sends its rays everywhere) in the coming millennial kingdom." Thomas Constable has a similar comment noting that "Some expositors have understood "**the sun of righteousness**" to be a messianic title, but it seems best to view it as a description of the day of blessing that Messiah will bring, the Millennium." **Thomas Constable** (also a dispensationalist at Dallas Theological Seminary) agrees with Ryrie writing that "The New Testament never referred to Jesus Christ as "**the sun of righteousness.**" While I agree with that statement (however see my note on 2Pet 1:19 below), it is notable that Jesus Himself is often associated with light - read Jn1:9, Jn 3:19, 20, 21, Jn 8:12, 9:50 Isa 9:2 According to tradition, Light was one of the names of the Messiah. Isa 9:1-2; 42:6; 49:6; 60:1-3; Luke 2:32. Note that Isaiah 42:6 associates "light" and "righteousness." In addition in 2Peter 1:19-note, the apostle refers to the Son's coming using the phrase "**until the day dawns,**" which metaphorically identifies His return with the rising of the sun! In another passage in Luke we read "Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise (Dayspring or Dawn) from on high shall visit us." (Lk 1:78+) Zechariah, John the Baptist's father prophesies that the coming of Messiah will be like the coming of the sun at dawn, the light of the sun driving away the darkness. **John Piper** commenting on Luke 1:78 and Mal 4:2 writes

When John the Baptist's father prophesied in Luke 1:78, he alluded to this verse and said that with the coming of Jesus the **day was dawning** from on high. The **sun of righteousness** was rising. And he has been rising all over this world ever since. And one day his rise will reach its noonday brightness and he will appear in glory and the final division between the believing and unbelieving will be made.

Finally, the Septuagint translation of Mal 4:2 uses the **masculine singular noun** *helios* (sun) and the masculine genitive for "**it's**" (healing in its wings) leading to Brenton's translation "the Sun of righteousness arise, and healing shall be in **HIS** wings." In sum, while one cannot be absolutely dogmatic, it seems to me that there is ample evidence to support the interpretation that the phrase "sun of righteousness" is clearly an allusion to the soon coming Messiah.

**Healing in its wings** - While this description is difficult to interpret dogmatically, the same word for **healing** (*marpe*) is used in Jeremiah's description of Jerusalem and the nation when the Lord returns, God declaring "Behold, I will bring to it (Jerusalem) health and **healing** (*marpe*), and I will **heal** (*rapha/rophe*) them (Judah and Israel)." (Jer 33:6-see more discussion below). When the Son returns, His coming will bring healing.

**Zechariah's** prophecy seems to allude to this "healing"...

And I (the Lord - see Zech 12:4) will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **the Spirit of grace and of supplication**, so that they will look on Me Whom they have pierced (Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness Who brings spiritual "healing" in His wings); and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born. (Zechariah 12:10)

The prophet **Isaiah** also alludes to healing at the second coming of Messiah...

Then (**When?** Read Isa 35:4) the eyes of the blind will be opened, And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.  
6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy. For waters will break forth  
in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah. (Isa. 35:5-6).

**MacArthur comments:** God's restoration in the **Millennial Age** is to include physical restoration to the afflicted. Jesus' first coming gave a foretaste of that future day (Mt 11:5; 12:22; Mk 7:37; Lk 7:21; Acts 3:8).

**Healing** (04832)(**marpe** from **rapha/rophe** = to heal) means health, healing, a cure, a remedy. It can speak of restoration, cure or renewal. 2Chr 36:16 speaks figuratively of Judah's spiritual healing, which was no longer possible (same idea of spiritual healing in Jer 8:15, Jer 14:19, 33:6). God's Word brings health to one's body (Pr 4:22, cp Ps 107:20 where "healed" = rapha/rophe). Human words (pleasant, wise, faithful/trustworthy) bring healing (Pr 12:18, 16:24, 13:17). Jer 33:6 speaks of a future healing for the land of Israel when the LORD returns.

**Marpe** - 15 verses. **Usage:** brings healing(1), composure(1), healing(8), health(1), incurable\*(1), remedy(2), soothing(1), tranquil(1).

2 Chronicles 21:18 So after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an **incurable** (no + healing - marpe) sickness.

2 Chronicles 36:16 but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no **remedy**. (Lxx = iama = healing, cure)

Proverbs 4:22 For they (context - Pr 4:20-21) are life to those who find them and **health** to all their body.

Proverbs 6:15 Therefore his calamity will come suddenly; Instantly he will be broken and there will be no **healing**.

Proverbs 12:18 There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings **healing**.

Proverbs 13:17 A wicked messenger falls into adversity, But a faithful envoy **brings healing**.

Proverbs 14:30 A **tranquil** heart is life to the body, But passion is rotteness to the bones.

Proverbs 15:4 A **soothing** tongue is a tree of life, But perversion in it crushes the spirit.

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and **healing** to the bones.

Proverbs 29:1 A man who hardens his neck after much reproof Will suddenly be broken beyond **remedy**.

Ecclesiastes 10:4 If the ruler's temper rises against you, do not abandon your position, because **composure** allays great offenses.

Jeremiah 8:15 We waited for peace, but no good came; For a time of **healing**, but behold, terror!

Jeremiah 14:19 Have You completely rejected Judah? Or have You loathed Zion? Why have You stricken us so that we are beyond **healing**? We waited for peace, but nothing good came; And for a time of healing, but behold, terror!

Jeremiah 33:6 (Read the context - Jer 33:6-13) 'Behold, I will bring to it (Jerusalem) health and **healing** (marpe), and I will heal (**rapha**) them (Judah and Israel); and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. (Lxx = iama = healing, cure)

**Comment:** This passage speaks of a future "healing" when Jerusalem is restored to prominence in the world and Judah and Israel are cleansed "**from all their iniquity.**" (Jer 33:8). This event coincides with the **Second Coming** of Messiah and the establishment of His **Millennial Kingdom**.

Malachi 4:2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.

**Adam Clarke on healing in his wings** - As the sun, by the rays of light and heat, revives, cheers, and fructifies the whole creation, giving, through God, light and life everywhere; so Jesus Christ, by the influences of his grace and Spirit, shall quicken, awaken, enlighten, warm, invigorate heal, purify, and refine every soul that believes in him, and, by his wings or rays, diffuse these blessings from one end of heaven to another; everywhere invigorating the seeds of righteousness, and withering and drying up the seeds of sin.

**Skip about like calves** - Calves, when confined to a stall for extended periods of time, leap for sheer joy when turned loose into the sunlight. The picture is one of a joyful, vigorous, and carefree life. The figure of calves enjoying open pasture after being cooped up



in a pen (stall) expresses the future satisfaction and joy of the righteous (cf. Isa. 65:17-25; Hosea 14:4-7; Amos 9:13-15; Zeph. 3:19-20), especially in Messiah's **Millennial Kingdom**.

While the **skipping calf** simile refers to a future literal day, Spurgeon applies the principle to believers even today -

“Understand the figure. The **calf in the stall** is shut up, tied up with a halter at night, but when the sun rises the calf goes forth to the pasture; the young bullock is set free. So the child of God may be in bondage. The recollection of past sins and present unbelief may halter him up and keep him in the stall, but when the Lord reveals himself he is set free.”

**David Levy** - They (the righteous) will become fat as a young calf who is driven from his stall to romp in the field and feast on the lush green pasture provided for his growth and satisfaction.

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**G Campbell Morgan** sees one's attitude toward the day of His coming as crucial in regard to how they live life today and where they will live eternally!...

The final secret is that of hope in the coming One; in the dawning of that new day which is to have two effects.

For behold, the **day** is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the **day** that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.” (Malachi 4:1-2)

That is not two days, but one. When that day comes, and the Sun arises, it will burn or it will heal. It will burn the plant that has no roots and no river resources; but it will heal the tree planted by the river.

The present position of **Christendom** (**Ed**: Morgan uses this as a synonym of nominal Christianity) is vividly portrayed by Malachi. Let us draw a very sharp line of distinction between the **Church** and **Christendom**. The terms are not synonymous. The **Church** consists of those who are His own. **Christendom** is the external appearance in every form. **Christendom** is characterized by formality devoid of power (2Ti 3:5). Formality is not peculiar to one section of the Church. The form may not be the same. It may be stately ritual, or it may be of the simplest. **Formality is the result of a conception that religion consists in external observance** To that condition the message of Malachi is: The day is coming which will be a day of healing, or a day of burning according to the condition of those who come to its dawning.

**What is our attitude towards that day? That is the supreme test of our position. As the last word of the Old Testament economy was a word declaring the coming of that day, so also is the last word of the New Testament economy. The attitude of men towards that day determines their ultimate relation thereto, and their ultimate destiny.**

Let us live, putting all our trust in the Name, in holy and unbroken fellowship with each other around our possessions therein, waiting for the daybreak (2Pe 1:19), that so we may not be ashamed from Him at His coming (1Jn 2:28)

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only Light,  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
Triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Dayspring from on high, be near;  
Day-star, in my heart appear.

---

**Sonrise** - My state's name, "Idaho," according to one legend, comes from a Shoshone Indian word, "ee-dah-how." When translated into English, it means something like, "Behold! The sun rising over the mountain." I often think of that when the sun breaks over the eastern peaks and spills light and life into our valley.

Also, I think of Malachi's promise: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). This is God's irrevocable promise that our Lord Jesus will come again and all creation "will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Ro. 8:21).

Each new sunrise is a reminder of that eternal morning when "bright heaven's Sun" will arise with healing in His wings. Then everything that has been made will be made over and made irrevocably right. There will be no throbbing backs or knees, no financial struggles, no losses, no aging. One Bible version says that when Jesus returns we will "go out and leap like calves released from the stall" (Mal. 4:2 NIV). This is my highest imagination and my hope.

Jesus said, "Surely I am coming quickly" (Rev. 22:20). Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

**High King of heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.  
[Be Thou My Vision - Selah](#)**

**You have reason for optimism  
if you're looking for Christ's return.**

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#### **Malachi 4:2 - F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily**

##### **The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings. Malachi 4:2**

At the end of the Old Testament it is meet that the sun should break out. The morning that broke on Paradise was clear enough. It was without clouds. But the sky soon became darkened, and at last veiled, with only here and there a chink of blue sky left. All through the dark succeeding centuries there have been gleams of sunshine to let men know that the sun was shining still. Every precious promise, every solemn type, every holy life, that was bathed in supernatural beauty, was like a shining forth of the sun through the bars of human darkness and sin. But evidently more was in store than Old Testament saints had dreamed; and the time was coming when the reign of type, symbol, and parable, would be succeeded by the clear vision of the face of God.

We live in the days of open vision. Let us go forth and exult. We are to rejoice in every good thing He gives us. As the young calves of the early spring manifest their exuberant life in their caperings and gambols in the pastures, so let us give expression to our joy. Exult because of the clear shining of God's love: exult because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth: exult because He is coming again, as surely as He came once. Wake up, my soul, take psalter and harp, and sing. The Bridegroom is at hand. Hark! are those his chariot wheels reverberating through the air? Even so! Lord Jesus, come quickly!

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#### **Malachi 4:2 LET'S GET GROWING**

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

Several years ago my interest in flowers had our home resembling a nursery. There's something about the presence of growing plants that I find very enjoyable. As I daily inspected their progress, I gained from my little green friends a new appreciation of the joy and necessity of the wonderful process of growth.

As Christians, we too are like plants. We should put down our roots, break up through the earth, spread out our branches, and burst into blossom. Such a thriving condition, however, isn't always evident in our lives. It's so easy to become bored and listless in the bland routine of our daily activities. Often we just hang on and merely exist without moving steadily toward maturity and fruitfulness.

At such times we are at a spiritual standstill and must allow Jesus the "Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2) to warm our hearts anew with His love. We must send our roots deep into the Word of God by meditating on it day and night (Ps. 1:2). Then we will be like a fruitful tree planted by rivers of living water, and our branches will extend outward in an ever-increasing influence and witness. They will be filled with blossoms that reflect the beauty of righteous living.

If we've become dormant, let's get growing! Martin R. De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If God can make a tiny seed  
Into a flower so fair,  
What can He make, O soul, of thee  
Through study, faith, and prayer?  
Anon.

When growth stops, decay begins.

---

#### **Malachi 4:2 Restoring Order**

As I looked at family members gathered around the Thanksgiving table, I smiled at the range of talents represented. At one end were doctors; at the other end were musicians. Thanks to doctors, human bodies operate more efficiently. Thanks to musicians,

beautiful sounds uplift our spirits and soothe troubled minds.

Although their abilities are very different, doctors and musicians rely on the same thing: an orderly universe. Without order, there would be no predictability; without predictability, there would be no music or medicine.

Within our orderly world, disease is a sign that something is “out of order.” Healing is a sign that God will some day restore all things to their original condition (Acts 3:21). When John the Baptist wanted to know whether Jesus was the “Coming One,” Jesus said, “Go and tell John ... the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Luke 7:20-22). Healing was evidence that Jesus was Israel’s Messiah (Mal. 4:2).

I am thankful for music that soothes my troubled mind and soul, and for medicine that heals my body, because they remind me of the ultimate healing and restoration that Christ is accomplishing. — by Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What are the prospects for this earth?  
What hope is there for man?  
A world restored through Jesus Christ  
In whom we see God’s plan. —D. De Haan

Jesus specializes in restoration.

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### **Malachi 4:2 Songbird In The Dark**

Just before the sunrise, we often hear songbirds welcoming the dawn. Despite the darkness, we know that the radiant light of the sun will soon appear.

Fanny Crosby has been called “The Songbird in the Dark.” Though blinded in infancy, she wrote hymns that inspirationally envision our future reunion with Christ. Early in her life, Fanny had a dream in which she saw the panorama of a glorious heaven, and many of her songs reflect that theme. By the time of her death, she had penned at least 8,000 hymns. Songs such as “Tell Me the Story of Jesus” and “To God Be the Glory” are still popular today.

When Zacharias praised God in anticipation of the Messiah, he also looked forward to a spiritual sunrise. Citing Malachi 4:2, he proclaimed: “The Dayspring [sunrise] from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness” (Luke 1:78-79). That Messiah came to earth, died for our sins, rose again, ascended, and promised to return for us.

Do you feel surrounded by dark and confusing circumstances? You can still lift your praise to God for the bright future you will share with His Son. The words of Fanny Crosby’s beloved hymn “Blessed Assurance” encourage us as we anticipate this glorious reunion with Christ. — by Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood. —Crosby

For the Christian, the dark sorrows of earth will one day be changed into the bright songs of heaven.

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### **Malachi 4:2- C H Spurgeon- Faith's Checkbook -Never Despair**

“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.”—Malachi 4:2

FULFILLED once in the first advent of our glorious Lord and yet to have a fuller accomplishment in His second advent, this gracious word is also for daily use. Is it dark with the reader? Does the night deepen into a denser blackness? Still let us not despair: the sun will yet rise. When the night is darkest, dawn is nearest.

The sun which will arise is of no common sort. It is THE sun—the Sun of Righteousness, whose every ray is holiness. He who comes to cheer us, comes in the way of justice as well as of mercy, comes to violate no law even to save us. Jesus as much displays the holiness of God as His love. Our deliverance, when it comes, will be safe because of His righteousness.

Our one point of inquiry should be: “Do we fear the name of the Lord? Do we reverence the living God, and walk in His ways?” Then for us the night must be short; and when the morning cometh, all the sickness and sorrow of our soul will be over forever. Light,

warmth, joy, and clearness of vision will come, and healing of every disease and distress will follow after.

Has Jesus risen upon us? Let us sit in the sun. Has He hidden His face? Let us wait for His rising. He will shine forth as surely as the sun.

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#### **Malachi 4:2 - C H Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook - Grow Up**

“And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”—Malachi 4:2

YES, when the sun shines, the sick quit their chambers, and walk abroad to breathe the fresh air. When the sun brings spring and summer, the cattle quit their stalls and seek pasture on the higher Alps. Even thus, when we have conscious fellowship with our Lord, we leave the stall of despondency, and walk abroad in the fields of holy confidence. We ascend to the mountains of joy and feed on sweet pasturage which grows nearer heaven than the provender of carnal men.

To “go forth” and to “grow up” is a double promise. O my soul, be thou eager to enjoy both blessings! Why shouldst thou be a prisoner? Arise, and walk at liberty. Jesus saith that His sheep shall go in and out and find pasture; go forth, then, and feed in the rich meadows of boundless love.

Why remain a babe in grace? Grow up. Young calves grow fast, especially if they are stall-fed; and thou hast the choice care of thy Redeemer. Grow, then, in grace and in knowledge of thy Lord and Savior. Be neither straitened nor stunted. The Sun of Righteousness has risen upon thee. Answer to His beams, as the buds to the natural sun. Open thine heart, expand and grow up into Him in all things.

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#### **Malachi 4:2 Sunshine For Your Soul**

Psalm 84:1-12

The Lord God is a sun and shield. --Psalm 84:11

Many people feel cheerful in fair weather, but they are depressed when skies are gray. The travel industry thrives on this fact by luring millions of people to brighter climates. There's nothing wrong with enjoying the sun and its many benefits. But if we rely on good weather to maintain our good cheer, the climate of our inner world will be as changeable as the weather.

This was my condition before I became a Christian while in my teens. Each morning I would check out the weather. If it was bright, I felt happy; if it was gloomy, so was I. One night I realized I needed Jesus. Kneeling by my bed, I accepted His forgiveness for my sins and invited Him into my life. The next morning I forgot to check the weather! It simply didn't matter anymore. The "Sun of Righteousness" had risen in my heart (Malachi 4:2) and had replaced my fickle source of happiness with Himself.

Since then, my personal world has known some dark times, but the Lord has been my constant "sun and shield" (Psalm 84:11). I still prefer sunny days, but I'm no longer a "sun-worshiper." Instead, I'm a worshiper of God's Son who shines brightly within me—whatever the weather.

Which kind of worshiper are you? —Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

There is sunshine in my soul today,  
More glorious and bright  
Than glows in any earthly sky,  
For Jesus is my light. —Hewitt

Lasting happiness doesn't come from sunny days but from the Son of God.

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#### **Malachi 4:2 J. C. Philpot. Daily Portions**

J C Philpot - Just as the sun rises in the east and gradually mounts up into the meridian sky, dispersing with every ray light, warmth, and gladness; so this blessed Lord Jesus, as the Sun of righteousness, is ever dispersing the beams of his grace and the rays of his favor; and whenever those beams come, and those rays fall, there is light and life, and everything to make the soul holy and happy. Now a man would act very foolishly if, wishing to have light in his room when the sun was shining at noonday, he should shut all the shutters, and strike a match to give him a little light for a few moments. Let us not then be so foolish as to look for happiness or comfort in our own performances when the glorious Sun of righteousness is at the right hand of God, and shining thence upon

believing hearts. But when the veil is over the heart, it is like shutters in a room--there is no light to show who, what, or where Jesus is. And then need we wonder that men strike a light and make a fire, that they may "walk in the sparks of their own kindling?" But what is God's word against all such? "This shall you have of my hand, you shall lie down in sorrow" (Isaiah 50:11). - Daily Portions

### **September 2 J. C. Philpot. Daily Words for Zion's Wayfarers.**

"Unto you who fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Malachi 4:2

Oh, what a mercy for the Church of Christ that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus has not left her as he might justly have left her, to perish in her sins, but has provided for her a Savior, and a great one, and does from time to time encourage every poor, self-condemned sinner to hope in his mercy! The very things, poor, exercised soul, that most try your mind are the very things that make such a Savior suitable to you. You are dark; this makes the Sun of righteousness exactly suitable to enlighten you. You are cold; this makes you need the Sun to warm you. You are cheerless and cast down; this makes you need the Sun to gladden you. You are barren and unfruitful, and lament that you cannot bring forth fruit to God's glory; you need the Sun to fertilize you. You are, at times, very dead in your feelings, and can scarcely find any inclination to pray, meditate, or read the Scriptures; you need the Sun to enliven and revive you. Are not, then, these very trials and temptations necessary to make you feel that the Lord Jesus is the Sun you need, the very Sun that David (Psalm 84:11) felt him to be? What value do those put upon the Lord Jesus who make a fire for themselves, and walk in the sparks of their own kindling? What is Jesus to those who know no trouble of soul? What real and earnest prayer or fervent desire have they after him? what ardent longing for his appearing? what breathings to see and feel his blood and righteousness? Oh! it is sharp exercises, manifold trials, and powerful temptations that make the soul really value the Lord Jesus. -

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### **Malachi 4:2 The Power Of The Sun**

#### **READ: Psalm 85:1-13**

The Sun of Righteousness shall arise. --Malachi 4:2

I remember the day I arose early to work in my garden but found dense fog over the entire landscape, limiting my vision to only a few feet. It was so wet that work was out of the question. But my early rising was not in vain. As I sat on a potato crate in the doorway of the barn facing east, I was to behold one of the grandest of all heavenly spectacles, the sunrise.

First there was a brightening of the fog. As the sun shed its light and warmth, the mist began to move upward, and at last the sun burst through in all its glory. The trees dripped with moisture, and a thousand dewdrops on the grass and shrubbery sparkled like so many diamonds as they reflected the sun.

I sat transfixed, forgetting about the beans I had planned to pick. I saw in the sunrise my own experience. Once I too was in a fog, lost and confused until the Sun of Righteousness arose in my heart. First a glimmer of hope, and then one day in a moment the light burst through and I saw the One who scattered all my doubts and fears.

O that we today, like the sparkling dewdrops, would reflect His light and glory. As "we walk in the light" (1 Jn. 1:7), may men and women see the Son shining brightly through our lives and words. —M. R. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sun of my soul, Thou Savior dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near;  
O may no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes. --Keble

Christians are windows through which the glory of Jesus can shine.

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**Malachi 4:2 Robert Morgan** - We can even go to the book of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, written about 400 years before Christ was born, and find this theme. In Malachi 4—the last chapter of the Old Testament—the ancient prophet avows that the Messiah's coming will be like the sun rising in the morning, with healing in its rays.

It takes eight minutes and fifteen seconds for a particle of light to travel through space from the sun to the earth. That means that if at this moment the sun would suddenly burn out like a light bulb when the filament blows, we would have just about eight minutes of life left on this earth. Then suddenly the world would be plunged into darkness. I suppose our power stations would work for a few minutes, and I suppose we could see the distant twinkling stars. But for the most part, this planet would be plunged into pitch blackness and we would all be groping around like blind men.

And then, of course, the deadly blasts of cold air would blanket the planet, and temperatures would plunge into a deep freeze. The weather systems would all collapse, and without the sun's gravitational pull, our planet would wobble out of its circuit and float away into the blackness of the void.

That's what a person's life is like without Jesus Christ! The Son of God is to the human soul what the sun above is to planet Earth. He provides warmth and light, and our lives are to revolve around Him in a ceaseless orbit of faith and obedience. Without Him, we grope in the darkness, looking for hope, but all is dark and cold, and our lives grow wobbly and gradually lose altitude until they're lost in the blackness of eternity.

The Psalmist said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life—of whom shall I be afraid" (Psalm 27:1). ([Inside the Tabernacle - Christ: Our Sufficiency](#))

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### **Malachi 4:2; Psalm 84:11 Today in the Word**

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. - Numbers 6:24-25

When was the last time you watched a sunrise? Perhaps you've slept in too often, and can't remember. If you've been up, perhaps you've been busy or stuck in traffic, and not taken the time to enjoy this daily drama of nature. Perhaps because sunrise is so frequent, you've been taking it for granted. Yet no two sunrises are exactly the same—our Creator makes a new masterpiece each and every morning!

Today's verses use the sun as a metaphor for God. Notice there is no confusion between the sun and God, as in the case of the pagan nations which surrounded Israel. The sun is a created object, and only the Creator is worthy of worship.

In that case, what attributes of God do the Jewish writers want to highlight by comparing Him to the sun? One answer is His righteousness and glory (Mal. 4:2). For those who revere the Lord, a new day is coming. Like the sun rising, God will appear on the horizon of our wicked world, dispelling the darkness and bringing the fire of judgment to evildoers and granting healing and redemption to His worshipers (v. 1).

In exactly this way, the first coming of Christ was like a sunrise: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned" (Isa. 9:2; cf. Luke 1:76--79). When the day of the Lord is full, there will in fact be no more need for the sun—"the Lord will be [our] everlasting light" (Isa. 60:19-20).

A second meaning of this sun metaphor spotlights God's blessing or favor (Ps. 84:11). That's why the standard priestly blessing included the phrase, "the Lord make His face shine upon you" (Num. 6:25). As with the first meaning, this happy result is only for those who are living righteously, "those whose walk is blameless."

TODAY ALONG THE WAY - Schedule a time soon to get up early and watch the sun rise. Pick a good vantage point. Allow plenty of time. You might even invite a friend to join you.

**Malachi 4:3 "You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.:**

- Ge 3:15 Jos 10:24,25 2Sa 22:43 Job 40:12 Ps 91:13 Isa 25:10 26:6 63:3-6 Da 7:18,27 Mic 5:8 7:10 Zec 10:5 Ro 16:20 Rev 11:15 14:20)

**You** - Referring to the **righteous remnant**, those who fear the Name of the LORD.

**Will tread down the wicked** - This literally happened in Joshua's day (Josh 10:24-25)! This prophetic promise will happen again in Israel in the future! At the time of Malachi's writing (and even in our day), it might look like evil doers are triumphing over good and God, but like Paul Harvey used to say "And now for the rest of the story" - It's "His Story (History)" and the final act is the book of the Revelation (apokalupsis = the revealing) of Jesus Christ! John records that when Jesus returns triumphant, **He will tread** "the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty." (Rev 19:15-[note](#))

**Ashes under the soles of your feet on the day** - Zechariah alludes to that **day**...

Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against

Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. (Zech 14:12, read also Isaiah 63:1-6 which also describes these end time events)

**Isaiah** speaks of the events on **the day** the LORD is **preparing**...

Who is this who comes from Edom (Jesus the returning King of kings!), With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? (Could this be anyone other than the returning Messiah?) "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? 3 "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. 4 "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come (Vengeance for all who fail to repent, redemption for all who repent!). 5 "And I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me; And My wrath upheld Me. 6 "And I trod down the peoples in My anger, And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth." (Isaiah 63:1-6)

This picture of treading **down the wicked** also reminds me of the **Protevangelium**, Latin for the "first preaching of the Gospel," "the Bible in embryo, the sum of all history and prophecy in a germ."

And I will put enmity (hostility, hatred) between you (Satan) and the woman (Ultimately fulfilled in Mary - Gal 4:4-5, Isa 7:14, Mic 5:3, Mt 1:23 Lk 1:31,35, 2:7), and between your seed (all who are in Adam - Ro 5:12-note) and her seed (Messiah); He (Messiah) shall bruise you (Satan) on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel (Picture of the Crucifixion)." (Ge 3:15)

**W A Criswell explains** - It is a prediction of continual hostility between good and evil, between man and the satanic forces that oppose his moral well-being, and between the people of God and the unregenerate world system in which they live. This is more than a prediction, however. Such conflict is said to be divinely caused. It is God's will that until the final redemption, the Christian and the world should not be at peace. The "woman" is emphasized because she was beguiled by the Serpent; it is she who is "the mother of all living" (Ge 3:20), and it is by the woman that the Savior would come (Gal. 4:4). The "seed" of the Serpent must include all the followers of the Evil One (cf. John 8:44). There is a unique allusion in "her Seed," the first announcement of the virgin birth, for biologically in conception the seed or sperm is delivered by the man; but in the miraculous conception of the Messiah, the seed was the woman's, the result of her being overshadowed by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 4:4). Jesus Christ, then, as the "Seed" of the woman, will ultimately defeat Satan and his "seed." The phrases "bruise your head" and "bruise His heel" reveal suffering for both sides, but the final wounds to the Serpent are ultimately devastating, while the victory most certainly comes for the descendants of Eve. The Savior was "bruised for our [man's] iniquities" (Isa. 53:5), but His sufferings and death are now history. A bruised "heel" may be nursed until healed, but the crushing of the "head" means certain death. In the atonement and promised return of Christ, Satan's head is crushed (cf. Ge 9:13; Rev. 20:2, 3-note).

They will **tread down the wicked** because God (Who is greater and in them - 1Jn 4:4) has defeated the wicked ruler, Satan...

And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. (Ro 16:20-note)

**John** explains how the **righteous remnant** (and all the righteous of all ages) will be enabled to **tread down the wicked**...

For whatever is born of God overcomes (nikao) the world (kosmos); and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes (pisteuo in the present tense) that Jesus is the Son of God? (1Jn 5:4-5)

**Related Discussion** - Three Mortal Enemies of our Soul - the **world**, the **flesh** and the **devil**

**For they will be ashes - Why?** Because they will be **set... ablaze... leaving neither root or branch** (Mal 4:1). **Ashes** are all that will remain. And it is easy to tread upon **ashes**!

**The day I am preparing** - This is a fearful, awesome thought! God is preparing this horrific day, and in a sense we each are preparing for this day (**Day of the Lord**), either safe in Christ (cf Col 3:3-note, Jn 10:27-30) or dead (and doomed) in our trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1-note, cf Ro 5:12-note)!

**Dear reader, are you safe or will you be sorry? If you fear God now, you do not need to fear His**

## judgment on the terrible day that is coming!

**Malachi 4:4 "Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.:**

- **the law:** Ex 20:3-21 Dt 4:5,6 Ps 147:19,20 Isa 8:20, 42:21 Mt 5:17-20, 19:16-22, 22:36-40 Mk 12:28-34 Lk 10:25-28, 16:29-31 Jn 5:39-47 Ro 3:31, 13:1-10 Gal 5:13,14,24,25 Jas 2:9-13
- Ex 21:1-23:33 Lev 1:1-7:38 Ps 147:19

**Remember** (zakar) - Zakar means not only to be reminded of something but also to act accordingly. This is a command to the **righteous remnant** to bring to mind the Law of Moses. While it is not stated, the implication is to be a hearer of the Word and a doer of the Word. The doing of the Law in no way saved them but their ability to order their lives according to God's statutes and ordinances was evidence that they were genuine believers.

It is notable that the charge for Israel to **remember** the law is repeated 13 times in the second giving of the Law, just prior to Israel's entry into the promised land - Deut 5:15; 7:18; 8:2, 18; 9:7, 27; 15:15; 16:3, 12; 24:9, 18, 22; 25:17; 32:7

**Eugene Merrill** - To **remember** is to do. There is no abstract reflection here but a command to bear in mind and to put into effect. This is the very exhortation Moses himself made, especially in the great parentheses of Deuteronomy. "Remember YHWH your God," he said, "that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers" (Dt. 8:18). ([Malachi Commentary recommended](#))

**Moses My servant** - This is a description toward which every saint should eagerly strive (enabled by the Spirit)! It is surely no coincidence that in this closing section **Moses** and **Elijah** are mentioned and these are the same two men who are with Jesus in the Transfiguration. (Mt 17:1-8). It seems fair to say that Moses represented the Law and Elijah represented the prophets.

**The statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb** - Referring to the giving of the "Ten Commandments" (and other laws) at Mt Sinai. **Horeb** has a connection not only to Moses but also to **Elijah**, who "traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God" (1Ki 19:8; cf. Ex 3:1).

**Disciple's Study Bible** - The prophetic books end with a reminder to the faithful to continue doing the Law, preserved as revelation in writing from its manifestation and deliverance at Horeb (Sinai) by God's messenger Moses. Law had become authoritative Scripture, the criteria for judging the faithfulness of God's people.

**Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.:**

- **I am going** - Mal 3:1 Isa 40:3 Mt 11:13,14, Mt 17:10-13, 27:47-49 Mk 9:11-13 Lk 1:17, 7:26-28, 9:30 Jn 1:21,25
- **great:** Mal 4:1 Joe 2:31 Ac 2:19,20 Rev 6:17

## ELIJAH THE PROPHET

**Behold** (02009)(hinneh) - Hinneh calls attention to the text and directs reader to give special attention -- it is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy. God wanted to make sure they heard the pronouncement concerning Elijah the Prophet.

**Walter Kaiser** - There is a clear relationship between this verse and Malachi 3:1. They both contain: (1) the word **"Behold,"** (2) the participle **"I am sending,"** (3) the mission of calling the people to **"turn,"** and (4) references to the **day of the Lord**.

**John Phillips'** has an interesting succinct summation of Malachi 4:5-6...

When Jesus came the first time, God did indeed send a forerunner: John the Baptist, who came in the spirit of Elijah to call the nation back to God. The nation responded by murdering John and crucifying Christ. But Jesus is coming again and before He returns, the real Elijah will come, armed with miraculous power to smite the earth with plague and judgment (Revelation 11:3-12-[note](#)).

**I am going to send you Elijah the prophet** - Is this the same person to whom Malachi refers in Mal 3:1? While some say no, the majority of ancient and modern Protestant interpreters maintain that the two figures are identical. The second question is who is this "Elijah?" Is this John the Baptist who comes in the spirit and power of Elijah? Will the prophet Elijah actually return before the Day of



the Lord? While most see John the Baptist as the "type" of Elijah and thus see no need for a literal Elijah (albeit see Elijah's literal appearance at the Transfiguration), there remains the possibility that Elijah might be one of the two witnesses in Revelation 11:3ff (See [Who Are the Two Witnesses?](#)). There is however no clear consensus regarding this possibility, and so one cannot be dogmatic regarding Elijah's literal reappearance.

**Gotquestions** discussion -

- [What should we learn from the life of Elijah?](#)

This prophecy could have been fulfilled at least in part in Elijah's appearance with Moses at the Transfiguration. Some would argue that this was only a vision, and would say that Elijah did not literally return. Vision or not, there is no doubt it was truly Elijah!

And **Elijah** appeared to them along with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. (Mk 9:4, Mt 17:3)

**Elijah the prophet** - John the Baptist was a type of Elijah at Christ's first advent -

Luke 1:17-commentary "And it is (John the Baptist) who will go as a forerunner before Him (Messiah) in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

**Comment:** John the Baptist like the OT prophets such as Elijah were concerned about calling the erring nation of Israel back to God, to genuine repentance.

John the Baptist readily admitted that he was the one who prepared the way for the Lord (Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1), but adamantly denied that he was actually Elijah (Jn 1:21-23).

Mt 11:10 "This (John the Baptist) is the one about whom it is written, 'BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.' 11 "Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12 "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force. 13 "For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. 14 "And if you care to accept it, he himself is Elijah, who was to come.

**Comment:** Jesus is not saying Elijah had been reincarnated as John the Baptist, which as we noted above, John himself denied (Jn 1:21).

**Ryrie:** Jesus is saying that if the Jews had received Him, they would also have understood that John fulfilled the OT prediction of the coming of Elijah before the Day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5).

**MacArthur** agrees with Ryrie: If they had believed, John would have been the fulfillment of the Elijah prophecies. (Study Bible)

Mt 17:10 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that **Elijah** must come first? (Referring to Mal 4:5)" 11 And He answered and said, "**Elijah** is coming and will restore all things; 12 but I say to you, that **Elijah already came**, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." 13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

**MacArthur:** The prediction that the actual Old Testament person of Elijah would be the forerunner of the Messiah and His judgment was well-known to Jews of Jesus' day. Therefore, as Peter, James, and John came down the mountainside with the Lord, they could not have helped wondering how the appearance of Elijah they had just witnessed (cf Mt 17:3) fit in with Malachi's prophecy "If You are the Messiah, as you have declared and we have believed," they asked, in effect, "why did Elijah not appear before You began Your ministry?" It was doubtlessly that same concern that many of the Jewish leaders used to justify rejecting Jesus' messiahship. And it was probably Malachi's prophecy that caused some people to think that Jesus was Elijah rather than the Messiah (Mt. 16:14). "Despite His great miracles," they may have reasoned, "Jesus cannot be the Messiah, because Elijah has not yet come. So He must Himself be Elijah." (MacArthur Study Bible)

Jesus responded by first acknowledging the partial truth, saying, "Elijah is coming and will restore all things." There is an Elijah who is yet to come; and when he arrives, he will restore all things, just as Malachi prophesied (**Ed:** MacArthur does not elaborate, but this would seem to leave open the prospect that one of the witnesses in Rev 11:3 is literally Elijah! See [Who Are the Two Witnesses?](#)).

“But I say to you,” Jesus went on to explain, “that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist. (Mt 17:12-13)

The Elijah prophesied by Malachi was not to be a reincarnation of the ancient prophet. Rather, as the angel of the Lord told Zacharias regarding his son, John the Baptist, the prophesied forerunner would come “**in the spirit and power of Elijah**” (Luke 1:17). John would not be the ancient prophet come back to earth but would minister in much the same style and power as had Elijah. In that way, as Jesus had told the disciples at least once before, “[John] is Elijah, who was to come” (Matt. 11:14).

Why then, some wonder, did John himself disclaim being Elijah? When the priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked him, “‘Are you Elijah?’ ... he said, ‘I am not’ ” (John 1:21). He denied being Elijah because, though he knew of the prophecy of Luke 1, like Jesus, he realized the question was about a literal, reincarnated Elijah. And, though John did not share Jesus’ omniscience, he doubtlessly also realized that the questioning of the priests and Levites originated from unbelief, not sincere faith. They were not interested in learning the truth but of finding a way to discredit John, just as they would later seek ways to discredit the One whose way he came to prepare.

**David Guzik** commenting on Mt 17:11-12: Jesus reassures the disciples that Elijah will indeed come first. But the first coming of Jesus’ did not bring the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Instead, the Malachi 4:5 coming of Elijah is probably best identified with the appearance of the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3-13 (See [Who Are the Two Witnesses?](#)), and the Second Coming of Jesus.

**W A Criswell** has a different interpretation: Elijah has come, and the prophecy of Mal. 4:5, 6 has been fulfilled in John the Baptist. Malachi’s prophecy had a real fulfillment, but not as Jewish expectation anticipated. The prophecy of Malachi actually meant that an “Elijah-like” character would appear prior to the first coming of the Messiah.

**Henry Morris** has another interpretation: Elijah was taken into heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11) and is apparently one... of God’s two witnesses in the first half of the seven-year tribulation period of the end-times (Revelation 11:3,4). Although many have assumed this prophecy was fulfilled by John the Baptist, John himself said he was not Elijah and had not come for that purpose (Jn 1:21). The Lord Jesus said that “Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things” (Mt 17:11). John did indeed come “in the spirit and power of Elijah,” (Luke 1:17), but he was not Elijah himself. Elijah must yet return to complete his unfinished prophetic ministry just “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD,” which is still future (see Mt 17:10-13; Rev 11:3,4).

Even when Jesus called John “the Elijah who was to come,” He conditioned that designation with the phrase, “if you are willing to accept it” (Mt 11:14). A solution to the problem seems to be offered in Mt 17. After Elijah appeared with Christ in His transfiguration, the disciples asked about Elijah’s future coming. Jesus, speaking apparently after John’s death (cf. Mt 14:1-2), affirmed that “Elijah comes and will restore all things” (Matt. 17:11). This future expectation indicates that Malachi 4:5-6 was not fulfilled in the ministry of John (nor in Elijah’s appearance at Mt of Transfiguration). Israel did not accept John the Baptist as the Elijah-like restorer of all things, so another Elijah-like forerunner is yet to come before the day of the Lord.

**Eugene Merrill** addresses the question of Elijah...

In what sense should one understand the coming of Elijah? The answers to this question are varied. The OT record reveals that he did not die but was translated bodily into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). His coming thus could be more easily explained and made possible without the impediment of death. His very ascension perhaps was for the purpose of his later eschatological appearance as forerunner of the coming of YHWH. Jewish tradition from earliest times viewed it in this way, as even the NT suggests. When the Jewish masses learned of the ministry of John the Baptist in the wilderness, they went out to him and inquired as to his identity. Was he the Messiah, they wondered, or Elijah, or the prophet, that is, the prophet of Deuteronomy 18? To each of these his answer was no. But the very question reflects anticipation of a coming Elijah.

Jesus, in an apparent contradiction of John’s own testimony, clearly identified John as Elijah (Matt. 11:14), but in a highly nuanced way. John’s inquisitors had wondered if he was not actually Elijah in the flesh returned to earth. This he was not, as he made clear in his reply. But he was, however, an Elijah figure, one who came in the spirit and power of Elijah. This is why Jesus qualified His assessment of the Elijah-John identification by saying, “If you are willing to receive him, this is Elijah who is to come.” That is, John stands in fulfillment of the

promise of Malachi concerning the coming of Elijah but only in the sense that he announced the coming of Christ, just as the messenger would come to announce the coming of Adon (Mal. 3:1).

Jesus touched on this point again in the transfiguration narrative (Matt. 17:1–13; cf. Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36). When Jesus appeared on the mountain in glory, He was accompanied by Moses and Elijah, the same two figures mentioned by Malachi. In later discussion with His disciples about His resurrection, they reminded Him that before the messianic manifestation could come to pass Elijah must first appear. Jesus agreed that Elijah must restore all things, but then announced that Elijah had already come, only to be rejected. They then understood that Jesus once more was connecting Elijah with John the Baptist.

As argued previously, however, in connection with Mal. 3:1, the messenger of the covenant there and John the Baptist are one and the same. Jesus established this linkage (Matt. 11:10–11) and went on to make the further linkage between John and Elijah in the same passage (Matt. 11:14). But Mal. 3:1–6, as we saw, has eschatological as well as messianic overtones. This suggests that the messenger (and thus also Elijah) has an eschatological identification and role as well. There is still a sense, then, in which Elijah is yet to come. This is put beyond question by Mal. 3:23 (EB Mal 4:5), which locates Elijah's coming in the setting of "the great and terrible day of YHWH," a description freighted with eschatological language.

It is likely, then, that the historical Elijah is not in view but instead an antitype Elijah who, like John, will announce the coming of YHWH in a day yet future. But the fact that he may not be the historical Elijah cannot mitigate against the literalness of the figure himself any more than it could against the literalness of the historical John the Baptist.

Why Elijah is mentioned and not someone else may have to do with his place as a prophet non pareil. Moses appears in Mal. 3:21 (EB 4:4) in connection with the Law; Elijah appears in the next verse, perhaps in connection with the prophets. Thus the whole canon of Malachi's day is represented, attesting univocally to the certainty of YHWH's coming salvation. This sublime act of final redemption is confirmed by the word of two witnesses (Deut. 19:15), just as its anticipatory revelation in the Transfiguration of our Lord was accompanied by the same two witnesses, Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:3) (**Ed Comment:** Which leads one to ponder the identification of the Two Witnesses in Rev 11:3-13!). The great and terrible day of YHWH is a certainty, as both law and prophecy declare. But it will be a day of salvation for those of Israel, who, by the message of grace preached by Elijah, are thereby made capable of adhering to the covenant of Moses to which YHWH likewise elected them by grace. ([Malachi Commentary recommended](#))

**The great and terrible Day of the Lord - Great** in the sense that it will be remarkable in magnitude, degree, and effectiveness.

**Terrible** in the sense of exciting extreme alarm or intense fear for those outside of Christ! Other synonyms that come to mind include frightful, that which strikes terror, formidable, very serious, extreme, unpleasant, etc.

The first allusion in Scripture to the **Day of the Lord** is found in Exodus...

But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you; nevertheless **in the day when I punish**, I will punish them for their sin." (Ex 32:34)

**Warren Wiersbe** - When we get near the end of the New Testament, we read, "And there shall be no more curse" (Rev. 22:3 [note](#)). All of creation is eagerly awaiting the return of the Savior, expecting Him to deliver creation from the bondage of sin (Ro 8:18-23-note). We too should be expecting Him and, while we're waiting, witness of Him to others. For when the Sun of righteousness arises, it will mean either burning or blessing (Mal. 4:1–2): blessing to those who have trusted Him, burning to those who have rejected Him. Nobody can afford to argue with God the way the Israelites did when they heard Malachi, because God will always have the last word. For you, will that last word be salvation or judgment? ([Be Amazed](#))

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**Malachi 4:4-6 A Family in Trouble** - Many of America's 30 million white-tailed deer find themselves endangered not by guns, but by the cars of our expanding suburbs. I was reminded of their plight when a mature doe dashed through traffic just ahead of me. As I watched, I wondered what had driven her to take such a chance, and why she then stopped on the other side and looked back over her shoulder. As I drove by her, I turned to follow her gaze and saw two small fawns looking helplessly at their mother across the busy street. Instead of following, they turned and walked back into the woods.

This family is not alone. We too can find ourselves in circumstances of separation and danger we did not anticipate. Reading Malachi and Matthew reminds us that we are troubled children of troubled parents who desperately need the help of our Father in heaven. Sometimes we need His help to see and avoid repeating the sins of our fathers (Neh. 9:2-3). Sometimes we need His help to turn back to the example and care of loving parents (Luke 15:18).

Only from our heavenly Father can we find the perfect forgiveness, example, and inner grace we need. He knows we are all fallen children of fallen parents, and even now He offers us the help of His Spirit and the rescue of His Son. — by Mart De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Each day we learn from yesterday  
Of God's great love and care;  
And every burden we must face  
He'll surely help us bear.  
—D. De Haan

**It's never too soon to turn back to God.**

**Malachi 4:6 "He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.":**

- **restore** : Lk 1:16,17,76
- **so that**: Isa 61:2 Da 9:26,27 Zec 11:6, 13:8 14:2 Mt 22:7, 23:35-38, Mt 24:27-30 Mk 13:14-26 Lk 19:41-44, 21:22-27
- **smite**: Dt 29:19-29 Isa 24:6, 43:28, 65:15, Da 9:11 Zec 5:3, 14:12 Mk 11:21 Heb 6:8, 10:26-31 Rev 22:3,20,21

### A DIVINE "RESUSCITATION"

Note that in the Hebrew Bible this verse (Mal 4:6) is Malachi 3:23 and the last verse, Malachi 3:24, is Mal 4:4. It seems that the Hebrew scholars did not want to end the OT with the word "**curse!**"

He - [Elijah \(= "My God is Jehovah"\)](#) and John the Baptist in the "spirit and power of Elijah." (Lk 1:17+)

**Radmacher** - As in every act of God announcing judgment, there is also an offer of His mercy

**MacArthur** on **turn... hearts** - The very opposite of what occurred at Christ's first coming (cf. Matt. 10:34–36) anticipates a general societal repentance (cf. Matt. 25:31–46; Rev. 7:9–17; 20:4–6), so that complete destruction might be averted. The earth will be restored to Edenic wonder, the curse reversed, the kingdom established with Messiah reigning, and the righteous Jews and Gentiles entering it.

**Will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers**- Scripture is always the best commentary on Scripture (Compare Scripture with Scripture) and Luke alludes to this passage, as well as directly quoting it in his Gospel...

And he (John the Baptist) will turn back (**epistrepho**) many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God (Read John's call to the multitudes, surely including the hearts of both fathers and sons in Lk 3:7-8). 17 "And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN (**epistrepho**) THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Lk 1:16-17)

**Comment:** The verb Luke uses for "**turn... back**" is **epistrepho** which means to turn about, around or toward and which in context describes a definite turn to God, a genuine conversion (repentance, regeneration).

**Epistrepho** is frequently used of a sinner's conversion to God (Read Acts 9:35; Acts 14:15; Acts 26:18, 20; 2Cor 3:16; 1Pe 2:25 Ps 22:27 Ps 51:13)

**Restore** ([07725](#))(**shub/sub**) is a verb used 1060x in 954 verses and means to turn, to return, to go back, to do again, to revert, to change one's mind. It is interesting that a derivative **sobeb** is used twice in the OT of backsliding.

The Lxx uses the verb **apokathistemi** which means to restore to one's former state, which is also a medical technical term for curing or restoring to health (Mk 3:5), "to return someone to a former place or relationship." (BDAG) The idea of **restore** in this passage seems to be repentance.

**Hearts** ([03820](#))(**leb** - see word study)

Taylor -

Elijah's coming before the day of the Lord will result in a great revival of faith in Israel, expressed here as fathers and their "children" (or sons, *bānīm*) "turning" (*šûb*, the same verb translated "return" in 3:7) their hearts toward each other. The idiom of turning one's heart is similar to the idiom of placing upon the heart used in Mal 2:2 ("set your heart to honor my name"). Israel's future repentance after the Lord's discipline is referred to in Dt 30:1-6 as turning, restoring, or taking (*šûb*) God's instruction to one's heart:

So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call (**Ed: Hebrew = sub** so more literally = "**you return to your heart**") them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, 2 and you **return (Ed: Hebrew = sub)** to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3 then the LORD your God will restore (**Ed: Restore = Hebrew = sub**) you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again (**Ed: Again = Hebrew = sub**) from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. 4 "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back (**Ed: There has been a partial regathering with the re-birth of Israel but this awaits a complete end times fulfillment**). 5 "And the LORD your God will bring you into the land (**Ed: the Land of Israel promised** to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not the church!) which your fathers possessed, and you (Israel - those who have accepted Messiah as their Redeemer in the last days - cf Zech 12:10, 13:9) shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. 6 "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart (**Ed: See Excursus on Circumcision Of the Heart**) and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live. (cf. Dt 4:39; 1Kgs 8:47; 12:27; Isa 46:8; La 3:21). (**Ed: Bolding added and Dt 30:1-2 expanded to Dt 30:1-6**)

The expression in Mal 4:6 is literally "**and he will return/restore the heart of fathers upon sons and the heart of sons upon their fathers.**" The point is that fathers and sons would no longer live self-serving lives, but fathers will take their sons to heart and sons will take to heart their fathers, considering the effects of their actions on one another in the course of their lives. Ezekiel had vividly portrayed a nation under the horrors of divine condemnation when he prophesied a sight of cannibalism during the siege of Jerusalem in the words, "Fathers will eat their children, and children will eat their fathers (Ezek 5:10; cf. Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53; 2 Kgs 6:28–29). Malachi's portrayal, on the other hand, was of a nation that had returned to the Lord and so had rediscovered the way of peace. Malachi's Israel was full of men committing acts of treachery and injustice against one another (Mal 2:10; 3:5), but Elijah's Israel would be full of righteousness and peace; and his day would be one of revelation, repentance, and reconciliation (**Ed: A day that can only be realized when the Prince of Shalom returns to set up His Millennium**). ([Haggai, Malachi- An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture \(New American Commentary- Richard A. Taylor, Ray Clendenen\)](#))

**So that** - See discussion of value of observing and querying **terms of purpose or result** - so that, in order that, that, as a result.

**The land** - Refers to Israel, the promised land, but this is a promise they would rather not "actuate!"

**R C Sproul** - Repentance and turning to God will be seen in the restoration of family relationships (Luke 1:17).

**NLT Study Bible** - Turn is the OT term for repentance and indicates a complete change of loyalties. Turning toward God results in reconciliation between generations (see 2 Cor 5:18–20).

**NET Bible Note on He will restore the hearts...** : [the] sons, and the heart[s] of [the] sons to their fathers." This may mean that the messenger will encourage reconciliation of conflicts within Jewish families in the postexilic community (see Mal 2:10; this interpretation is followed by most English versions). Another option is to translate, "he will turn the hearts of the fathers together with those of the children [to me], and the hearts of the children together with those of their fathers [to me]." In this case the prophet encourages both the younger and older generations of sinful society to repent and return to the LORD (cf. Mal 3:7). This option is preferred in the present translation; see Beth Glazier-McDonald, Malachi (SBLDS), 256.

**David Dockery** - Elijah's coming before the day of the Lord will result in a great revival of faith in Israel, expressed here as fathers and their "children" (or sons) turning (the same verb translated "return" in 3:7) their hearts toward each other. As quoted in Luke 1:17, it describes fathers turning compassionately toward their children and disobedient people accepting the wisdom of the righteous. (Holman Bible Publishers)

**Smite the land with a curse - Kaiser** - Humanity worldwide will turn to the Lord (**Ed: Presumably Kaiser is referring to the Second Coming**), or God will need to come and smite the earth with a "curse" (Mal 4:6). The "curse" denotes involuntarily dedicating everything back to God, in contrast to the deliberate act of dedication called for in Romans 12:1–2. After a long pursuit of the wicked, God must ultimately claim everything back to himself, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof (Ps 24:1). Notice,

however, that when the hearts of the fathers turn to the Lord the generation gap is bridged, for then it is that the hearts of the fathers are turned to the children and the children's hearts are turned to the fathers (Mal 4:6).

**NET Note on "curse"** - Heb "[the] ban" (כֶּרֶם, kherem). God's prophetic messenger seeks to bring about salvation and restoration, thus avoiding the imposition of the covenant curse, that is, the divine ban that the hopelessly unrepentant must expect (see Deut 7:2; 20:17; Jdg 1:21; Zech 14:11). If the wicked repent, the purifying judgment threatened in Mal 4:1–3 will be unnecessary.

**Curse** (02764) (**herem**) it is something devoted unto divine service, and is under a ban. In some context as the present use, it describes a curse or extermination which implies total destruction (see Dt 7:26; 1Sa 15:18; Zech 14:11). MacKay says "The 'curse' is the ban, the utter devotion to destruction (Isa. 43:28 — and NIV footnote; Jer. 25:9) of what is an abomination in the LORD's sight."

**Herem** is not the normal word for **curse**, and as noted refers to the practice of devoting things or persons irrevocably to God, often by total destruction. Cities of Canaan were put under the "curse," and thus the people were to be exterminated (cf. Dt. 13:12-18; 20:16ff).

**Herem** "conveys the "basic meaning is the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God. The word is related to an Arabic root meaning "to prohibit, especially to ordinary use." The word "harem," meaning the special quarters for Muslim wives, comes from it. Usually āram means a ban for utter destruction, the compulsory dedication of something which impedes or resists God's work, which is considered to be accursed before God. The idea first appears in Nu 21:2–3, where the Israelites vowed that, if God would enable them to defeat a southern Canaanite king, they would "utterly destroy" (i.e. consider as devoted and accordingly utterly destroy) his cities. This word is used regarding almost all the cities which Joshua's troops destroyed (e.g. Jericho, Josh 6:21; Ai, Josh 8:26; Makkedah, Josh 10:28; Hazor, Josh 11:11), thus indicating the rationale for their destruction. In Dt 7:2–6, the command for this manner of destruction is given, with the explanation following that, otherwise, these cities would lure the Israelites away from the Lord (cf. Dt 20:17–18). Any Israelite city that harbored idolators was to be "utterly destroyed" (Deut 13:12–15; cf. Ex 22:19). A man who was the object devoted to God came under the same ban." (Leon Wood - TWOT)

**Herem** - 31 verses in the KJV. Note that verses that are **not in bold** are classified in the NAS by the Strong's number 2763a (21 verses) and those in **bold** by Strong's number 2763b = 9 verses, the latter being translated primarily with the meaning of net. (see Louw-Nida definition below) -

Lev 27:21, 28, **29**; Nu 18:14; Dt 7:26; 13:17; Josh 6:17,18; 7:1, 11, 12, 13, 15; 22:20; 1Sa 15:21; 1Kgs 20:42; 1Chr 2:7; **Eccl 7:26**; Isa 34:5; 43:28; **Ezek 26:5, 14; 32:3**; Ezek 44:29; **Ezek 47:10**; **Mic 7:2**; **Hab 1:15, 16, 17**; Zech 14:11; Mal 4:6.

**The KJV renders herem** as - net 9, accursed thing 9, accursed 4, curse 4, cursed thing 3, devoted 3, destruction 2, devoted thing 2, dedicated thing 1, destroyed 1; 38

**Louw Nida** definition summarized - 1. consecrated possession, i.e., a thing devoted to the Lord (Lev 27:21); 2. thing set apart to utter destruction, given to the ban, i.e., a thing or person that will be destroyed as a consecration to the Lord (1Sa 15:21; Isa 43:28) 1. fishnet, i.e., a net used to trap fish (Eze 26:5, 14; 32:3; 47:10; Hab 1:15, 16, 17); 2. trap, i.e., a snare used in hunting (Eccl 7:26; Mic 7:2)

**Eugene Merrill** - The ban (**herem**) was the judgment of God on places, things, and hopelessly unrepentant people that resulted in the extermination of living beings and the destruction or appropriation by YHWH of the rest. Were God's people at last to remain in unbelief and rebellion, they must suffer the fate of those placed under **herem**, for they, too, would be under His everlasting curse. The whole earth would suffer similarly, for without the mediatorial ministry of Israel, the kingdom of priests, the program of YHWH for universal redemption would collapse and the design for a universal kingdom come to an end. ([Malachi Commentary recommended](#))

Notice what the last word of the OT is "**curse**." What a way to end. It leaves you hanging, anticipating, searching for resolution. And the resolution would come in the **Messiah**.

**Steve Felker** has a pithy comment - Conclusion: Following this prophecy by Malachi, Israel is going to move into a period in which heaven goes off the air. God will not be broadcasting. No word was heard from Him until the silence was broken by the messenger who would introduce the Messiah. The silence of four hundred years was broken. Though the OT ends with a curse, the New Testament ushers in salvation, blessing and hope through Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Won't you believe in Him today? Jesus came under the curse of the Law when He died on the cross for you. Now, you can be saved, become a part of the people of God, and share in this marvelous destiny. ([Malachi 3:13-4:6 A Glorious Destiny](#))

**Thomas Constable** has an interesting interpretation (**Ed note**: Constable's interpretation is based on his belief that Elijah will return as one of the two witnesses in Rev 11:3ff) - At His first coming Jesus said that because of Him families would experience division.

Some fathers would believe on Him but their sons would not, and daughters would disagree with their mothers over Him (Mt. 10:35–36; Lk 12:49–53; cf. Mic 7:6). When this Elijah comes, he will cause the Jews to believe on their Messiah as they did in the past. They will unite over belief in Him. If the Lord would not send this Elijah, and if he did not turn the hearts of the Jews back to God, the Lord would have to come (in the person of Messiah) and strike the earth with a curse. Because the Jews will turn to Jesus Christ in faith, blessing will come to the earth, not a curse (Mal 4:2–3). This is another reference to millennial conditions. ([Malachi 4 Commentary](#))

**John Phillips** comments on **curse** as the last word of the Old Testament - Thus the Old Testament ends. The first book in the Bible ends with a coffin. Isaiah ends on a note of judgment and so do Ecclesiastes and Lamentations. Finally Malachi ends with the word "curse." The rabbis sought to avoid the full force of that dread word by repeating verse 5 after verse 6. But God did not want the word muted. He wanted it to wail out its woe down through the silent centuries. He wanted it to haunt the minds of men, to echo down the years. God wanted the Jew to find the word "curse" at the end of his Bible. What better preparation could there be for a new beginning in Christ? What better preparation could there be for the coming of Jesus, who would bring blessing? A curse or Christ-that choice was God's final message to the Old Testament Jew.

**J. Baldwin** - From early times attempts have been made to avoid the harsh ending of the book **smite the land with a curse**). Greek manuscripts placed Mal 4:4 after Mal 4:6, while Hebrew liturgical use led to the repetition of Mal 4:5 after Mal 4:6. Hebrew Bibles continue to print Mal 4:5 a second time at the end of the chapter.

**The fathers** - **Steven Cole** notes that "Many commentators interpret **"fathers"** to refer to the Jewish patriarchs, and **"children"** to refer to the disobedient people of Malachi's day. I reject that interpretation for two reasons. **First**, in Mal 2:10-16, we have already seen that the people in Malachi's day were intermarrying with unbelievers and experiencing fractured families. **Second**, Malachi here does not just refer to the children being reconciled to their fathers, but also the fathers to the children. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob didn't need to be reconciled to the people of Malachi's day. So I interpret it in the normal sense, to refer to **literal fathers and children being reconciled**. There is a progression here: First, there was personal alienation from God due to neglecting His Word (Mal 4:4). Next, there was family alienation (Mal 4:6a). If that were not corrected, the final step would be national deterioration (Mal 4:6b). God's remedy for the nation was to send Elijah the prophet to call the people to repentance before the day of judgment (Mal 4:5). God only sends judgment if we reject His offer of mercy. These people were indifferent to God's great love (Mal 1:2). So they needed first to get right with God by obedience to His Word and then to get right with one another. These are the two great commandments that sum up all of the Law and Prophets. Malachi is saying, The key to reconciled families is that we obey God's Word."

**A C Gaebelein** - The close of the Old Testament prophetic Word is majestically solemn. In the beginning of the Old Testament stands written the sin and the curse which came upon the race through the fall of man. The final testimony in Malachi speaks of Him who comes to take the curse upon Himself, the promised Christ; who comes to deal with the wicked, who comes to bless and to remove that curse. The New Testament which follows tells us of Him and of His matchless work, the fullness of redemption and the all-sufficiency of Grace. And the final New Testament book shows the consummation, the coming judgments, the righteous judgments of the Lord, and the fulfillment of all "which was spoken by His holy prophets;" ending with the great words, "Surely I come quickly! Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20-[note](#)) ([Arno Gaebelein's Annotated Bible](#))

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**FATHERS** - Brett Favre is 40 years old and still playing Quarterback in the National Football League. Favre is playing for the Minnesota Vikings, the fourth team of his storied career. He has won one super bowl and three times he has been voted the Most Valuable Player in the NFL. One of the reasons, perhaps the main reason, he is still playing years after most quarterbacks have retired is a deep-seated need to prove something to his father. Brett's wife, Deanna says, "Not only was Brett trying to impress his coach, he was trying to make his dad proud. That mentality always stuck with him. Six years after his father died, Brett Favre is still struggling to his most vocal second guesser proud. "I knew he was proud of me. But he was one of those who never said it." In addition, he says, "Never did he say he loved us (children). But we knew. And vice-versa: We never said it to him. I am going to make sure my children never have to assume I love them and I am proud of them. I am going to tell them. Every chance I get. Part of being a father is to give them a place in the world where love, welcome, and acceptance rules. While I am at it, I think I will give my dad a call too. (USA Today, December 18, 2009. P. A1-2., Illustration by Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell)

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### Malachi 4:6 Final Words - Our Daily Bread

"Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6).

Last words are powerful. Malachi 4 expresses God's final words to Israel under the Old Testament dispensation. For four hundred years He would remain silent until they would hear "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord'" (Matt. 3:3). Although Malachi 4:6 appears to be a curse, it really is not. It does not close the door on hope. On the contrary, it was God's

last appeal of love. The threat of a curse, expressed by the word lest, was aimed at averting the natural consequence of disobedience.

G. Campbell Morgan noted that from Malachi's time until Christ's, rabbis did not end their reading of Malachi with verse 6. Skipping from verse 4 to 6, they then reverted to verse 5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." And in the Greek Old Testament, verse 4 is put at the end. Thus the Jews regarded God's final words as spoken in love, not in anger.

God's final prophetic words to believers in the New Testament are also filled with hope: "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Rev. 22:20-21).

God's last words to Israel and to the church can give us hope. The assurance of His grace and the warnings from His love will keep us living close to Him. —D. J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**The Christian's future is as bright as the promises of God.**