

The Final Word

The Final Word on the Day of the Lord – Malachi 3:13-4:3 December 12, 2010

Christmas Eve Schedule

- 11am – Children’s Christmas Eve Service
- 4pm, 6pm, 8pm – Identical Candlelight Christmas Eve Services (no childcare)

Overview of Sermon Series

THE FINAL WORD		
An 8-Week Study of Malachi – The Last Book of the Old Testament		
Date	Message Title	Text
Oct 31	The Final Word on God’s Love	Malachi 1:1-5
Nov 7	The Final Word on God’s Purpose	Malachi 1:6-14
Nov 14	The Final Word on Leadership	Malachi 2:1-9
Nov 21	The Final Word on America	Malachi 2:10-16
Nov 28	The Final Word on Good and Evil	Malachi 2:17-3:5
Dec 5	The Final Word on Tithing	Malachi 3:6-12
Dec 12	The Final Word on the Day of the Lord	Malachi 3:13-4:3
Dec 19	The Final Word on Fatherhood	Malachi 4:4-6

Executive Summary of Malachi 3:13-4:3

The Israelites have been complaining that it is futile to serve and obey God because there are no consequences for those who do not. God responds that there will be consequences on _____.

Questions About the Fairness of God (3:13-15)

1. It is OK to ask God the _____ questions
 - **Psalms 10:1** – Why, O Lord, do You stand far off? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?
 - **Psalms 13:1-2** – How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?
 - See also Habakkuk 1:1-4
 - **Application #1** – What is a question that you would like to ask God? _____
2. It is _____ to harden your heart against God (3:13-15)
 - “said harsh things” = *chazaq* (khaw-zak) = to be obstinate/stout; to harden your heart (used of Pharaoh hardening his heart in Exodus 7:22)

- Many of the Israelites were hardening their hearts against God because they were not seeing the results from their religious acts that they expected to see. Thus, they said obstinate things against God. Contrast this with Job’s response to his situation.
- **Job 2:9-10** – His (Job’s) wife said to him, “Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!” He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

3. When all is said and done, the _____ of God will be very, very clear (3:16-4:3)

- CS Lewis: “The first words out of our mouth when we enter heaven will be ‘Of course!’” The Day when we say “Of course!” is called the “Day of the Lord” in the Bible.

What the “Day of the Lord” will be like for those who fear Him

1. On the Day of the Lord, the names of those who feared God will have been recorded in _____ of remembrance (3:16)

- Ralph Earle: “The fear of the Lord does not mean being afraid of God, but rather is a reverential trust in God that makes us want to please and obey Him.”
- Eugene Merrill: “To fear God is to revere Him, to recognize and confess His awesome sovereignty.”
- Matthew Henry: “They feared the Lord—that is... they revered the majesty of God, submitted to His authority, and had a dread of His wrath in all they thought and said; they humbly complied with God, and never spoke any stout words against Him. In every age there has been a remnant that feared the Lord, though sometimes but a little remnant.”
- Synonyms in today’s passage for those who feared the Lord include those “who honored His name” (3:16), “the righteous” (3:17), and those who revered His name (4:2).
- The “book of remembrance” appears to be a synonym for other books referred to in the Scriptures: “book of truth” (Daniel 10:21), “book of tears” (Psalm 56:8), and “book of life” (Psalm 69:28; Rev. 20:12,15).
- Matthew Henry: “Never was any good word spoken of God, or for God, from an honest heart, but it was registered, that it might be recompensed in the resurrection of the just, and in no wise lose its reward.”
- **Application #2** – Let’s be a people who fear the Lord – reverencing Him with our words and actions and lifestyles. One expression of walking in reverence for the Lord could be... “The Big 5 Challenge.”
- YouTube video: “John Piper – How Do You Fear God?” (2:10)

2. On the Day of the Lord, those who feared God will be His _____

(3:17a)

- *cegullah* (seg-ool-law) = jewel, peculiar treasure
- In Ephesians 2:10, God calls His people His “poem, masterpiece”
- Application #3 – Say this aloud over and over and renew your mind (Romans 12:2) to this truth: “In Christ, I am God’s jewel. I am God’s treasured possession. I am God’s masterpiece.”

3. On the Day of the Lord, those who feared God will be _____ from judgment (3:17b)

4. On the Day of the Lord, those who feared God will experience the _____ of God (4:2a)

- Charles Feinberg: “The sun is used here figuratively of God Himself, and specifically of the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel’s Messiah (Psalm 84:11; 2 Sam. 23:4; Isaiah 9:2; 49:6). He is called the Sun of righteousness, because He is the Lord our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5-6; 1 Corinth 1:30). There is spiritual healing in this Sun, for just as the rays of the physical sun give light and heat for the growth of plant and animal life, so the Sun of righteousness will heal the wounds inflicted upon and borne by the righteous. The beams of the sun are here spoken of as wings because of the speed with which they spread over the earth. Israel’s hope is the Sun of righteousness; the hope of the Church is the Morning Star (2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16).”
- Application #4 – Pray: Lord, I receive the healing of the warm rays of Your Presence in my life.

5. On the Day of the Lord, those who feared God will _____ (4:2b)

- Like a calf being released from a stall (where he would be slaughtered) and is instead released to freedom and to play in the pasture.
- Application #5 – By faith, dance now.

6. On the Day of the Lord, those who feared God will participate in the judgment of the wicked (4:3)

- Revelation 19:11-21 (and 17:14) seems to indicate that believers will return with Christ at His Second Coming and that we will be part of the “armies of heaven” riding with Him in victory over the wicked.

What the “Day of the Lord” will be like for those who reject God

- Those who fit in this category are called “the arrogant” (3:15; 4:1), “evil-doers” (3:15; 4:1), “the wicked” (3:18; 4:3), and those who do not serve God (3:18).
- There is one word to describe their fate: _____ (4:1,3)
- **Isaiah 66:15-16** – *See, the LORD is coming with fire, and His chariots are like a whirlwind; He will bring down His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire.*

For with fire and with His sword the LORD will execute judgment upon all men, and many will be those slain by the LORD.

- **Matthew 25:41** – *Then He will say to those on his left, “Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”*
- **Revelation 20:10-15** – *And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from His presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Application #6 – Get _____ from the fire to come.

- **Exodus 32:33** – *The Lord replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me I will blot out of My book.”*
- **Revelation 21:27** – *Nothing impure will ever enter (heaven)... but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*
- **Romans 5:8** – *But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- **Romans 10:9** – *If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- If you have never done Romans 10:9, please do so. Pray with a sincere heart:

God, I realize that My name will not be found in Your book because I have sinned against You. Help! I need a Savior! I repent of my sins, and I place my trust in what Your Son Jesus Christ did for me on the cross. Jesus, I believe that You are Lord and that You rose from the dead. I receive You into my life. Please make me into the person that You want me to be. Thank You for forgiving my sins and writing my name in Your Book of Life.

Application #7 – Help _____ from the fire to come.

- Will innocent people who have never heard of Christ be judged? No. But there is no such thing as “innocent people.” All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). There is no one righteous (Romans 3:10-11).
- **Jude 23** – *Snatch others from the fire.*

Questions to Discuss with My Family, Friends, and Small Group

1. What is your favorite day of the year? Why?
2. Read Malachi 3:13-4:3 aloud and discuss its meaning and applications using these notes. Share your applications with each other and pray for one another.