

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**MALACHI 4****Malachi 4**

Malachi four is the last chapter in the entire Old Testament. It is a chapter filled with the promise of judgment and a chapter filled with hope and promise.

Malachi thunders the warning of judgment in verse one, as he speaks of the coming of the LORD to bring judgment like a fiery oven in which stubble will be destroyed and nothing will be left of the wicked and their works in that day. Stubble in the Old and New Testaments is a symbol of worthlessness and waste. Paul speaks of this in his letter to the Corinthians in relation to the "Bema" or "Judgment Seat of Christ," which will happen when the Lord Jesus comes for those who are His followers that make up the "ekklesia" or the church.

"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw (Straw here is the same as "STUBBLE"), each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

Malachi then compares the coming Messiah and Savior to a great bird that will rise with healing and comfort in His wings as a giant protective bird would rise to protect His own and bring healing under His wings. The triumph

of the righteous is promised in v. 3. Malachi then gives an amazing prophecy concerning the prophet Elijah. Elijah, the Tishbite, comes on the scene like a meteor in the night. Only for a short span did he shine, but what an eternal impact he made on time and eternity. The Lord Jesus identifies John the Baptist as the fulfillment of this prophecy, or at least one phase of the prophecy (Matthew 11:14; 17:10; Mark 9:11-3; Luke 1:17). Malachi 3:1 identifies the forerunner of the Messiah. This was the first fulfillment of this prophecy as Elijah and John the Baptist both called the people to decision and repentance from waywardness to follow the true and living God.

Secondly, Elijah actually appeared with the Messiah on the Mount of Transfiguration and spoke to the Lord Jesus about His coming death. The Greek says that Moses and Elijah appeared with the glorified Savior and spoke to Him about His "ek-hodos," His "Exodus," translated as "death or decease" in our English Bibles.

Finally, during the days of the great tribulation, before the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, returns to earth to reign, an "Elijah-like figure" will be part of a duo of faithful witnesses that will be killed. Their bodies will be left lying on the streets, after which time the two will be raised from the dead before a watching and mystified world. The ministry of latter-day revival will be the message of turning the hearts of young men back to their fathers and to the God of their fathers. Relationships will be restored in families, and revival will come when men, young and old, return in repentance to God.

Prayer and Action Steps

Even in the midst of a national decline in morality and godliness, the Lord did not forsake His people. God has always had a remnant, a relatively small group, that has been the catalyst to redeem nations and postpone His inevitable judgment. Dear God, turn back our nation to You, and may all of us, as the church of Jesus, realize that it is our responsibility to be salt and light and the witness to our decaying and corrupt culture.