

Malachi (Quality: Good)

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Date: 08 April 1990

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- [0 : 00] As the Lord may be pleased to help me, I'll direct you again to the words in the book of Malachi chapter 3, reading verse 16 and also verse 17.
- Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.
- And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
- Malachi chapter 3 and verses 16 and 17. We have tried to consider a few things in the light of what is before us in this 16th verse, concerning that favoured remnant in the days when Malachi was raised up to prophesy amongst God's ancient people.
- And we've tried to consider them as those whose God's eyes are upon, those whom he takes gracious notice of, such as to whom their words and desires come up before his holy majesty, and regarded by him.
- [1 : 42] And even, as it were, written in that book of remembrance. Of course it is a figure of speech here. But it reminds us that God's dear people are ever in his thoughts.
- And that these people are described here as God-fearing people. And it is that this distinguishes them from all else.
- As we tried to notice this morning, when Malachi ministered, as he did, as a prophet of the Lord, he had solemn words to bring before the people on account of their infidelity.
- And even the priests, in the manner in which they attended to those things that belonged to their position, they were insincere in this.
- And it was a sad and solemn day. And Malachi has to administer these solemn reproofs and rebukes.
- [2 : 58] But then it's so evident. There are those who have been kept by God's almighty grace. And as it were, there were found people such as did indeed truly fear his name.
- You see, when you think of the others, whether it be the priests or the people, there was not the evidence of the holy fear of God in gracious exercise in their hearts.
- Therefore, we have those, as it were, those evil corrupt fruits which are grown upon the corrupt tree.
- Remember that Lord Jesus Christ made that great distinction, didn't he, between the good tree and the corrupt tree. And that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.
- But a good tree brings forth good fruit. And here we have the description of those who did bring forth the fruits of godly fear.
- [4 : 15] And one particular evidence of this was that they were together, as it were. That is in spirit.
- No doubt, actually, oftentimes. But especially in spirit. And you see, it shows to us how that when the grace of God is in gracious exercise in the heart and God's filial fear at work within, it is that which does unite the people of God.

And especially, surely in this respect, that they are a humbled people. A humbled people. And where there is true humility, there will be a dwelling together, as it were. Or it is when pride creeps in, that it brings dissension.

But these dear people, although they may have been perhaps but a small remnant, yet had they lived as they were unable to do so, by the grace of God, even they lived to his honour and to his praise.

[5 : 36] And the Lord has said concerning his dear people, hasn't he, this people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise. And surely one way in which those who fear God's name do show forth his praise is in that they are unable to walk together.

And these who feared God in these days, they could commune together. Yes, they could understand each other. They knew something of the secrets of the Lord.

You read in one psalm how the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. And they knew something of this secret. And as they were favoured to, as it were, to commune together, surely it proved to be to them, as it were, a means of grace.

And how true this is in this gospel day. When there's a, as it were, a community together. And particularly in the public ordinances of God's house.

And with respect to the worship of God, good it is if we know a little of the secret of what it is to be found within the compass of what is before us here. and for there to be that, that oneness of desire.

[7 : 07] In that, uh, the Lord's name may be honoured and glorified. That souls might be blessed. And there might be a little of that, uh, uh, true, uh, peace and prosperity known, uh, amongst those who are inhabitants of Zion.

Although Satan will ever seek to disrupt, uh, and he's very intent on this. Yet what a mercy when grace abounds.

Well, we try to consider then a little concerning these characters. Such as do fear the Lord. Not a slavish fear, but a godly filial fear which is implanted in the heart.

A, a rich treasure really. And it is that, as one as well said, it is that that gives religion life. You see, there were those who made some form of religion and they, there was some, uh, form of, uh, worship.

But, uh, it was not sincere. It was certainly not the Spirit of God. But where the fear of the Lord is, what a, a blessing it is.

[8 : 33] And how it, it does, it does give religion life. It is a living principle. We noticed this morning that it is, it is the fountain of life. The Word of God tells us so. A fountain of life to depart from the snares of death.

And while there are many, as it were, deathly snares, then God's people as they journey on are exposed to these snares. But if through mercy there is this godly fear in the heart and in gracious exercise it is the fountain of life, we'd remember to the source of it in the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Here is the water of life to thirsting souls. Here is the spring of life. Here is the great head of the church. And the life of all his dear people is hidden in heaven.

The apostle in writing to one church reminded them that their life was hidden in Christ to their God. And what a safe place.

And what an inexhaustible store, of life that flows from that one source, the Lord Jesus Christ. And while often it is the complaint of those who do fear God, they feel so much lifelessness, so much death as it were within their souls.

[10 : 04] But all to bring home this truth that they cannot maintain, they cannot produce, they cannot maintain that life in their souls.

no man keep alive his own soul, but the Lord in his mercy and his faithfulness keeps alive his people.

What a mercy it is to be kept alive. Yes, kept alive. alive. Well, it is that which gives religion life.

Yes, not to be confused with any religious excitement as it were, and there are certain circles of religion these days when so much is made of certain things and it seems that it only goes to feed the fleshly pride and religious pride of man and much of it but religious excitement.

But that is not the fear of the Lord. Because as I said this morning, the fear of the Lord is that which will produce reverence with regard to the things of God, the name of God and the worship of God.

[11 : 25] And it will be preservative against those things which are so otherwise, be they under religious name. There is joy to be known, but it is sober joy.

And one said this, the joy of the Lord is your strength. And no doubt these dear people as they gather together from time to time and commune together, it strengthened one another.

It was a source of support and strength, especially in the dark time they were called to live. And surely in this latter day in which we live, how good if we should be favoured to know something more of this as to what it is to commune together in the things of God.

I feel we have to confess that we're often very slow in this. Yet I had the dear psalmist, when his heart was warmed, he said, oh magnify the Lord with me, let's exalt his name together.

Notice that, together. And here there is that which indicates a together, not being torn asunder, but together.

[12 : 47] another. And the Lord approved this. Yes, the Lord looked with approval upon this dear remnant.

And as he discerned his grace in their hearts, so he commanded his blessing. Then we did notice too how the word is so kind, is it not, to, yes, those who feel they cannot attain to great things.

This sentence at the end of the 16th verse, and that thought upon his name. And really the word does join together in this respect.

You see, those who do fear the Lord are the ones that think upon his name. There are times when their thoughts, yes, they have gracious thoughts. And although they're still sinners, and we know by sad experience that we have many sinful thoughts arise in our hearts.

And we would not have it so, but it is so. We have to mourn over it. But there are gracious thoughts. Yes, and in the hearts of those who fear God's great and holy name, there will be these thoughts upon his name.

[14 : 13] And surely there's something about the name of the Lord, which is attractive to these who fear him. And thought upon his name.

What a wonderful mercy it is when poor sinners are directed in their thoughts, yes, and in their spirit, toward the name of the Lord.

Yes, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Sweet name. We read of it in the word of God as ointment poured forth, as a wondrous fragrance in the name of Jesus.

That is, to those who fear his name. It is nothing to the ungodly. When the Lord Jesus Christ was here upon earth, many of the religious people saw no beauty in him.

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Such was the pathway the dear Lord Jesus had to walk in, as he lived his life of suffering.

[15 : 20] They saw no beauty in him, but some did. There were some who felt drawn to him, and as they thought upon his name, it directed their feet.

It caused them to come with their hard cases to him. or what is his name to you and me? Is there something about the name of Jesus that draws your heart toward him?

Here is a sinner's home. Here is a sinner's one foundation, really, in the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Yes, and those who fear his name are those who are, as it were, brought to be settled upon that foundation, having no other foundation for their hope but in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as they think upon his name, you see, his name denotes his nature. What his name is, that is what he is.

And when you think of the name of Jesus, that name yes, which belonged to him in his humiliation, in his incarnation, thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

[16 : 40] I say, what a name. I sometimes thought of that scripture, it's a very easy text to remember, you dear children, to remember that text so easily, thou shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, when you think of what it contains.

For he shall, and he alone, and he does. Save his people, there we have the whole election of grace. And what are they saved from?

Their sins. Yes, and the dear rewards of their deeds. And to be delivered from just condemnation, to be freed, to be blessed, and to be made fit vessels, yes, of service to the Lord, and at length, to dwell with him, to be made, meet, to be partakers of the saints in light.

But thought upon his name, yes, and his name does denote his wondrous pity and mercy, his love. what was it brought the dear Son of God into this world?

What was it that, if I put it this way, prompted him in living his life? and knowing what was laid before him with regard to the terrible sufferings in Gethsemane upon the cross, in love to his people, yes, and the name of Jesus reminds us of his love to his people.

[18 : 29] He spared nothing, you see, and all the price he paid for the redemption of his people, his name then.

And there's that in his name, to encourage poor fainting souls, and those, yes, who feel the guilt of their sin upon their conscience, in the name of Jesus, he shall save his people from their sins.

It was through this man, was preached under the people of forgiveness of sins. The apostles had no other theme, but the preaching of the gospel, and that gospel was the grace, the gospel of the grace of God, and proclaimed forgiveness through the Lord Jesus.

And you see, to be directed in our thoughts to his name. And when perhaps sometimes you feel to be such a poor thing, such a poor backslider, what pity and compassion the Lord Jesus Christ exercises toward his dear wayward people, them that thought upon his name.

And so the Holy Spirit here, in the word of grace before us, comes right down, as it were, to, yes, down to the lowest. And yet you see, there's a standard here, as it were.

[20 : 06] It makes a distinction, doesn't it? And grace does make a distinction. We read it in the Sunday school this morning, the portion of one of the Psalms, when the scholars read it for us, that concern the wicked, that God is not in all their thoughts.

It turns to hear the distinction. And grace is a distinguishing principle. Where this godly fear is in the heart, it distinguishes. It joins together those who bless with the like grace, but it will distinguish, it will separate them, yes, from others.

That will come out from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. They that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

And now, we read this also. Here is a Seth the Lord, and we need to take notice when there is this Seth the Lord.

Often the prophets proclaimed his truth in that way, didn't they? Thus Seth the Lord, giving authority to the message, as it were, as coming from the Lord himself.

[21 : 30] And here in this 17th verse, Seth the Lord, the Lord of hosts. And what does the Lord say here? A very straightforward word it is, isn't it?

And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts. In that day, when I make up my jewels, they shall be mine. I like to notice the blizest certainty of this word here.

For here we see the wonder of God's sovereign grace to poor sinners. And they shall be mine. Does it not remind us of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, when he was here upon earth, when he was speaking about his people and considering them as his sheep and he their good shepherd?

giving them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He said they shall be mine. What a privilege concerning those who fear his name.

They belong to him, and it will be made manifest. Yes, at times, in that they are separated from the world, and that they join in spirit together, one with another.

[22 : 51] Some of the evidence is that they belong to the Lord. But the word implies this, that the day will come when it is made more evident.

And it was in the light of this, I felt need to read that chapter in Matthew's Gospel, where it is recorded concerning the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, when it will come, not as he came in the first place, as a little babe, when he comes in all his glory, sits upon the throne of his glory, how solemn, and how blessed concerning those who belong to him.

And that final separation, sheep on the right hand, goats on the left, and all nations shall be gathered before him, none shall be missing there.

and that final separation, and then it will be made manifest as never before, who are his. Oh, what a mercy, dear friends, if you and I shall be found on the right hand, on his right hand, as those who belong to him.

And what a mercy if the Lord has been pleased to raise up a sweet hope in our hearts, yes, concerning this, and you know, if we know something what it is to think upon his name, and have those desires toward his name, can we not hope which we found on his right hand, not for our duties or deserts, not because we're any better than our fellow creatures, not one bit better, we're all sinners.

[24 : 43] And these who fear God have to mourn over their sin, voice. Yes, the purchase of his love, and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, nothing can overturn this.

Not all the power of Satan, as he vents his spite against God's dear people, can overturn this great truth. And you see that the weakest one found within this word here will be safe.

safe to all eternity, because they belong to him, and they shall be mine. You see, God's people belong to him, don't they?

They belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. We go back into eternity, and God the Father set his love upon a people, yes, before they were born, before this world was created, and man upon it.

And in that covenant of grace, provision was made for the salvation of each one of these. They should be made manifest as his.

[25 : 59] Yes, drawn from the ruins of the atom fall. Oh, think of the wonder of this, that the Lord should set his love upon a people, and to have a purpose of grace toward them.

It could have been otherwise, but blessed be his name, it is not otherwise. God has his people. And you see, they belong to him, and they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In that wonderful prayer, as recorded in John's gospel, the dear saviour, as he prayed, to his father, refers to his people, as those that the father had given him.

And you see, they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the gift of his father. God the father, set his love upon his people, yes, and the dear son of God covenanted to undertake their cause, and to make it possible for mercy to flow to them in salvation.

And they were, as it were, given into his hand. All his saints are in thy hand. Wonderful word in the book of Deuteronomy.

[27 : 19] They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts. Yes, they belong to him by way of gift from the father. But then, in that wonderful way, in that they are purchased people.

Redeemed. A price has been paid. Yes, purchased by his precious blood. What a tremendous cost.

Oh, that we might more often be helped to meditate upon these things and see in this something of the awfulness and the sinfulness of sin that we are guilty of.

That it needed no less than the dear son of God to come down this world to live and to suffer and to die, to shed his blood. Yes, to put away sin, to pay the price, to satisfy divine justice.

Without the shedding of blood is no remission. Christ shed his blood. He redeemed his dear people. They belong to him.

[28 : 26] And none of them can be lost. Jesus said did he, none shall pluck them out of my hand or my father's hand. Not even Satan with all his malice cannot pluck the feverish one from the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my jewels. That great day, that solemn day. Yes, when, as I said just now, as revealed in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus reminded the people and is written for instruction of that great day that is coming.

When you shall come and sit upon the throne of his glory. Then it shall be seen who are his. And shall hear that blessed sentence to come, yes, and inherit the blessing, the inheritance prepared from the foundation of the world.

They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels. And here we have something which reminds us that precious in his sight.

Jewels of course are precious things. They're not imitation jewels, these are real jewels. And the marginal rendering of this is special treasure.

[30 : 00] And the Lord acknowledges his ancient people like this as his special treasure. And this is typical of the true Israel of God.

And that the Lord acknowledges these, yes, as his jewels, his special treasure. treasure. His people, his treasure. What an amazing truth is to consider.

Poor sinners, you see. Yes, guilty, helpless in themselves, and yet objects of his love, subjects of his grace, and coming to the blessings of his salvation.

And the Lord acknowledges these as his special treasure, his jewels. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

This, I feel, indicates God's dealings with his people. Yes, you see, they're his jewels, they're his children, and just as wise parents deal with their children for their profit, sometimes it is by way of chastening or rebuke, a correction, but it's in love.

[31 : 30] But that's spared, you see. And now, the Lord says here, concerning his dear people, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

There may be chastening, there are. There are corrections, reproofs and rebukes are in the way of life, the word of God tells us. And be not over discouraged, poor sinner, if sometimes the Lord may see fit to administer rebuke to you, a reproof.

No something is chastening hand upon you. Remember, it is in love. It is the way in which a father would deal with his child. And it is, you see, evidence of sonship, is it not?

No, spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. And we think of the wonderful mercy. I've tried to touch upon it a little. You see, they're spared sinners, yes, and as sinners, deserving God's just rules, but they're spared.

There is one who has been punished in their place, as it were. And they shall be delivered and spared. Yes, spared to live, spared to enjoy his gracious presence, and spared to know his presence in the fullness of it, without any interruption at all in heaven itself.

[33 : 10] And I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. And as you come to the end of the chapter, you notice this. Then shall he return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between them that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.

A distinction, you see. Now, this is not a distinction that will puff up in the spirit, no.

But where grace is an exercise, it should be a humbling truth. Yes, God's distinguishing grace. You know, Paul, when he wrote to the church at Corinth, there were a few things there that were out of order.

And not honoring to God, to Jesus Christ, the church's head. And the apostle had to write to them and rebuke them with regard to these things.

And he reminds them of this, as they seemed to be puffed up one against another. You see, so foreign to the evidences of grace and fear of God in the heart.

[34 : 27] Puffed up, one against the other. He brings her to consider this. He says, for who would make thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?

You see, it should be a humbling thought, shouldn't it? Yes, God's distinguishing grace. And who has brought it about but God himself was the God of all grace.

and if you and I have any well-grounded evidence that the Lord has been pleased to deal with us graciously, it should be a humbling thought.

to think that thousands have passed by, and we might have been passed by, and left to go our own way, but any evidence of the Lord's gracious dealings, it should be humbling to us.

For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? You see, there's not much to boast about, is there? Not in ourselves, but all to make our boast in the Lord, to glory in him, and everything to do with the salvation of all God's dear people will redound to the glory of his name, and his dear people in the right mind and spirit desire that it may be so.

[35 : 52] Or may we often know what it is to be humbled in the dust, and that there might be glory to his name. You see, the psalmist, shall make a boast in the Lord.

He hadn't got anything to boast of in himself. He got much to be ashamed of. There were certain things that come into his life to bring him to realize what a poor guilty sinner he was.

But he was brought to this, he could boast in the Lord. That is, what the Lord had been pleased to do for him, and do in him, and his forgiving love, his restoring mercy, and all these things called for the sounding forth of his glory.

Yes, that him that glorieth glory in the Lord, none flesh can glory in his presence. Oh, to have a humbling sense of God's great mercy.

Well, just a few things then with regard to this blessed remnant. And as it was in the case of the time when Malachi was directed to give this word, it was a dark time.

[37 : 11] There was much ungodliness, much profanity, and abuse with regard to the things pertaining to the worship of God. And there are many things in like manner in these days.

But dear friends, what a mercy. If we are found amongst this remnant, you notice they are spoken of in this prophecy as a godly seed.

A godly seed. Yes, blessed with a godly principle, you see. And such as shall be raised up, yes, to sound forth his praise.

And that for his mercy. surely it is profitable sometimes to be helped to as it were soberly and quietly consider the times when the Lord has been pleased to graciously help you along.

When perhaps you've been brought so low and feel so much to need the Lord's gracious support and help and the Lord has been pleased in his mercy to strengthen support.

[38 : 21] Lord and while there may not have been perhaps an outstanding deliverance in some cases there are outstanding deliverances but what a mercy to be upheld yes to be preserved to be kept and in this to be helped to humbly trace it to what is before us in this text and they shall be mine said the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my jewels none of them can be lost here is the safety here is the final perseverance of all God's dear people it is grounded upon this truth yes not for man's works not his efforts no not man's ability but God's saving grace and Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation all may the Lord bless his word and grant us his fear in exercising our hearts

I like that word in the hymn then cry we to heaven with one loud accord that to us be given the fear of the Lord Amen shall shall we conclude by singing hymn number 1134 to the tune the sweet name 730 light and comfort from above our waiting soul set free be thou our guardian thou our guide or every thought and step preside and draw us after thee 1134 all