

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Exodus 19:5–6 | Psalm 1:1–6 | 2 Timothy 2:11–13

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.26.25

SUMMARY

As Malachi's oracle continues, the people, in their hardness of heart, continue to wage a war of words against God. The Lord has reminded them that obedience will yield blessing (Malachi 3:10), and the people's response is more accusation, in short, saying "What is the use of obedience? Serving God doesn't pay off as evidenced by evildoers who seem to have it better than we do" (vs. 14–15). God directs his response to two distinct groups—the wicked and the righteous—and his message is one of judgment and comfort. The message of comfort he reserves for the righteous—the remnant which he has preserved to be his *treasured possession* (v. 17), a title used by the Lord for his people in the wake of the exodus (Exodus 19:5–6). With the Lord equating the remnant of Malachi's day to the people he preserved in the exodus, the Lord is declaring that this faithful remnant was truly his chosen Israel. With this, the Lord responds to the accusation of the wicked that there is no distinction between those who do evil and the righteous in that his delight and compassion will fall upon those who truly belong to him (v. 18). However, those who feared God were having difficulty discerning God's favor upon them. What this remnant neglected to see in the moment was that God seldom reveals his favor through circumstance, but in his declaration that they are his treasure—they belong to him and he will not let them go. Though they had difficulty seeing him in the moment, the people needed to remember that there was a day coming in which the Lord would act, when God himself would enter history to demonstrate a decisive difference between those who were truly his special possession and those who were not (v. 18). This has always been God's promise to his people—that he will preserve them and that one day there will be a final separation between the wicked and the righteous: he will give the wicked the justice they deserve, and the righteous will be vindicated and treasured (Psalm 1:1–6). But the righteous are seen as such not by their own merit, but because of the special favor granted to them by their Savior, Jesus Christ.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Malachi 3:13-18.

Though it was the accusation of the wicked, is there a part of their accusation with which you can identify? Does it sometimes seem that the wicked prosper more than the followers of God? How so?

What is God's response to the accusation that the wicked prosper more than the righteous? How can we learn to take comfort in his promise that we are his treasured possession rather than despairing in our circumstances?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.