

RELATED SCRIPTURES

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 11.2.25

Matthew 13:24-30 | 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 | Revelation 21:22-27

SUMMARY

In the final verses of Malachi 3, some of the people of Israel “feared the Lord and esteemed his name” (v. 16), and their names were written in the book of remembrance. Malachi’s prophecy continues by describing a day in the future when the Lord will separate the righteous from the wicked, distinguishing between those who serve God and those who do not (v. 17). Malachi 4 describes what will become of these two groups. It may sometimes appear to us as it did to Israel, that “evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape” (Malachi 3:15), but a day is coming when all will stand before the judgment seat of God (Romans 14:10). The evildoers, those who do not serve God, will receive God’s vengeance and “suffer the punishment of eternal destruction” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). The scene described in Malachi 4:1 sounds very similar to Jesus’ parable of the weeds, where the reaper throws the weeds into the fire, but the wheat he gathers into the master’s barn (Matthew 13:30). There is no way to sugar-coat what lies ahead for those who do not put their trust in the Lord. On the other hand, those who put their faith in Christ will also stand before the judgment seat, but with a different outcome. Jesus Christ has taken the punishment on their behalf. “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24). Rather than scorching, the sun of righteousness provides healing (v. 2) for the redeemed. On that day tears, mourning, pain, and death will be no more (Revelation 21:4). Those who put their faith in Jesus can look forward to that day in anticipation rather than fear, saying with Job: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God” (Job 19:25-26).

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Malachi 4:1-3.

What does it mean to you to fear the Lord and esteem his name (Malachi 3:16, 4:2)?

What similarities do you see between Malachi 4:1-3 and the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13:24-30? How does Matthew 13:29-30 help explain why it might appear that evildoers go unpunished in the world?

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.