

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Mark 1:6–8 | Matthew 3:1–10 | 2 Kings 1:3–8

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 11.9.25

SUMMARY

As Malachi concludes his oracle, he provides a word of foreshadowing. Though most of his writing has been a word of warning, anticipating a day of coming judgment, he finishes by anticipating the good news of the gospel. There will be hard hearts that soften, and sorrow will yield to confession and repentance as he transforms strangers and aliens into his own sons and daughters. Malachi refers to both Moses and Elijah, the figures of the past who embodied the law and the prophets of the Lord; however, they aren't only figures of the past; they also speak a word of the future. Through Malachi, the Lord promised to send another Elijah-like figure before the coming of the final day—a prophet who would preach repentance and restore the broken relationships of children with their heavenly Father, as well as with their earthly fathers. In other words, this coming prophet would point a remnant of God's children back to their Father.

History would have to wait some 400 years to see the fulfillment of this prophecy, and we can see it unfold in the gospel of Mark. He begins his gospel with the coming of the promised Elijah, wearing a reminiscent camel-hair coat and a leather belt (2 Kings 1:8), and eating locusts and wild honey in the wilderness as he preached a message of repentance (Mark 1:6–8). "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" was his message (Matthew 3:2), announcing the Lord's impending judgment. However, the day of the Lord is preceded by the arrival of a Savior who came to seek and save that which was lost; the Lord's mercy accompanies his judgment, thanks be to God!

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Malachi 4:4–6.

Malachi spoke of the day of the Lord, but also promised a day of restoration and repentance; yet the people of God had to wait approximately 400 years to see the word fulfilled. What does the account teach us about the Lord? What might this account teach us about the Lord's second coming?

What can you say about how you have seen God's judgment accompanied by his mercy in your own life? In the life of the Church? Where have you seen the evidence of God's mercy?

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.