

## Remember – Malachi 4:1-6

### I. Introduction:

- A. If you were to describe the conclusion of this book, would you say it was moving in an upward direction?
1. Does it reach a conclusion, or does it simply stop?
  2. Would you say that these last verses excite you, or does it leave you hanging, wanting more?
  3. Does it end in a blaze of glory, or would you say that it fizzles out like a candle at the end of its life?
- B. Once again, let's try to put our feet into the sandals of the saints in Jerusalem 2,400 years ago.
1. Their grandparents had returned from Persia with great expectations, but those hopes had been dashed.
  2. The wicked were prospering and thumbing their noses at both God's people and the Lord Himself.
    - a. They were saying, *"It is vain to serve God; to believe the Bible; to trust in Jehovah."*
    - b. The wicked were doing as they pleased, and were pleased with what they were doing.
  3. To this the prophet replied, *"Remember that God has a book of Remembrance for them that fear the Lord and think upon His name."*
    - a. *"There is a huge difference between the righteous and the wicked."*
    - b. And the Lord's Day is coming when He will separate between those two kinds of people.
    - c. The proud and wicked will be tossed into the oven of divine judgment and Hell.
    - d. But the righteous shall be healed through the wings of the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord Jesus.
    - e. And ye saints shall *"tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."*
  4. Then God says through Malachi, *"Remember the words which I shared with you through Moses."*
    - a. *Furthermore, I will soon send a new version of Elijah, before that great and dreadful day of the Lord.*
    - b. *And as he PREACHES repentance, I shall GRANT repentance, saving multitudes of parents and children before I smite the earth my devastating judgments."*
- C. Remember, Malachi was living in the exciting prospects of the soon coming of Elijah prior to that *"day."*
1. But little did he know that the fulfilment of his words would come only after another 400 years.
  2. **AND**, here **we** are 2,000 years after John the Baptist, still awaiting that great and dreadful day of the Lord.
  3. Probably for many of us, because of our perspective, it appears that the **Book of Malachi** just fizzles out.
- D. I hope you can see the obvious parallel between Malachi's day and ours.
1. As I said, unknown to the prophet, it would be 400 years before his Elijah arrived in John the Baptist.
    - a. And during those four centuries there wasn't a peep of prophecy. It was total silence from Heaven.
  2. And again, here we are, still waiting.
    - a. For us, it hasn't been 400 years; it's been 2,000 years of Heavenly silence.
    - b. There has been no new revelation; no obvious angelic visits; no signs in the sky.
  3. Yes, we are supposed to be living in the anticipation of the return of the Sun of Righteousness, but how long must we wait? Just a little longer. The Lord will be here very soon.
  4. Ignore those scoffers, *"walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"*
  5. They are a bunch of people who have chosen to be willingly ignorant of God's promises.
- E. What are the saints supposed to do during the days of God's silence? They are to remember God's voice.
1. Jesus told us what to do in His parable of the pounds in **Luke 19:12**.
    - a. Jesus *"spoke a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."*
    - b. *He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*
    - c. *But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.*

d. *And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."*

2. What did the King command his servants to do while they were in the midst of a society which hated Him?
3. He told them; **He told US:** *"Occupy till I come."*
4. *"Get busy, use the gifts and resources that I have given to you to glorify my name.*
5. *At my Bema judgment, I will ask you what you have been doing in my absence.*
6. *How many pounds will my investment in you produce? How much glory will you have to give to Me?"*

F. Going back to **Malachi**, how are those saints to occupy their time until the Sun of righteous arrives?

1. *"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments."*
2. Transposing that and carrying it forward 2,400 years, what is God saying to you and me?
3. *"Remember ye all those things I have revealed to you throughout my Word."*

## II. How are we to occupy till the Lord comes? By remembering what He has told us.

A. Does the word **"remember"** suggest we start once again to memorize God's word so that we can replay it to ourselves throughout the day?

1. While that would be a very good thing, that is not really the essence of the meaning.
2. What does **Exodus 20:8** mean when it says, *"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy?"*
  - a. Was it telling those Jews to wake up and remind themselves that it was God's day of rest and worship?
  - b. No. It meant that **keeping** the Sabbath day holy is the proper way to **remember** it.
3. The Jews were supposed to wear certain clothing, *"That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."* Proper remembering means **doing**.
4. What did David mean when he said, *"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God?"* In this case **remembering** the Lord means **trusting** the Lord.

B. Malachi tells his hearers: *"During this upcoming inter-testament period, remember to obey the Law which God gave to Moses."*

1. And what is **OUR** responsibility in the dying hours of this *"Age of Grace?"*
2. We are to fill our hours and days with the promises and exhortations of all that God has revealed to us.

## III. WHY should we remember the Words of Christ, Moses and the apostles?

A. Because it is only through God's word that we have any **foundational TRUTH**.

1. The Bible reveals the Lord; there He opens up His heart, exposing what we need to know about Him.
2. Then from the truth of God, we begin to learn the truth about ourselves and our creation.
3. We learn about sin, righteous and even about judgment, as Malachi has already taught us.
4. Facebook isn't going to tell us what is really important or what is really true.
5. We can't trust Fox New or CNN or even the BBC World News America.
6. Remember the Word of God and base your day-to-day decisions on what you find there.

B. We should remember the Word because it is **HOLY**.

1. It will never lead us into bad decisions, although we might be guilty of misinterpreting it from time to time.
2. Paul reminds us *"the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."*
3. It is **holy**, and it is **right**, and it is **good** for us.

C. The Word of God provides us with the best **PRINCIPLES of life**.

1. It gives to us a proper *"world-view"* and a pattern by which we can best live in a God-denying world.

2. I was driving home from the church building on Monday, & I saw a middle-aged woman leaving her house.
  - a. She was not particularly attractive, and her purple and blue hair didn't help to impress me.
  - b. For some reason, maybe it was for this message, I thought: Lady if you want to set yourself apart from the rest of the middle-aged women in this city, perhaps you should try to live righteously; to live according to the principles of God's Word.
3. Yes, it is true that God's people don't immediately stand out in a crowd, like King Saul who was head and shoulders above everyone else.
4. But in time as people get to know us, we will catch their attentions **IF** we live according heavenly principles.

D. Why should we remember the law of Moses and the exhortations of Paul?

1. Because those things will be the **criteria** for our future **judgment**.
2. When the books are opened and our pounds are counted – 10, 5 and 1 – our works will be compared not to the works of others, but to the standard which the Lord has given us in His Word.

#### IV. Why must we **REMEMBER** what the Bible tells us?

A. Because we are **prone to forget**.

1. We are forgetful people, and if we don't make an effort to remember, we won't do it as we should.
2. And we can say the same thing about churches.
3. Any church, and any pastor in any church, can slip from preaching and teaching God's Word.
4. We can slip from concentration on Christ and the gospel to focusing on peripheral doctrines.
5. If the preacher is spending too much time listening to the news he can become forgetful of spiritual things.
6. If he is reading the wrong devotional materials his ministry can degenerate into psychological counseling rather than on declaring God's Word.
7. It is easy in an extremely secular society to become too secular, forgetting to *"set our affection on things above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."*

B. We need to remember because **the world** around us desperately **needs God's Word**.

1. I just finished reading a book which contained a chapter that began with **Amos 8:11**.
2. And yesterday a preacher friend, who often sends quotes and thoughts, sent me this:
  - a. *"Travel to virtually any city in America and try to find a church that preaches the full counsel of God, and that preaches the Word of God, and you will drive past church, after church, after church.*
  - b. *And the larger it is, the more anemic it is, until you will finally find some small church on the periphery of the beaten path in that city, until you find a place where the Word of God is preached.*
  - c. *We are living in days in which there is a famine in the land for the hearing of the Word of God."*

C. **Amos 8:11** says, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."*

1. Brethren, we are living in that day.
2. And for that reason it is all that much more urgent that **WE remember** the law of the Lord.

D. There is going to be no new revelation, no new Word of God, before the return of our Saviour.

1. No newly published books will give us newly revealed spiritual truth out of Heaven.
2. For this and other reasons, we need to **treasure** God's Word and **defend** God's Word.
3. We need to *"hide God's Word in our hearts that we might not sin against the Lord."*
4. And we need to remember God's Word in the sense of putting it into practice.

E. Think about it: this is the last command of the Old Testament.

1. In essence it should be considered the last exhortation of the New Testament era as well.
2. The Lord will be here soon; the Day of the Lord will soon reach that crucial next tick of the clock.
3. *"Occupy till I come,"* saith the Lord.