

Discovery Notes

For November 17, 2024

God's Treasured Jewels

Malachi 3.16-18

Introduction

Malachi is the last of the Old Testament prophets. His timely message to the nation of Israel was followed by 400 years of prophetic silence, which lasted until John the Baptist came on the scene to prepare the way for the Messiah and to herald the implementation of a New Covenant. Malachi's message centers around 6 disputes God has with Israel, highlighting their unfaithfulness to His covenant.

Following the 6 indictments are three delightful verses (today's text) describing what faithfulness to God looks like and how He treasures those who are faithful to Him. Malachi's final words, which close the Old Testament canon, exhort Israel to remember the law of Moses and to prepare themselves for the coming of Elijah, who will inaugurate the "great and awesome day of the Lord".

Observation (what does the passage say?)

1. What are the activities that appear to preoccupy the people who are described as "fearing the Lord" (v 16)?
2. What is God's immediate response to these people and their activities (v 16)?
3. What is God's long-term response to these people (v 17)?
4. What is one of the key benefits experienced by those who have the kind of relationship with God described in this text (v 18)?

Interpretation (what does the passage mean – using Scripture to interpret Scripture?)

1. What does it mean to fear the Lord (v 4)? Compare Deut 6.10-15; Joshua 24.14; Ps 2.10-12; Prov 1.17; Eccl 12.13; Matt 10.28; Rom 3.10-18

2. Why is it important that believers speak often to each other (v 4)? See Hebrews 10.23-25; Acts 2.42, 46-47; 1 Cor 12.12,14-18,25-27

3. Using the following Scriptural references for comparison, what do you think is meant by a “book of remembrance”? Ex 32.32-33; Ps 56.8; 139.16; Dan 7.10; 12.1; Rev 20.12

4. What insights are revealed about God’s heart when He says “they shall be mine in the day when I make up my treasured possession”(v 17)? Jer 31.3; Isa 54.10; Ex 19.5-6; 1 Pet 2.9; John 17.9-11; 20-23

5. Elaborate on the importance of the kind of discernment God promises those who are faithful to Him (v 18). Isa 5.20-21; Mt 6.22-23;12.24,31; Mal 2.17; Jonah 4.11; Amos 5.13-15

Application (why does it matter? How does it apply to us today?)

1. Are your thoughts, words and deeds indicative of one who “fears the Lord” in the Biblical sense of the concept?

2. Do you think the consistency and depth of your fellowship with other believers is worthy of God listening in and recording it in His book of remembrance?

3. Do you see yourself as one of God’s treasured possessions? Why or why not?

4. How would you evaluate your ability to discern between the one who is serving God and the one who is not?