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**APOSTOLIC VERSE BY VERSE BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

**37 Market Street, New Haven, CT 06513**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Servant / Shepherd**

**The Late Bishop E. Samuel Green, Establishmentarian**

**“MOSES’ LAW AND ELIJAH’S PROPHESY”**

**Malachi 4:1-6**

***Malachi 4:1 "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."***

The concluding verses of Malachi remind us of the sovereignty of God over his creation. Sovereignty is a theological term that simply means that God rules, controls, and governs all things. There is absolutely nothing that happens anywhere, anytime, anyhow that God does not either cause or allow. He’s not only God of the big stuff but also of the tiny details, as well. In fact, there is not a single hair that falls from your head of which he is not intimately aware.

***Matthew 10:30“But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”***

Scripture often speaks of “the day” or “the day of the Lord.” It has both a temporal meaning and an eschatological one. Temporally, the day refers to God’s intervention in history to reverse circumstances. It is the day when heaven intervenes—such as when the Lord struck down the Assyrians as they threatened Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:19–19:37). When things are headed in the wrong way, God can turn events on a dime to accomplish his purposes. Malachi is talking here about the eschatological day. Eschatology is the study of the last things. The day is coming refers to the moment when Jesus Christ brings history to a climax (or the Great Tribulation), which is in view as the birth pangs for the millennial kingdom.

***1 Thessalonians 5:1-5***

***1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.***

***2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.***

***3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.***

***4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.***

***5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.***

The day of the LORD has two parts: evening, which is the time of judgment or the tribulation period, followed by day, which is the one-thousand-year reign of Messiah Jesus on this earth. Malachi here describes the “evening” portion as an intense (burning like a furnace), destructive (every evildoer will be chaff), and complete (leaving them neither root nor branch) judgment of the wicked. This is speaking of that day of judgment on all the earth. God is associated with fire many times.

***Hebrews 12:29 "For our God [is] a consuming fire."***

God judges with His fire. Sometimes, the fire is speaking from a spiritual nature, and sometimes, it is literal.

***Matthew 13:30 "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."***

God gives everyone ample time to turn from their sin. When they do not, He destroys them.

***II Peter 3:7 "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."***

God always exercises his sovereignty. But, on that final day of Christ’s coming, he’ll display his sovereignty for all to see. The arrogant and everyone who commits wickedness will become stubble. The coming day will consume them means that those who do not trust in Jesus Christ will experience eternal judgment, forever separated from the goodness and grace of God having a two-fold effect: the bringing down of the wicked and the lifting up of the righteous.

***Malachi 4:2 "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."***

***Malachi 4:3 "And ye 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."***

When God judges the world, He will also remember those who feared Him. Contrasting the blazing heat that will burn the wicked, God promises the faithful that the sun of righteousness will arise, bringing its warm rays of healing in its wings. Sun of righteousness is a figurative representation of the Messiah. So, whereas the calves have been cooped up and locked down, they’re going to go skipping with joy when God opens the stall through Christ to set them free. This is that great day of separation. Those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus, receiving their rewards. This is when the Sun of righteousness brings healing and warmth to those of His own. There will be no more sorrow. We will be filled with the Light of God at this time. The wicked will be ruled over by the saints of God. Jesus will reign 1000 years upon the earth and the Christians, who had been oppressed, will reign with Him. The ashes are caused by the fire of judgment that has come upon them.

***Luke 17:24 "For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one [part] under heaven, shineth unto the other [part] under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day."***

***Revelation 11:18 "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."***

***Revelation 21:4 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."***

***Malachi 4:4 "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, [with] the statutes and judgments."***

***Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:"***

The exhortation is to remember the law of Moses, a reference to the laws God gave Israel at Mount Horeb (an alternate name for Mount Sinai; Exodus 3:1; 19:18-25; 24:16-18; Deuteronomy 30:10). Having returned from captivity, the nation was to remember that the Torah remained their constitution and law while they awaited the day of the LORD. This gives them one more warning to keep the law of Moses, so they will not be cursed and burned by the fire of God. Those who truly knew the Old Testament the way they should have known John was like unto Elijah and Jesus was the Messiah.

***Matthew 5:17-20***

***17 "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."***

***18 "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."***

***19 "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach [them], the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."***

***20 "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed [the righteousness] of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."***

***Matthew 11:13-14***

***13 "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John."***

***14 " And if ye will receive [it], this is Elias, which was for to come."***

***Matthew 17:10 "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?"***

***Matthew 17:11-12***

***11 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things."***

***12 "But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them."***

Moses represents the law and Elijah represents the prophets. Both of them appeared at the transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17:3). The Old Testament ends with the promise of the coming of Elijah, which the New Testament identifies as John the Baptist (Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). John’s own disclaimer (John 1:21) was simply a denial that he was literally Elijah. Jesus, on the other hand, clearly stated that John the Baptist came “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Matthew 11:14; 17:10–13; Mark 9:11–13). Malachi’s promise is quoted by the angel in Luke 1:17 as referring to the ministry of John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah. Therefore, the Old Testament ends in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah and His prophetic forerunner, John the Baptist, who appears in the likeness of Elijah.

***Malachi 4:6 "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."***

There had been a terrible time when there was no love between parents and children. This is speaking of Elijah, as John the Baptist, when he preached repentance. Repent for the Lord is coming, was his cry. Before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, God will send the prophet Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers. John called people to repentance in order to prepare the way for the Lord. This repentance would not only restore people’s relationship to God but also their relationships to one another.

***Matthew 24:27-30***

***27 "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."***

***28 "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."***

***29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:"***

***30 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."***

The Old Testament begins with creation (Genesis 1–2) and ends with the threat of a divine curse (Malachi 4:6) which is removed by the atoning death of Jesus Christ who came to redeem fallen humans and restore the creation to its intended purpose in His millennial kingdom. Thus, the Old Testament remains incomplete, awaiting the arrival of the Promised One.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who does verse 1 say will be burned as stubble?
2. What day is this speaking of?
3. Who does 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 7 say, this terrible punishment is reserved for?
4. The Sun of righteousness rises with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in his wings.
5. God shall wipe away all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from their eyes.
6. Who rule over the wicked?
7. Why are they as ashes?
8. What law does Malachi caution the Jews to remember?
9. Why does the author stress Bible study?
10. Read the Ten Commandments aloud.
11. Did Jesus come to destroy the law?
12. What did He come to do?
13. Who will God send before the coming of that great and dreadful day.
14. Who does Matthew chapter 11 say he was?
15. Verse 6 is speaking of whom?
16. What was the cry of John the Baptist?