

# Fearing God enough to serve Him righteously?

February 17, 2020

**MALACHI 4:1-3 NKJV -** (1) For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the Lord of hosts, That will leave them neither root nor branch. (2) But to you who fear My name, The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves. (3) You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do *this*," says the Lord of hosts.

It had been decades since the temple had been completed, yet the glories of the messianic kingdom had not arrived as expected. But neither had the people lived up to the stipulations of God's law. Politically, Israel was a minor province in the massive Persian Empire. The nation was suffering from economic and agricultural problems. The most serious problem, however, from the prophet's perspective was spiritual. The people lacked zeal for the Lord. Spiritual discouragement and apathy were rampant. The people of Judah had turned away from the true worship of the Lord, leaving themselves under judgment and in need of salvation. This behavior of the Israelites led to rampant corruption among the priesthood and a spiritual lethargy among the people.

In the above passage you will notice that God is announcing two important truths! In verse (1), He is announcing "judgment" to the people. **WHY?** Well if you read the previous chapters you will discover the relationship the Israelites claimed to have with God and they went as far as saying that God wasn't honoring His part of the covenant. But God turns his finger immediately at the Israelites and tells them in detail from the priest to the lay member, how they haven't honored Him through the covenant. And because of the displeasure, God pronounces "judgment on the non-repentive. God also announces the second truth consisting of "Hope, Blessings and Eternal life" in verse (2). But to you who "**FEAR**." That leads to the question, what does it mean to fear God?

Well on one side, to fear God meant to dread Him for He is so high, and holy, and just; but then, on the flip side of that coin, it is to awe Him—or hold Him in high reverence. When you mix together the dread of God with the awe of God, it simply comes out to mean: "Blessed is he who takes God seriously." If the man and woman wants to function in this kingdom, they must take the King very seriously: "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord."

There is always one test as to whether one fears God. And the Bible says, "You walk in His ways." The fear of God is not ultimately measured in the feeling—it's always measured in the feet. If there is no adjustment in the feet, there is no fear in the heart—regardless of how inspired we may feel at any given moment. Therefore, blessed is the one who fears God." But not just fear God, but fear his name! What is the significance of "**FEARING A NAME?**" His name has "Power and meaning!"

**CONCLUSION:** God's is commanding people to denounce sin, remain faithful to His covenant and hope for the future. Make up your mind and stop shifting the way you walk. What He is simply saying is: "If **WE** are serious about His kingdom, then, God must be the sun of your life's solar system, where the planets of your activity revolve around Him. You do not request that He revolves around you." This message is not for unbelievers!

## SCRIPTURE READING

PSALM 34:9

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

I **fear** God and next to **God** I mostly **fear** them that **fear** him not. ...

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"