

Malachi - the faithful remnant

Part 1

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] First I have to say that the word on the scripture that is being brought before us is Medecai 3.16.

We are more familiar with John 3.16, but Medecai 3.16 is very, very important.

And I'm sure I'll follow my mind if I say a few words on it.

Medecai lived in a day of great weakness on the part of God's people, great declension, and over and over again if you read through the book of Medecai, the prophecy of Medecai, [00:01:03] you see the word, we're in, they questioned the love of God. And when they were rebuked for their lack of response, they even questioned the love of God to all of them. It begins like this, doesn't it? I have nothing, saith the Lord, yet ye say, we're in, hast thou loved us. You see, they were indifferent to their own poor, poverty-stricken spiritual condition. And that's a very sad state to be in. But here is a remnant, within a remnant, that were concerned with not only their own feebleness, weakness, but what was due to God himself.

[00:02:01] Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.

What an occupation, in the midst of all that was so sad and so dishonoring to Jehovah, that here were those that feared the Lord.

I don't have my finger on it, but I think somewhere in this book there's the question raised by Jehovah himself, where is my fear? Where are those that have any respect and honor for me?

Where is my fear? Well, here were those that did fear the Lord. They honored him. They had a love and respect for him. And they spake often one to another.

[00:03:01] But how precious it is that the Lord hearkened and heard it. The Lord noticed those feeble few. I suppose they were gathered together in some corner of the temple. We're not told exactly about that. But they were gathered together, speaking one to another, not about their troubles or their anxieties, weaknesses, but they spake of him.

The Lord hearkened and heard it.

I'm not a great scholar, but there's a difference, I believe, between hearkening and hearing. I think it implies that the first, the hearkening, refers to the Lord taking notice. [00:04:01] His attention was arrested by those feeble few that were concerned with his interests. He hearkened and he drew near to them. He bent over them to catch each sound. He heard them. He hearkened and heard. And not only so, but he laid it down for a permanent reminder, so to speak, in his Book of Remembrance. A Book of Remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. It was an unusual hymn we started with. We have it often for the Lord's Day mornings. But there's a lot in that hymn.

And over and over again it spoke of our desire to remember the Lord, to think of him.

[00:05:01] We're here to seek his glory and keep his word and so on. We can't know how it goes now. But we need to stir each other up in these days so that we get our attention away from things all around us and we get occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Book of Remembrance was written. You see, not only did the Lord take notice of it, but he recorded it.

And what a thought that is, that if we are faithful to the Lord, he takes notice and our names are recorded in his Book.

One of our holy disciples was sent out on our Lord's Day [00:06:04] and they came back to him reporting that even the devils were subject to them or something of that effect. And the Lord says, don't rejoice in that, but rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven. And we should be glad that if we're thought nothing of in this world, despised and thought nothing of, it was just how they treated our Lord and Saviour, but our names are written in God's Book.

And that record will come to light in a future day.

But they feared the Lord and they thought upon his name.

[00:07:02] Now, I understand, although I say again, I'm no big scholar, but the word thought is a very strong word. I think some of you might be able to tell me more about it. But I'm going to carry you back to one or two Old Testament scriptures to see the force of this word. They thought upon his name. They paid diligent attention to it. It was prominently before and they thought deeply. Now, will you turn just briefly to Isaiah 13.

I think I can find the verse in a moment. Verse 17, where Jehovah says, [00:08:08] Behold, I will stir up the meads against them which shall not regard silver. Now, that's the word regard that we have in our verse in Matthew, in our Medicare. Here, you see, they put no value upon silver.

It was thought nothing of. They shall not regard silver. But here were those, dear saints, that put a value on the name of Jehovah. They thought upon his name. Now, in chapter 33, I think we have another similar reference.

[00:09:03] Verse 8, The highways thy waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth. He hath broken the covenant. He hath despised the cities. He regardeth no man. He hath no thought for any. But here were those that did really value the name of Jehovah.

They put a great value upon it. And it reminds me of Isaiah 53, where we have the same word, I believe.

And perhaps this is a more direct reference. Isaiah 53, where the remnant of God's people express what they thought of the Lord Jesus when he was here.

He was despised and we esteemed him not.

[00:10:06] They had no regard, no thought. They placed no value upon the Lord Jesus Christ. And the day is coming when they will confess it. We like to read this chapter through and we say, oh, how it expresses our feelings today. Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. How true that is of us. Certainly. But in the day that's coming, it will be the language of God's people when they are spiritually restored, when they are brought back to confess their failure and to acknowledge the Lord Jesus as their Deliverer and Savior. Well, this will be their language then. [00:11:02] We did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was despised. We esteemed him not. They put no value upon him, so to speak. And that's the force of this word. They thought upon his name. They set no value upon it. How precious is the name of Jesus to us.

What do we think of him? Well, here were those that thought upon his name.

And the Lord goes on to say what he thought about it. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels. I think I might have read a different translation. Maybe JND.

I think the thought is there.

They shall be mine, my special treasure, I think it is, in the coming day when the Lord acts. [00:12:07] He will act. He will intervene on behalf of his people.

I think that's the thought of it. And he will make up his treasure, his jewels. You can still keep the word jewels if you like. You can still sing the children's hymn when he cometh to make up his jewels. Quite true.

But the literal, more accurate rendering is, I believe, as our brother read. They shall be mine, my special treasure, in that day when I prepare, when I act, and so on.

They shall be mine. Well, the day is coming when the Lord will own all those that belong to him.

[00:13:06] He'll acknowledge them as his. He'll display them before wandering worlds. How precious to think that we are his now. We belong to him. He's purchased us with his own precious blood. And the day is coming when he will present the church, complete all members of that bridal company. He'll present them to himself. A church in glory without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Meanwhile, how are we conducting ourselves?

Are we like those in the Lord's day? The little remnant that were there to welcome the Lord when he came.

[00:14:04] No room for him in the inn. No acknowledgement of him when he was born in Bethlehem.

But there were those who were looking for him.

I was just going to find a place for you in the second chapter of Luke. Well, there was, first of all, there was Simeon. He was one of the little remnants, wasn't he? He took up the Lord in his arms and he said, Lord, now that is there thy servant depart in peace according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel. [00:15:01] Well, Simeon was one who expected the Lord, who had a longing for the Lord to come.

And now his longing was answered. He had that babe in his arms and he could express himself in this beautiful way. Mine eyes have seen thy salvation. That little babe that he held in his arms, the Christ of God, the salvation of Simeon and the salvation of all that believe. And then lower down you find Anna, verse 36, a prophetess, the daughter of Phaneo, the tribe of Asher, of a great age, and a widow of about four score and four years, [00:16:01] which departed not from the temple but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in at that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord. And what else did she do?

She spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Israel. There were those that were looking for the Lord. There were those that were concerned with the state of things and who longed for one to come to bring deliverance. And this Anna, she gave thanks and she bore her testimony to the Lord.

She spake of him. Are we patient?

Yes. Are we ready to speak of our Lord Jesus? Is he everything to us?

Do we make much of him when we meet together and when we meet our friends and so on? Or have we other things to talk about?

[00:17:04] Well, the Lord is worthy, is he not, of our whole attention, so to speak. Worthy of our homage and our praise and our worship. And so I just leave these few thoughts with you and pray that it may be our desire to be more fully occupied with our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who has done so much for us, the one who now lives for us, interceding for us, and who will soon come to receive us to himself. Just a few thoughts on that scripture that our brother read to us.