



**A Word for the Remnant
The Coming Ministry of Elijah at the End of the Age
Malachi 3:16-4:6**

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What is one of the things we have seen in our culture these days, especially since the pandemic? The closing of churches, thousands of them nationally. At a rate higher than new churches starting. There has been a process of culling that is taking place.

As the world fully embraced situational ethics and redefined terms and institutions that have been the norm for thousands of years, there are those who look at what is taking place and are in awe of how quickly those who named the name of Jesus turned right around and embraced another Jesus.

For anyone who has been watching, it has been no surprise other than the speed it all fell together. But He did say it would be a characteristic of the end of the age (2 Thessalonians 2:3).



But for those of us watching, it is surprising to see.

Large ministries turning and embracing alternative lifestyles, which the Bible is clear on, is something we are seeing now way too often.

The Church seems to be in a rush to look like the world but in reality, Laodicean churches are all the rage.

The rush to apostasy within the church has not slowed down, but rather has accelerated in the past few years. Looking just at the mainline denominations, the recently completed American Worldview Inventory 2023 found, “based on a study of 20 core attributes tested in the American Worldview Inventory, there were only two beliefs or behaviors for which at least four out of five evangelical church attenders conformed to the biblical view—80% believe God created the universe and 79% hold an orthodox, biblical view of God.” (Barna 2023)

Drilling down into mainline denominations, it gets worse.

Although they are historically connected to the Protestant Reformation, just one-third of mainline attenders (34%) believe that people are born into sin and can only be saved from their sins by Jesus Christ. In fact, a minority of mainline adults (46%) are classified as born-again Christians—individuals who will go to Heaven after they die solely because they confessed their sins to Jesus Christ and accepted Him as their savior. (Barna 2023)

The book of Malachi speaks directly to our generation. As we have seen thus far in our study in this book, there has been one denial after another from the people about their spiritual drift. Their responses to the questions being posed by God to the nation is telling.

Malachi 1:2

““I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have You loved us?” “Was Esau not Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob;” (NASB 2020)

And that was the beginning comment to the people. First Malachi dealt with the spiritual leadership, the priests and how they were no longer serving the Lord. Then he turned to the people and concluded earlier here in Malachi 3 that they are no longer being faithful or obedient to the covenant.

The move from the heady days of Zerubbabel and the Temple being completed led to Ezra and Nehemiah coming to Jerusalem. There was a run at faithfulness, but by the time Nehemiah arrived, he had to confront problems within the nation. Now that he is in Persia reporting to the king, the problems are back.

As we see the current headlong run of those who attest to be Christians into the world, we see the same that took place in Jerusalem.

I am not talking about all the church. There are still those who teach the word and follow the Lord. Yes, the numbers are small, only 4% of all adults have a Biblical worldview, but that does indicate there is a remnant.

There was also a remnant in Jerusalem. Now we hear from them.

Malachi 3:16–18

“Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened attentively and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and esteem His name. “And they will be Mine,” says the LORD of armies, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will have compassion for them just as a man has compassion for his own son who serves him.” So you



will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him." (NASB 2020)

The members of the remnant in Jerusalem were still having fellowship with each other. They all knew too well what was going on in the Temple with the priests since they were probably considered the oddballs for insisting on doing things per the Torah.

This is here as an example to those who are providing the blasphemous sayings we have already gone through. Just who is it that the Lord would listen to? He listens to those who are faithful.

What we see with the remnant is "that they strengthened themselves in their faith in Jehovah, as the holy God and just Judge who would in due time repay both the wicked and the righteous according to their deeds, and thus presented a great contrast to the great mass with their blasphemous sayings. This description of the conduct of the godly is an indirect admonition to the people, as to what their attitude towards God ought to be. What was done by those who feared Jehovah ought to be taken as a model by the whole nation which called Jehovah its God." (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 661)

Even though it looks like those who are not being faithful are getting away with it, for now. They truly are not.

As we see churches today change their attitudes towards sexuality, the reliability of the scriptures and who Jesus truly is, they are not getting away with it either. His word to the church today.

Revelation 3:20

"Listen! I am standing at the door and knocking! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into his home and share a meal with him, and he with me." (NET 2nd ed.)

Jesus is returning soon.

We are told here that as the faithful remnant fellowship with each other, God is right in the middle of them, He is listening to everything they are saying. Not only is He listening, but He is paying attention to all that is being said.

He hears believers encourage each other while the majority make fun of them. He hears everything, including the concerns over the unfaithfulness of just about everyone else. Because they are faithful and are remaining loyal to YAHWEH, He is loyal to them.

Faithful followers, giving is not a problem for them. "Where their treasure is—with God—there is their heart also; and so they "fear" God, that is, they spend their lives in trust and obedience and reverence and service to God the King. It is the attitude which the Lord will find among all nations when the Kingdom of God comes on earth, according to Malachi (1:11, 14), but here we find the first-fruits of that kingdom already among the faithful of Judea." (Achte-meier 1986, 194)

Malachi 1:11

"For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name shall be great among the nations, and in every place frankincense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering that is pure; for My name shall be great among the nations," says the LORD of armies." (NASB 2020)

Because they are faithful, God puts their names into a book of remembrance. This is not for salvation. They are also serving as the jury for the case that has been presented. Because they are faithful, they can see the situation in Jerusalem for what it really is. Only those who are faithful can see truth.



God chooses to make sure they know that He knows, and He will not forget. Of course, if we truly understand the attributes of God, we know that there is only one thing that He chooses to forget, our sin.

He is omniscient after all. He knows everything to include everything about us, yet He chooses to love us, He sent His Son to die for us and because of what Jesus did on the cross, once we place our faith in Christ, He chooses to forget our sin and instead looks at the righteousness of Jesus as our own. It is nice to know that He remembers what it is we do for Him.

Here we see being graphically portrayed for us a “book of remembrance” being written for Him. “A book by which God remembers the deeds of human beings is a familiar concept in the Bible, but it bears the title “book of remembrance” only here. God inscribes the names of the faithful or righteous in the book in order that he may remember them on that Day of the Lord, pictured already in 3:1–5, when he comes to set up his kingdom over all the earth.” (Achte-meier 1986, 194)

One of the reasons we have 1 Chronicles 1 – 9 is to show us just how detailed some of the records being maintained by God are. Name after name for 9 chapters. There are things to learn from the list of names, but the biggest takeaway is that God indeed remembers and has detailed records on each of us.

In the book of Revelation, we learn something else about the books God has, it is possible to blot your name out of it (Revelation 3:4-5). And there are multiple volumes and types of books too. The Lamb’s Book of Life is the one we want to be in.

But as we study the scriptures, we also see there are other books being maintained as well. In Revelation 20, we are told that at the Great White Throne Judgement, the books are opened once it is determined you are not in the book of life. Think of it as surveillance camera footage complete with audio, video, and brain wave activity for our entire life.

Back to the Book of Remembrance, for the remnant, this is a book of the things they did because of their love for YAHWEH. They were saved and faithful, and here is the proof.

The same exists for each and every believer. If you know Jesus, you are already in the book of life. That is a done deal. But what have we done with the salvation we have. There is this job evaluation coming, the Bema Seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10

“For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.” (NLT)

That is why this is, to us, an important book. What we do for the Lord is remembered.

1 Corinthians 3:10–15

“Because of God’s grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value. If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.” (NLT)

If we are saved, we are in, “but works done after we have received the free gift of eternal life are special to God. Indeed, the same passage (Ephesians 2:8-9) that affirms we are saved by faith alone because of grace continues: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God



prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). These works are sought by God and honor Him. We should strive to please Him, and for such works we shall be rewarded.

Although we shy away from thinking that something we do has merit, Christ did not hesitate to promise that those who performed sacrificial acts would be “repaid” (Luke 14: 14).” (Lutzer 2015, 13)

After you have been saved, that is when your works really begin to count, and they become all-important. This book of remembrance is a very beautiful and wonderful thing. (McGee 1997, 1026)

One more thing, God was taking note of what they did for Him, but He also was taking note of their reactions to persecution and rejection from others. It appears this too is part of the Book being referenced.

Psalm 56:8–9

“You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book. My enemies will retreat when I call to you for help. This I know: God is on my side!” (NLT)

Malachi 3:16–18

“Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened attentively and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and esteem His name. “And they will be Mine,” says the LORD of armies, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will have compassion for them just as a man has compassion for his own son who serves him.” So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.” (NASB 2020)

Because the remnant is remaining faithful to YAHWEH, His faithfulness to them also continues. God claims them as His own. They are part of His treasured possession. A time is coming where the distinction between right and wrong will be clearly seen and when that day arrives, this remnant will be there.

When Jesus returns and the wicked are judged, the remnant will be there as a part of His treasured possession.

They will be spared like loyal members of the family and rewarded for their resolve to serve God. God, in this last Book of the prophets, is affirming his relationship with his people in the OT (cf. Exo. 19:5f; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18). When God acts, there will be a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Those who serve God will be claimed by God as his own special treasure and separated from those who do not serve Him. (Lint 1999, Mal 3:17-18)

The Hebrew word translated “special possession” in verse 17 is noteworthy. It is a word one would reserve for a collection of jewels...God says, “You are My treasured possession.” Can you feel the immense promise implied in that statement? The God of the universe would look at you as His private keepsake, as the item He values highly and protects next to His heart. (Fries, Rummage and Gallaty 2015, 265)

Unlike most of the people who complained that God was no longer differentiating between the righteous and the wicked, the remnant will see that God indeed does treat them differently. They will witness it. “Despite appearances, the paradigm for divine justice has not been inverted. God will convincingly demonstrate the distinction between the righteous and the wicked on the day he acts (v. 18).” (Hill 2012, 356)



Malachi 4:1

““For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of armies, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branches.”” (NASB 2020)

The coming day being discussed here is the Day of the Lord, the Tribulation. This is God’s retribution on those who have been answering His questions with comments and remarks that show the nature of their hearts, they are not believers. They are the wicked, and they will be like chaff. As contrasted with the godly by the Psalmist.

Psalm 1:4–6

“Not so with the wicked! Instead they are like wind-driven chaff. For this reason the wicked cannot withstand judgment, nor can sinners join the assembly of the godly. Certainly the LORD guards the way of the godly, but the way of the wicked ends in destruction.” (NET 2nd ed.)

That contrast is, in other words, between one who “serves God” and one who “does not serve Him.”... Jesus, speaking of the separation at His second coming, used the same distinction (Matt. 24:45–51; 25:14–30). (Rosscup 2008, 1452)

This is a promise to the remnant that the wicked, those who they are talking about when they get together, will not be a problem anymore once this Day of the Lord arrives. He will remove them just as a farmer would remove the chaff left over after the wheat harvest is done and the crop has been processed.

Worthless and only good for burning.

Matthew 13:40–43

“Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom all who cause sin and those guilty of lawlessness. They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father’s kingdom. Let anyone who has ears listen.” (CSB)

Joel, who spoke volumes about the coming Day of the Lord, also addressed this group as he revealed some of the combat operations of the Beast.

Joel 2:1–3

“Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near— a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains, a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Fire devours in front of them, and behind them a flame burns. Before them the land is like the garden of Eden, but after them a desolate wilderness, and nothing escapes them.” (NRSVue)

We know this to be the Day of the Lord, the Battle of Armageddon, the return of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist seals that thought for us.

Matthew 3:11–12

““I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.**”” (NRSVue)



The promise YAHWEH has for the wicked is doom and destruction, and it is something that the remnant will see take place. They have a different reward waiting for them.

The coming day, however, will not only remove the wicked; it will also heal the righteous. Having figuratively described the end of the wicked by means of a sequence of destructive events, Malachi unfolds a series of events by which the righteous will be rewarded. (Taylor and Clendenen 2004, 451)

Malachi 4:2–3

“But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and frolic like calves from the stall. And you will crush the wicked underfoot, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I am preparing,” says the LORD of armies.” (NASB 2020)

What we see here is again, exclusively for the remnant, those who fear YAHWEH’s name. They are promised to see the dawn of a new day as the Messiah arrives and takes over. Zechariah prophesied about this after he began to speak again when he named his son John.

Luke 1:76–79

“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, **whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.**” (ESV)

True believers, the remnant, will not only see the wicked dealt with, but Jesus coming as King to rule and reign. Because of that, the joy they will experience is characterized as that of a calf frolicking when released from a stall.

If you have never seen that, it is a scene of abandonment and joy. For the remnant, as they enter into the Kingdom, that same joy will be evident. As “Jesus will reign as King of Kings and His people will frolic like calves let out of their stalls!” (Wiersbe 1996, 163)

Here though is the amazing thing, the wicked, who are like chaff, will be trampled under the feet of the remnant.

This is also to the remnant who has just made it through the darkness of the Tribulation and have now arrived on the other side and Jesus Christ is on the throne. The picture is the same as cattle being set out after a winter of having to be protected in the stall. But now the sun is out and shining.

“The young cattle may have been kept under cover in the winter, but when the sun brings the spring the fields are green, and you let the calves loose. There is joy about the creatures’ movements. Even so when the Lord appears to his people, they move with delight, and dance for joy of heart. The Lord’s love within them shall make them give expression to their joy.” (Spurgeon 1879, 153)

As believers in Christ, we have been set free from sin and our past.

Psalms 30:4–5

“Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” (ESV)

Because of what Jesus has done for us, we are to reflect joy.



We call this joy, praise. Consider this, the remnant, believers, trampling what is left of the wicked, what is left of the armies of the beast after the end of Armageddon and all singing and rejoicing in the Lord in worship and praise.

Psalm 33:1–5

“Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings! Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.” (ESV)

The wicked are gone, and righteousness is now the rule of the day. All are rejoicing and the joy is so pervasive that there is barely a realization that the dancing taking place is on the ashes of the wicked.

Malachi 4:3

“And you will crush the wicked underfoot, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I am preparing,” says the LORD of armies.” (NASB 2020)

The picture we had was of the wicked becoming nothing more than chaff to be burned and trampled. This is not figurative language here but may be literal to a degree and around Jerusalem. What happens to the wicked, the armies of the beast and those who were trying to destroy Jerusalem when Jesus suddenly shows up?

Zechariah 14:12–13

“The LORD will bring a terrible disease on all the nations that make war on Jerusalem. Their flesh will rot away while they are still alive; their eyes and their tongues will rot away. At that time the LORD will make them so confused and afraid that everyone will seize the man next to him and attack him.” (GNB)

They literally decompose and do so rapidly.

This word is for those who have been faithful and have followed the law when it was no longer fashionable to do so. They remembered the law. It was the rest of the nation that was having a problem with it.

Malachi 4:4

“Remember the Law of Moses My servant, the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.” (NASB 2020)

This is a command from the Lord to the nation. Those who were not being faithful. There is still the issue of covenant loyalty, and the Torah was a part of that. When God says to remember, it is not intended to solely be a memory exercise. The intent is to link up with what is said in Deuteronomy. “To “remember” in the OT means far more than to recall or think about a past event. It always involves action.” (Smith 1984, 341)

To remember the Torah is not simply to recall that yes, it exists and is Genesis through Deuteronomy. Remember here is to digest what it says and do it. To remember each command and ordinance and comply with what was required.

There had been allegations among the people and the priests that they had progressed beyond the Torah. It was the 5th century BC after all and they had entered a modern age. Perhaps Torah no longer needed to be followed. At least certain aspects of it had become tiresome to the people.



Here it becomes clear, no it has not gone out of fashion. God's word is still God's word no matter what you think of it. This is something we must also take note of, we need to remember God's word and the words of Christ. Obedience to what Jesus says is something we get to do because we love Him.

Obedience is an organically natural response to having our sin forgiven, being given new life and looking forward to an eternity with Him. We want to please our Lord and we do that by following His word. He has not canceled any of it. There are some who think that is not the case. It isn't.

Moses, as God's servant, had been the recipient of this divine revelation. All that the Israelites, including the priests, did to displease God related to the Mosaic Covenant. At the heart of that relationship was the greatest command of all: to love God in response to God's love for them (Deut. 6:5). Malachi called them to pay attention to their relationship with God. (Lint 1999, Mal 4:4)

There is a reference to Horeb, which also ties Moses, the nation, and one other person together.

That command to His people to "remember the Law of Moses" is then followed up with what would amount to the final words from God for over 400 years. There would be no more prophets until John the Baptist would show up. Heaven is signing off for a while.

The first words to be heard will be by Zechariah.

Luke 1:11–17

"An angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, appeared to him. And Zechariah, visibly shaken when he saw the angel, was seized with fear. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son; you will name him John. Joy and gladness will come to you, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go as forerunner before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him." (NET 2nd ed.)

Power of Elijah? What is that all about. We are getting there in Malachi. The communication lines between heaven and earth are about to go silent for a while. But there is a final word to be given to His people first, and Elijah is part of that.

The final briefing from Jesus to His disciples just prior to going to the cross was immensely important, He was communicating the way things would be in the new covenant that He was about to introduce through His death, burial and resurrection.

These final words of prophecy are also important.

Malachi 4:5–6

"Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. He will turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and strike the land with complete destruction." (NASB 2020)

Who is coming back? Elijah is coming back. It seems his ministry is not yet done.

Who is Elijah? Moses received the law at Mount Horeb. Elijah also had an encounter with YAHWEH at Mount Horeb.



So, you are listening to a prophet whom you would prefer to ignore since all he has done is call you to account for the way you are living. He has just told you to pay attention to and do what the Torah says. And then suddenly, he pops this in the prophecy. "I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." Say what?

God will send Elijah. In context, the people have a hard time keeping the law. Malachi pointed that out earlier.

Malachi 3:7

“From the days of your fathers you have turned away from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of armies. “But you say, ‘How shall we return?’” (NASB 2020)

They had asked the question, implying that they never had strayed away, “How shall we return?” They have opened themselves up to the curse, again. God did not forget that question though as now He steps up and lets them know that they need help to do so, Elijah.

In order to avert this curse from Israel, the Lord would send the prophet Elijah before His coming, for the purpose of promoting a change of heart in the nation. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 664)

Elijah was a prophet of God. He is the one who confronted King Ahab, Jezebel and the prophets of Baal. He was taken to heaven in a chariot and later was with Moses on Mount Hermon meeting with Jesus and the three disciples. We get a synopsis from the book of Sirach.

Sirach 48:1–11

“Then Elijah arose, a prophet like fire, and his word burned like a torch. He brought a famine upon them, and by his zeal he made them few in number. By the word of the Lord he shut up the heavens and also three times brought down fire. How glorious you were, Elijah, in your wondrous deeds! Who can boast as you can? You who raised a corpse from death and from Hades, by the word of the Most High, who sent kings down to destruction and famous men from their sickbeds, who heard rebuke at Sinai and judgments of vengeance at Horeb, who anointed kings to inflict retribution and prophets to succeed you, who were taken up by a whirlwind of fire in a chariot with horses of fire, who were prepared at the appointed time to calm wrath before it breaks out in fury, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and to restore the tribes of Jacob. Happy are those who saw you and were adorned in love! For we also shall surely live.” (NRSVue)

At the Passover Feast, a special glass of wine is poured for Elijah and left at an empty chair. “At a certain point in the seder, guests stand while someone opens the front door. All wait quietly for a moment to see if the prophet appears and takes a sip of wine. It is traditional that Elijah’s Cup look different from a regular wine glass.”

Then there is the chair left for Elijah for the brit milah. This is “a special chair set aside at every brit milah (covenant of circumcision) for the mystical spirit of the Prophet Elijah, who is supposed to make sure that Jews are still faithful to the covenant. The Hebrew term is Kisse Eliyahu.” (Eisenberg, Scolnic and Jewish Publication Society 2001, 38)

Based upon Malachi 4:5, Judaism teaches that before the Messiah can come, Elijah the Prophet must come first. They also believe that when Elijah does come, it will be on the first night of Passover. So, just in case this might be the Passover when Elijah comes, the chair and the cup are reserved for him. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 20)

He will return though, and we see that in Revelation 11.



Revelation 11:3–6

“And I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, dressed in sackcloth.” (These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.) If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and completely consumes their enemies. If anyone wants to harm them, they must be killed this way. These two have the power to close up the sky so that it does not rain during the time they are prophesying. They have power to turn the waters to blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague whenever they want.” (NET 2nd ed.)

God’s two witnesses will be given special powers to do miracles, including incinerating their enemies (v. 5), preventing rain from falling, turning water into blood, and striking the earth with plagues (v. 6). These powers are reminiscent of the activities of Moses and Elijah, but the practice here will exceed them, for the two witnesses will exercise these powers at their discretion (v. 6d). These miracles will inflict divine judgment on unrepentant earth dwellers and will also protect the two witnesses. (Tan 2014, 459)

I believe Elijah is one of the two witnesses and his ministry during the Tribulation will result in many of Jews who are living then, remember, the remnant was taken at the rapture, to come to Christ.

Because of the ministry of Elijah, verse 6 will indeed be fulfilled.

Malachi 4:6

“He will turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and strike the land with complete destruction.” (NASB 2020)

When judgment comes, those who have responded to Elijah are now believers, they will be part of the reason why Jesus returns.

At His first coming, Jesus said that because of Him, families would experience division. Some fathers would believe on Him but their sons would not, and daughters would disagree with their mothers over Him (Matt. 10:35–36; Luke 12:49–53; cf. Mic. 7:6). When this “Elijah” comes, he will cause the Jews to believe on their Messiah, as many did in Elijah’s day. They will unite over belief in Him. (Constable 2003, Mal 4:6)

The last word of the OT is complete destruction. Judgement is indeed coming but because of the nation turning to Christ, as prophesied in Zechariah (Zechariah 12:10), there will be a blessing instead of a curse. Destruction will not be total.

So here at the end of the Old Testament, we see that the curse persists. Genesis introduced the curse to us because of the fall in Genesis 3, and Malachi 4:6 shows us the problem remains. But the New Testament starts with the coming of the one who will remove the curse from the planet, Jesus Christ.



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