

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**5-8-19**

**Malachi 4**

**Judgment and Covenant Renewal - Verses 1-3**

<sup>1</sup> "Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them. <sup>2</sup> But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves. <sup>3</sup> Then you will trample on the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I act," says the LORD Almighty.

**4:2** In the day of the Lord, God's wrath toward the wicked will burn like a furnace or oven (4:1). But he will be like the healing warmth of the sun to those who love and obey him. John the Baptist prophesied that with the coming of Jesus, the dawn was about to break with light for those in sin's darkness (Luke 1:76-79). In Isaiah 60:20 and Revelation 21:23-24, we learn that no light will be needed in God's holy city, because God himself will be the light.

**4:2-3** These last verses of the Old Testament are filled with hope. Regardless of how life looks now, God controls the future, and everything will be made right. We who have loved and served God look forward to a joyful celebration. This hope for the future becomes ours when we trust God with our lives.

**Judgment and Covenant Renewal - Verses 4-6**

<sup>4</sup> "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel. <sup>5</sup> "See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. <sup>6</sup> He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction."

**4:4** These laws, given to Moses at Mount Horeb (Sinai), were the foundation of the nation's civil, moral, and ceremonial life (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 4:5-6). We still must obey the moral laws because they apply to all generations.

**4:5-6** Elijah was one of the greatest prophets who ever lived (his story is recorded in 1 Kings 17—2 Kings 2). With Malachi's death, the voice of God's prophets would be silent for 400 years. Then a prophet would come, like Elijah, to herald the Messiah's coming (Matthew 17:10-13; Luke 1:17). This prophet was John the Baptist. John prepared people's hearts for Jesus by urging people to repent of their sins. Christ's coming would bring not only unity and peace, but also judgment on those who refused to turn from their sins.

**4:6** Malachi gives us practical guidelines about commitment to God: God deserves the best we have to offer (1:7-10). We must be willing to change our wrong ways of living (2:1-2). We should make family a lifelong priority (2:13-16). We should welcome God's refining process in our lives (3:3). We should tithe our income (3:8-12). There is no room for pride (3:13-15).

Malachi closes his messages by pointing to that great final day of judgment. For those who are committed to God, judgment day will be a day of joy because it will usher in eternity in God's presence. Those who have ignored God will be "stubble," to be burned up (4:1). To help the people prepare for that day of judgment, God would send a prophet like Elijah (John the Baptist), who would prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah. The New Testament begins with this prophet calling the people to turn from their sins and to turn toward God. Such a commitment to God demands great sacrifice on our part, but we can be sure it will be worth it all in the end.