

No.
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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

M A L A C H I III.

An Address (revised) at

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by

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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

At Forest Gate, 19th Jan., 1914.

Our subject, dear friends, this evening is this deeply important chapter. All Scripture is important because it IS Scripture; but I suppose there are few chapters which have, at least in a PART of their wondrous unveiling, lived in the lives of God's people as this chapter has with the majority of earnest Christians. Using the word "earnest" in the widest way, we may be sure that most such have some knowledge of Mal. 3. 16. But I desire that we should search this evening through the WHOLE chapter, and seek by grace to understand the context. Malachi is the last of the prophets whose writings we have in the Earlier Scriptures. His name means "My messenger", and he prophesies *the* Greater "My Messenger". The people in Malachi's day were talkative, and like most people who are talkative, they coupled with their talking - pride and sin. They liked to answer the Lord and defend themselves. This was utterly foolish, but it was quite natural. O how important that we should always know that we are wrong and the Lord is right. There cannot be any doubt as to a difference with Him. If the Lord's declaration is one way and our feelings the other WE ARE WRONG. But these people wished to defend themselves, and they talked so much that, as we read in chapter 2.17, they wearied the Lord with their words. They professed to be very interested in the Truth, like those of Isa. 58, who took delight in approaching to Him. Hence the joy of those here before us - ACCORDING TO THEIR PROFESSION - "The Lord WHOM YE

SEEK .. The Messenger of the covenant WHOM YE DELIGHT IN". They professed so to delight. And then startlingly on that background, the prophet sounded forth the words "Who may abide the day of His Coming?" Beloved friends, we need to have this emphasized in our experiences. There are myriads to-day who would speak glibly of delighting in the Lord. They need to have the truth brought to bear upon them "Who may abide the day of His Coming?" It is easy to say "O, I want to see Him". It is easy to sing hymns about the coming back of the Lord Jesus. There are myriads who have sung about Him, and who have felt sentimental longings toward Him, who have never known the deep longings of a heart reached by grace. The stony-ground hearer is never saved, but the stony-ground hearer has apparently a great but temporary joy, and MUCH present day joy is simply a superficial delusion. The people of the Lord have a deeper joy. It is not simply that which lasts for a few months. It is that which exists amid greater sorrows than the stony-ground hearer can understand. "As sorrowful, yet ALWAYS rejoicing", for the believer has a strange two-fold experience. He realises the greatness of God, and knows something of a trembling at His word, yet he also realises the preciousness of being made ABSOLUTELY near by the precious blood of Christ.

The Lord then speaks, in Mal. 3, of coming back as a Refiner, that there may be an offering to Him in righteousness. He will not accept our ^{Services} ~~sacrifices~~ unless we are refined. The refining process is not pleasant, but God's furnace is a spiritual necessity. With more care than a refiner He refines,

but His wondrous care involves wondrous experiences in the believer's life, of the pain the Lord will cause, or permit, to separate His Own from their sins. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be PLEASANT". How precious is this thought! The Lord desires that His people should give Him that which is PLEASANT. Only when they are purged can their offering be pleasant. But the context is solemn in its judgment once more. The longest verse of the chapter speaks about a swift witness against the sorcerers, the climax of sin being "They FEAR NOT Me, saith the Lord of hosts". Then in amazing grace come the beautiful words, "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed". "I am the Lord" - and therefore I will bring you through the fire and purify you that you may offer to Me an offering in righteousness. Have we not experiences this? A human owner would have cast us aside again and again, but God bears patiently, and spends His time (if I may reverently say so) in refining. He could make fresh gold in a moment, yet He is pleased to refine His people who have so much evil mixed up with the pure gold. He could do without us, but He is pleased to be patient over us! And why? He replies - "I am the Lord". Ah, here is the reason. "Ye are not consumed", ye are refined; your sin is consumed, there is pain, the live coal must touch the lip, there must be trials, there must be persecutions, but "Ye are not consumed". The Lord will never blot out His people. It hath pleased Him to make us His people, and having loved His own He loves unto the end.

Then on this wondrous background of grace, the rebukes of loving faithfulness are given,- "From the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances and have not kept them". Here comes a message that appeals to our hearts,- "Ye have gone away from Mine ordinances" - "My graven statutes", as the word is literally. "RETURN UNTO ME". Ah, the Lord desires us to be strictly obedient to His will, not with the formalism of mere religion, not with the outward show of displayed godliness which is only counterfeit; but with the deep spiritual delight in His will which marks those who have been saved by infinite grace. The ones to whom this message was given had RECEIVED God. They had robbed Him, not only in tithes, but in tithes and OFFERINGS. They did not give to Him that which they should have given. Like those of Haggai's day they preferred their ciled houses to giving up for the Lord, and they earned their money to put it into a bag ^{but the bag was one} with holes. The passage appeals to the Lord's people still. "Bring ALL the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in MINER'S house, and prove ME I pray you in this". I do not mean that we have just the same legal arrangements which they had under law, but the same principles are underlying. We are not under grace that we might have MORE for self, but LESS for self. Law deals with part of self, and the regulation of self seems almost suggested. But grace buries THE WHOLE and therefore we have NOTHING AT ALL. It is not that we give the Lord a few tenths, but that we are possessors of NOTHING. We are simply to have our physical frame supported by part of that which is His, that we may have power in these physical frames

to please Him. I beseech you, brethren, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice. It is deeply important that we should bring all the tithes into the storehouse. I mean that we should have the spiritual parallel of devotedness, not simply to bring some of the tithes, as it were, but to rejoice in the Lord's own comprehensive term. The Lord will never approve of a compromise. He does not desire an Ananias nor a Sapphira. To keep back part is dangerous, and to do it with proud boasting that one gives all is epitidal. O that we may indeed make manifest our desire to give up for the Lord, to bring ALL the tithes into His house, not simply tithes of money, not simply gifts of earthly goods. Our time is His, our talents are His, all that we can do belongs to the Lord. Bring it ALL into His storehouse. Ah, how often we forget that this passage suggests more to us than it did even in the days of Malachi. People say, "Ah, now we are free from the law". Ah, 'tis not the tithes of the law which hold us; but there are TEN TITHES NOW, dear friends; you know what that means, - THE WHOLE belongs to the Lord, not simply a tenth part, but ten tenths. Bring all into the storehouse. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price, glorify God in your body". "Ye belong to Christ". You are not simply one who has a privilege of living for himself, and giving God a seventh part of time, and a tenth part of money. The whole week belongs to Him. All your powers belong to Him. Bring all into the storehouse. Ah, how often we keep something out of the storehouse. We do not think of meat in HIS house; we do not think of being PLEASANT unto Him, and the result is we hold back our own blessings, because we go our own way. We make our own troubles. It is true if we walk

with God we shall have troubles, but also a fulness of grace to meet them; and a difficulty when one has an infinite supply of strength makes it COMPARATIVELY a light affliction which is but for a moment. The apostle entered into the meaning of living above his experiences, and then they could not crush him. He knew what it was to enjoy a heavenly position, and, therefore, the things of earth could not suffocate him. Bring ALL the tithes into the storehouse; bring ALL unto the Lord, let there be the devotion to Him, and prove Him in THIS. We often ask the Lord to give a blessing, we often seek from Him some encouragement, but He desires to be tested in THIS. There were those who tested God in their own way, as we read further on in the chapter. "Those that test God", they dared to say, "are delivered". Such provoked Him; but God says, In THIS way I am willing to be tested. In this way I am willing that you should find out if I am all I said I will be. It is not a provoking God to test Him in this respect. "TEST ME IN THIS". Bring all to Me, be devoted to Me, and I will pour you out such a blessing there shall not be room enough. Empty yourself to receive a blessing, and the more there is emptiness, the more room will there be for the great overflowing blessing. "Prove Me now herewith if I will not pour you out a blessing". The Lord never gives half-encouragements to His people who trust Him. He pours out such a blessing that there is not sufficiency of room. Ah, oftentimes we have not enough vessels, and the oil stays. We need "vessels NOT A FEW". If only we have a "full emptiness", the Lord would grant a "full filling", and the blessing like

Joseph's fruitful bough, would go over the wall. "Not room enough to contain it", then it must go elsewhere. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out from him shall flow RIVERS of living water. Ah, dear friends, do we not all fall and falter in this respect? We go through our daily life, we see certain believers falling short, and we know that God has taught us many things, and He has graciously encouraged us in many ways, but YET we falter. We need to bring ALL into the storehouse. I will leave out the word "tithes", because ALL to us means MORE than tithes. Many there are who think that the term "tithe" is too legal. Well, we will leave it out, and without it the term is stronger. "Bring ye all into My storehouse, that there may be meat in My house". The principle applies. The object must be the glory of God. The object must be the exaltation of Him. Meat in His house. Not self. If Hophni and Phinehas feed themselves, the Lord will slay them. But if we give first unto the Lord, then He will supply us with meat in due season. He never fails His people. Bread and water shall be granted unto them, not only physically but the Bread of Life, and the Water of Life, - spiritual supplies, and SUCH a blessing not room enough to contain it. To hold back is to rob Him; to give up is to please Him.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes". Ah, there will be indirect blessings, says the Lord. Not only if you bring will I directly send you a supply from heaven, I will open its very windows; but I will also indirectly rebuke the devourer. I will arrange that the tree does not cast its fruit

before the time. And there are spiritual parallels to-day. The Lord can, moreover, deal with our physical needs, and reduce our expenses by rebuking the devourer, if we give devotedly unto Him. We sometimes toil in the Lord's work, and in that night we take nothing; but if only we are brought to an end of ourselves, and then obediently and in fellowship with Him, let down our net for a draught, we shall receive that wondrous supply that the Lord causes even in a few moments. Oh how often we go forth in our own strength, and we falter and fail. But when He rebukes the devourer, then He causes our works to prosper. "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish THOU the work of our hands". The Lord can make the holes in the bag, and the Lord can make the bag to have no holes. If only we trust Him there is such a vast difference, and if we give up for Him, He will supply our need. If we have confidence in Him He will deal with all our problems. I will rebuke, - your vines shall not cast her fruit before the time, - all nations shall call you happy. "The Lord HATH DONE great things for us, whereof we are glad." Why should we not be glad and trust Him more?

On the contrast we still find those who say, What is the profit; it is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance? The man who says, "I have obeyed the Lord but it has not paid me", is in a very wrong state of heart. But if anyone obeys the Lord without any thought of getting a return for it, he will have a vaster return than he can receive. If we try to make a bargain with the Lord, we shall find it is folly, but if we give up all for the Lord, He will see we do

not lack. "What profit" say these "that we have walked in black by reason of the face of the Lord of hosts?" "All nations shall call you happy" is the verse before. The Lord's redeemed are not to walk in the blackness of despair, not to walk in the blackness of gloom; they are to be those who walk in the light. What is the profit that we have walked in the blackness of gloom? No profit at all. No profit. Such were **SEEKING** an advantage, and they had a disadvantage. But if by the grace of God we give up for the Lord without asking Him **WHAT HE WILL GIVE US** first, then we shall know what it is to have an exceeding encouragement. Abraham refused to receive anything from the King of Sodom, even to a shoelatchet, because the Lord was to him the Possessor of heaven and earth; and that gracious, glorious Lord said, "Fear not, Abraham, I am thy Shield, and thy Exceeding Great Reward", and then the man of faith said, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me". He did not ask for the gift first; he trusted the Lord first, and then the Lord gave. And the Lord said, As the stars of the heavens so shall thy seed be. "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me?" comes in rightly there, but we must not say, "Lord God, what wilt Thou give me?" before we give up. There must not be the bargaining spirit, there must not be the walking in miserableness and saying. We have "got" to ~~give up~~ ^{do this}, we have "got" to do that, and we have "got" to give up something else, and we have "got" to lose something more. O, what a miserable thing it is to be **MAD** to go in the path of the Lord. How blessed it is to **DELIGHT**. Grace does not force us from outside, but inclines

from inside. The new covenant is not "I will write My law upon the stones", but "I will write My law" upon the "tables of the heart". So we delight in the law of God after the inward man, and though we realise the flesh rising up, yet we know we are never more happy than when we are delighting to do the will of God, and imitate Him our beloved and adorable Saviour, Who said such precious words, (Psalm 40. 6,8).

It is in this connection that verses 15 and 16 occur. "And NOW we call the proud happy". "THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another". Here we have the "now" people and the "then" people. There is a vast difference between the two. The "now" people were "presentists", in other words "secularists", for the word "secularist" only means one who belongs to this age, and there are more secularists than many think, and every one who wanders from the Truth is a free thinker, but it is a slavery to sin. We shall find the true thinking in the later part of this 16th verse. But to return, there is the contrast between the "now" and the "then" people. The "now" people want their advantage in the present time. NOW we call the proud happy. Ah, they are having their happiness, they are proud and yet they are delivered, they are exalted; and we, we are walking mournfully, we have a miserable time of it, - "now", and "now" is passing away from us, and we are "losing" the "now". Ah, there are others. "THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another". Their "now" was in the future, for they lived in the future, they lived in the light of the glory. Just as God's dear

servant Moses could say "A stranger **THERE**" (the name of his son "Gershom") instead of "A stranger **HERE**", - for his present **HERE** is soon to be his future **THERE**, so should we live. Moses spoke in the light of the future. The name would not fit till strangership was past, till Canaan was reached. So our present **NOW** is to be our future **THEN**, and we can speak of the present in the light of the future and call it "**THEN**". The time that is present is an opportunity, but in one sense its trials are almost gone by to faith, for faith lives in the light of the Lord's Coming. "**THEN** they that feared the Lord spake often one to another". The others were speaking often **ONE TO ANOTHER**. What a difference between the same words used in verses 13 and 16. We have those speaking against the Lord, talking together in verse 13, but we have those speaking one to another about the Lord, and fearing the Lord, in verse 16. "They feared", that is the beginning; they spake next, - "A man to his friend". Here we have the beautiful thought that when the Lord causes separation, the Lord causes **FELLOWSHIP**. "They that feared the Lord spake often, a man to his friend". They had friends who wanted to hear about the truth, and these alone. The idea of our English rendering "spake often" is rather that they were in a continuance of conversation **TOGETHER**. One did not do all the speaking. That is to say, **BOTH** of the friends were of one mind in the Lord. It was not that one said "I suppose I have to put up with what this one has to say to me", but they both **DELIGHTED** to talk of the Lord. They that feared the Lord spake **TOGETHER**, one to another, a man to his friend, and

Another was listening. "And the Lord hearkened and heard", (kept on hearkening. kept on hearing) "And there was a Book of remembrance written before Him". Ah, dear friends, often-times we have a talk together. - is the Book of Remembrance taking down our conversation? It must be a vast book, but how many pages do we occupy? Oh, how precious to realise that the Lord keeps a verbatim report of what His people say which pleases Him, and though it may never be published on earth, it is published in heaven. It is written to His face, in front of Him. The chronicles of the kingdom were read to King Ahasuerus, but the chronicles of that Kingdom, that Kingdom of God which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, - they are never forgotten by our gracious and glorious God, nor will He omit to reward one Mordecai. "THE King delighteth to honour", and no Haman shall thwart THE King. "The ones fearing the Lord are talking together, a man to his friend, and the Lord keeps on hearkening and keeps on hearing, and a book of remembrance is being written to His face, for the ones fearing the Lord" (this description comes first once more) "and the ones thinking upon His Name", - they thought upon His Name, they meditated. Ah, do we not all fall short in this? "Those that THOUGHT upon His Name". Are we such? The apostle says, "If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, THINK on these things". It is well to think. It is easier often to talk, but these not only talked, they thought. They thought upon His Name; but the word "to think" is also the word "to reckon". Elsewhere

it is rendered "impute". The thinkers of His Name, those who are reckoning about His Name, - what is the idea? Surely THEY COUNTED ON the Lord, as well as talked of Him. They trusted Him. They counted on Him, and counted on His for spiritual success. The outlook was dark, but the uplook was always bright. They counted on His Name. His Name never varied, and therefore they could live above their circumstances. They were the "then" people, for their "now", as men would say, was their "then", and their "then" was their "now". For we are all children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. But the day is not "nōw", the day is "THRN". Thus we have our "then" now, and our "now" then. Rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And so the passage goes on "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in the day when I make up My jewels", - "My kingly treasure" as the word is. "They shall be for Me"; and not merely "in the day" but "for the day". They will belong to that day. You see, they are the people who treat the present time as if it were past (except as an opportunity for devotion), and therefore they belong to that day. "They shall be for Me", "They shall be for that day", not simply blessed in the day, but they belong to that day, (of. 1 Thess. 5). They go through this day happily and earnestly as ~~pilgrims~~^{strangers} and ~~strangers~~^{pilgrims}, but they belong to that day. The treasure is in the field to be brought out in that day. The Lord bought the earth to display it. They shall belong to Me, for the day that I am making. "This is the day that the Lord hath made" was partly a description of the Lord's Day; it will apply more fully still to the Day of the

Lord. "The Day that I am making" the Lord says, and this will be the time for the display of the people that ~~He~~^{He} is making. For we are His making, having been created in Christ Jesus unto good works, or upon good works, which God before made ready that we should walk about in them. Let us then who are of the day live in the light of the day. We are NOT of the night, nor of the darkness. "Wherefore, awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light". 'Tis not in this passage "shall give thee life", THAT has been received. The gift of God is everlasting life. But there is the need for MORE LIGHT. Therefore, let us ARISE and live in the light of the coming Day. Let us not be mixed up with the world, let us not look as the world, for we are not of the world, but we have been chosen out of the world. Grace has altered our whole course, and God has saved us with everlasting life, that we might make manifest we belong to the time when He is coming. Now is MAN'S day, and we are not MEN in the mere sense of the word. We are those who belong to God, we are those who are in Christ Jesus. How blessed to be His (jewels!) How blessed to have the prospect!

"I will spare them". But why? Why will He be sparing for them when He places wrath upon others? Because He spared not His own Son. The sparing of a son is what we would expect. But God did the UNEXPECTED that He might spare us. "I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him", as if to say "I will spare them absolutely, just as a man spares his son". But God did not spare HIS Son, because God would

spare those who are made sons. "I will spare them". No wrath shall touch His own. That day has gloom ahead, but His redeemed will find the brightness real,- a joy when they behold their Lord, and stand before His Judgment Seat. The glories of that Day transcend the solemnities in the sense of losses, if only by grace we have that intense LOVE of His appearing. The solemnities are real. I do not ^{know} what the solemnities with regard to the losses will be if we are without a deep measure of that love; but if we have a fulness of love, though we tremble in measure to know that we too may lose something, yet the brightness of that Day makes us say in the Holy Spirit "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly"; for we look, not simply for the day, but for Him Who is the Centre of the day. He is not only the Day Star, but the Light-Bringer - the Sun of Righteousness, for everything centres round Christ. At the present time you cannot always say who are the Lord's people and who are not. THEN shall ye discern,- discern between those that fear God, and those that fear Him not; and you will find many who profess to be the Lord's, and say "We have kept His ordinances, and walked before Him mournfully" counted with those that fear Him not. But those that think upon His Name, there is no doubt about their salvation; those who remember the Lord, there is not any question as to their eternal preservation. Grace never loses the purchase of the blood of Christ, but the evidence that we are the purchase of that Blood of Christ is a life of godly living and godly loving. May this be our experience.
