

Malachi 3:13-4:3

**Passage Summary**

This passage contains the sixth dispute between God and Judah. God has an issue with the Israelites because they have spoken out against Him (3:14-15). Specifically they have argued that it is futile to serve God and that doing so carries no benefit. In fact, the people of Israel were pointing out that it was better to be an evildoer than it was to be a follower of God because evildoers prosper while God is unwilling to do anything to stop their wickedness. In short, they were saying that God would not act against unrighteousness and that God was not willing to be loyal to those who were loyal to Him.

**Discussion Questions**

Malachi 3:14-15

<sup>14</sup> You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts?' <sup>15</sup> And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.' ”

The people who lived in the time of Malachi were thinking that serving God was futile or empty. Why did it feel that way to them?

How might serving God seem futile or empty in our day?

Do you agree or disagree with this statement: “Whatever happens to people in life is a direct result of how they behave”? Why or why not?

Malachi 4:1

“For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

Malachi 4:3

<sup>3</sup> And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

These verses communicate some difficult truths about what is coming for those who reject God. Is God's removal of all the wicked (and all wickedness) an act of hate or love?

Malachi 3:17–18

<sup>17</sup>“They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. <sup>18</sup>Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

Why does God consider Judah to be a treasured possession? How can He spare them as a man spares his son who serves him?

What are some ways that you serve God because of the righteousness of Jesus?

This message to Judah was intended to give them confidence and delight in what God was doing and what He would do. How can Christians today find confidence and delight in this message in our lives?