

Mal. 4:1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

This verse is a descriptive picture of the time that we know as the “day of the Lord,” the last seven years on planet earth before Jesus the Messiah returns. God is going to completely destroy all proud (arrogant, insolent), wicked people. Not one person of that type will be allowed to enter Messiah’s Kingdom.

Mal. 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Mal. 4:3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do *this*, saith the LORD of hosts.

“But” – In contrast to the destroying effect on the wicked

This same time of judgment against the wicked will serve as a medicine that heals and restores to health those that have turned to the Lord in faith and repentance during that time. Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, brings both the fire of judgment to the wicked and rays of healing and comfort to His people.

Psa. 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Instead of having to hide in fear for their lives, those who fear His name will feel like they have been given a new beginning and will revel in their freedom. Note is to be made that this is all the work of the Lord—“I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.” His people will reap the benefit of His provision.

I think I should note that though I believe physical healing is included, I believe the healing being referenced is spiritual.

Mal. 4:4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Now the Lord has the prophet remind the people to remember the law of Moses and all its commands and instructions. His instructions for the people then are just as valid for them now. Moses was very careful to make sure the people had clear understanding by carefully recording these instructions as they were given. The whole book of Deuteronomy was written to make sure they didn’t forget what they had been taught.

Mal. 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

Mal. 4:6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

The book of Revelation tells us that God is going to send two witnesses to testify of Him during the first half of those last seven years on earth before Jesus returns. By this verse, we know that Elijah will be one of those witnesses. Their purpose at that time will be to bring about repentance in the hearts of the people. When Luke quoted this verse in reference to John the Baptist, the wording was a bit different.

Luke 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, **and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just**; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

I thought that was interesting since he made the connection of the disobedient to children and the wisdom of the just to fathers—which is as it should be. You expect children to learn through disobedience and for fathers to be wise and just in their discipline and instruction. The mission of the prophet was to turn people back to what should have been the norm. Obviously, the fathers weren't wise and just in dealing with their children, which resulted in lack of respect for the fathers in the eyes of their children. I say this because the focus of the ministry was to change hearts.

At Malachi 3:1 we learned that John the Baptist was a type of Elijah, and, in fact, Jesus indicated that John would have been the fulfillment of this prophecy "if ye will receive it."

Matt. 11:13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

Matt. 11:14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come.

The subject was the establishment of Messiah's promised kingdom. Had the people accepted Jesus as the Son of God, their Messiah, He would have established His kingdom after the resurrection. (I believe the crucifixion would have occurred anyway because the whole purpose of His coming was to be the sacrifice for the sins of mankind. The Jews just wouldn't have been the accusers.) One of the reasons they rejected Him was because they were so focused on a Deliverer King Messiah. They just couldn't understand the truth of the Suffering Messiah and the King Messiah being one and the same. Even His disciples didn't comprehend that truth until after the resurrection. God knew from the beginning that this would happen and the wording of prophecy reflects that truth. Knowing that Jesus would be rejected, the Lord declares through Malachi that Elijah will yet come. In fact, it's intriguing to consider just how much would have changed in God's plan accordingly. No, this isn't saying that our actions control God's plan. But because He **sovereignly** chose to give man freedom of choice, He made His plan by taking into account all of those choices before even one man was made. I can say it, but I can't really fathom the possibility. I certainly serve an amazing God!!!!

The indication seems to be that since the people do not respond to Elijah, the earth (country, nation, world) will be utterly destroyed (from the Hebrew). After the coming of John, the response of the people resulted in the destruction of the nation of Israel; after the next coming of Elijah, the world will experience a refreshing healing. Those, however, treasured by the Sun of Righteousness will enter into a Kingdom in which the curse of sin on the earth will be lifted and Messiah will rule.