

Malachi 3:16 – 4:6: Promise of care and restoration for the true spiritual remnant.

God affirms the righteous remnant of His care in a Jewish nation that is backsliding, both now and in the future judgment. They will be assured of victory to the end.

Summaries of relevant background information: Malachi is the last OT prophet. The exiles have returned and rebuilt the temple with regular sacrifices (**1:11, 2:13**). They appear religious but spiritual life is waning with corrupt sacrifices (**1:14**) and treacherous dealings (**2:10**). The book is a rebuke on insincere and hypocritical religion (**KV: 3:7, 18**). Chapter 1 is a rebuke of the priests' doubts and corrupt practices. In chapter 2 is a rebuke for profaning God's covenant and chapter 3 is on their critical questioning of God.

Explaining the passage Mal. 3:16-4:6 and evidence for fulfillment:

Chapter 3:16-18: Israel is backsliding but in **3:16-17** God abruptly turns to those who fear Him. It shows that amidst a backsliding nation, there are still the righteous remnant. Regardless of the state of God's people, He will still care for the righteous individual. However it is vital that they continue to fellowship and support one another (**3:16**). Note that this so excites God's heart that He not only hears them attentively but also writes for them a book of remembrance. Still in v17, the righteous are accepted by being "spared" and so it is by grace. Finally in **v18** these Jews will be able to distinguish between the righteous and wicked, and thus the true remnant will be clearly identified as the Messianic congregations are today. All this in **v17-18** must be in the future when God prepares His own possession but when will it be? In chapter four it will be shown that the judgment depicted is the Great Tribulation and perhaps it's a hint on Rev. 7:1-8 when He prepares the 144,000 Jews by clearly marking them to spare them as stated in v17 from impending trials. But these remnant exist already before that day depicted in 4:1 and so they must be the present Messianic Jews who will go on into the Tribulation to be marked.

Chapter 4: In this chapter, the 'day of the Lord' (5) is used, which is the most common biblical term for the Great Tribulation and the details also confirms it. So in **v1**, the trials are severe with all verbs in the imperfect tense (or equivalent), meaning that it is process, as in a period like the tribulation rather than a single event as Jesus' return. Yet His people in **v2-3** will be protected in righteousness and healing. This matches **Rev. 12:14** when the two wings will be given to carry Israel to a place in the wilderness and be nourished for 3½ years during the tribulation. She will be so well nourished that v2 says they are like calves from the stall, a colloquial term meaning well fed. Then v3, states that they will tread down the wicked as **Rev. 11:3-6** predicts that they will be led by two witnesses with awesome powers trouncing their enemies under the antichrist during the Tribulation. Finally in **v4-6** are two outcomes that God wants in His people in that 'day of the Lord', which are related to two names respectively. First is Moses (4) and they are to remember His law and statutes (Horeb is another name for Mt. Sinai). Next is Elijah who will come before that day. This is quoted in the NT as referring to John the Baptist but Christ says in **Matt. 11:14** that it will only be if they care to accept it. Since they rejected Christ, it will really be fulfilled in the future before the Second Advent. Amazingly the two names hint on the two witnesses to arise in **Rev. 11:3**, as **Deut. 18:16-18** also predict that a second Moses will come. The outcome related to Elijah is in v6, which is to restore relationships for this is crucial to God and we too should resolve such problems instantly.