

## **SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Saturday, November 18

Reading: Malachi 3:16 – 4:6

**Malachi 4:2** *But for you who revere My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays.*

Malachi continues to discuss the coming Day of Judgment by describing how God will remember the faithful remnant. There is a beautiful image of their names being written down in heaven. They are God's treasured possession. The Lord makes a clear distinction between His people and the wicked on that day. The wicked will burn like stubble while God's people will see "the sun of righteousness rise with healing in its rays."

What makes the difference? Malachi uses several words to describe what sets the righteous apart. They "feared and honored His name" (3:16; 4:2). This shows their respect and awe for Who God is. They "serve God" (3:17-18). This shows their respect for God's plan and mission for their lives. They "remember the law" of God (4:4). This shows their dedication to study and obey God's Word. These should be the marks of believers today as well.

Malachi's book ends with another promise of a messenger (like Elijah) who will turn the hearts of the people back to God.

### **POINTS TO PONDER:**

1. "The Sun of Righteousness will Rise with Healing in Its Rays." This is a unique title for Jesus Christ. His rising (a picture of His return in glory) will bring the fire of God's judgment on the wicked but healing to the faithful. Then they will rejoice and celebrate like calves released from their stalls. In Zacharias' song of praise at the birth of John the Baptist, he expresses a similar thought:

"Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising Sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." (Luke 1:78-79)

How has Jesus shined the light of His righteousness in your life? Are you allowing Him to guide you in "the path of peace"?

2. "I Will Send the Prophet Elijah." These are the last words spoken by God in the Old Testament. For the next 400 years there is no new revelation from God. Then the silence is broken as an angel brings Zacharias the word that he will have a son, John the Baptist. Notice the message the angel delivered to this aged priest.

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

The angel points Zacharias back to the last words God had spoken to declare that the new day of God's salvation was about to begin. However, it appears there will be another prophet like Elijah and John who will come before "that great and dreadful day of the Lord" (possibly one of the two witnesses in Revelation 11). Elijah, John, and this future prophet are all ordinary men that God used in powerful ways. Are you allowing God to use you to reach people before it is too late?