

Malachi 3:13-4:3 Discussion Guide

Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

Read Scripture

Read Malachi 3:1-4:3 together while focusing on 3:13-4:3.

Bible Study: The HEAR Method

The bulk of your time will be spent discussing God's Word together using the HEAR inductive Bible study method.

Remember:

- Walk through the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all your life.

Pray

- Take time to pray for one another and ask for His grace to apply His Word to our daily lives.

Malachi 3:13-4:3 (ESV)

"Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have we spoken against you?' ¹⁴You 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?' ¹⁵And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.'"

¹⁶Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name. ¹⁷'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. ¹⁸Then 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.

'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. ²But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. ³And 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.'"

Open: Describe a time when you in error wanted justice before mercy.

Review of Malachi: Remember that at the beginning of this book God addresses 1) the people's unbelief in His specific love of them, 2) then moves to address the religious leaders, the priests, of their wrongdoing, 3) then confronts the people of their unfaithfulness in marriage, 4) their lack of justice, 5) confronts their lack of generosity in giving to the Lord and 6) confronts their unwillingness to revere and obey Him and His words.

Study:

- 1) What does Malachi 3:13-15 reveal about God's character? According to this text, why is it so difficult for God's people to be faithful to Him?
- 2) Read Genesis 3:1-9. What are the root causes of Adam and Eve's sin against God? How are these similar to the feelings portrayed in Malachi 3:15-17? (Consider how Adam and Eve were tempted and the underlying emotions that caused them to give into the tempters descriptions.)
- 3) What does it mean to "fear" God (Mal. 3:16)? Why should we "fear" God? What does it mean to "esteem [the Lord's] name"?
- 4) Those whose names are written in the "book of remembrance" (Mal. 3:16) are spared (3:17). God spared them from nature and unnatural death in exile. But this prophecy also has implication today. What is the meaning of the simile, "I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him" (3:17)?
- 5) How will God's people see "once more" (3:18)? Compare this line against Malachi 3:13-15. What is God's answer to the questions and claims His people have been making? What are His plans? Is this God's admission that He was incorrect, or is it simply God's action?
- 6) When reflecting on Malachi 4:1, would you be friends with someone who treated you like God's people treat Him? Would you honor a partnership with a nation that acted like this? Would you recommend someone stay married to a spouse who acted like God's people?

Apply:

- 7) Have you ever found yourself saying similar words to those spoken against God in Malachi 3:13-15? What is it about the arrogance of others that infuriates us so much? What is it about evil people prospering that makes us so easily angered? What do you believe is the root cause of these feelings for you?
- 8) What are some ways that you can live like you fear the Lord? How are you not showing that you fear Him? What needs to change? What actions do you need to take?
- 9) What are some tangible steps you can take to honor God's sacrifice – to honor His Son dying for you?
- 10) How can thinking in the right way—about God, who He is, and what powers are reserved for Him—help you act righteously toward God and others?

PRAY:

- Take time thank God for His extravagant mercy towards you through Jesus.
- Ask God to help you trust that He is just in all things while you seek to extend mercy to others.
- Ask God for opportunities to share with others about God's amazing mercy to them through Jesus Christ.

NOTE: a variety of resources have been used for this discussion guide including: *ESV 12-Week Study Guide*, *Malachi Study Guide* from Christ Redeemer Church, and *Malachi: Easy Doesn't Change the World* by John Barry