

## **REMEMBER YE THE LAW OF MOSES**

**December 11, 2016**

**Malachi 3:16-4:6**

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

God spoke to Israel through Malachi, who wrote to a remnant that had returned from Babylonian captivity to resettle their homeland. Their religion was hollow and powerless, devoid of spiritual substance or reverence. They brought worthless offerings to God, such as they would not offer to another person. Responding to God’s love, they complained “Wherein hast thou loved us” (1:2). They grumbled, “It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?” (3:14).

God made three points in Malachi’s concluding words:

**1. “Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments” (4:4).**

The problem that caused Israel’s captivity was disobedience to God’s law. Centuries earlier, before Israel possessed the land that the remnant now sought to resettle, God warned of curses that would befall them if they forsook His law (Deuteronomy 27:15-26; 28:15-68). Israel had forsaken God’s law, and the curses had befallen them. To reverse their effects, repentance and obedience were needed (II Chronicles 7:14; Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

Some 400 years later, Christ would come, affirming: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matthew 5:17).

**2. “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (4:5).**

Elijah’s ministry (I Kings 17-II Kings 2) rebuked Israel’s departure from the Law of Moses, manifesting God’s power and judgment. God would send another Elijah to rebuke Israel and call them to repentance. That “Elijah” was John the Baptist. His miraculous birth was foretold by the angel Gabriel, who said “And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias (Elijah), 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” (Luke 1:16, 17). Jesus affirmed that John’s ministry was the fulfilment of this prophecy (Matthew 11:14; 17:11, 12).

**3. “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” (4:6).**

The fruit of John’s ministry would be repentance among his hearers, turning them unto the faith and obedience that their godly forefathers had manifested. In Christ, of whom John was the forerunner, this prophecy finds its greatest fulfillment.

