

LOVE AND GRACE IN MALACHI

5: THE DAY OF THE LORD. 3: 16 – 4: 6

1: 2; I have loved you, says the Lord. But you say, how have you loved us? Leviticus 11: 44 & 45; For I am the Lord your God ... consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy; for I am holy ... I am the Lord, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy; & 1 Peter 1: 16. Also, Jeremiah 31: 1 – 3, grace in the wilderness ... I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. The constant theme in the OT is that despite God's covenant people often and deliberately disobeying Him; He remained faithful & unchanging, demonstrating love and grace. Therefore, a lesson for us is not to be unnerved by political & social events, the latest press headlines or trends in church life. If we are afraid & retreat into a spiritual dugout we only blaze away at shadows. When we stand as people of love & grace & faith to speak or write lovingly and firmly into ungodly events there will always be reaction; **BUT, 3: 6.** The immutability of the divine nature. 'God has engaged himself to his people. Their relationship to him is irrevocable ... strengthened by the immutability of the divine purposes ... the perseverance of the saints is therefore positively grounded in his purposes, and involves the love he promises to all the saints' (Sinclair Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life*, Banner of Truth Trust, 264).

The Messianic promises are extensive: Genesis 3: 15 Promise; Genesis 4: 4-7 Abel's offering; Genesis 12: 3, 18:18, 22:18 the call of Abraham to found a nation; 14: 18-20 Melchizedek; 22 Isaac offered – Substitutionary Death of Christ; 26: 4 & 28: 4 the promise to Abraham, repeated to Isaac & Jacob; 49: 10 'Shiloh' to rule the nations. Exodus 12 Passover & Blood on the Door-Post; Leviticus 16 the Day of Atonement. Abundant promises throughout Psalms and Prophets.

We've shown the belligerent Q & A technique used by the people against God. This is clear & pointed in last week's conclusion, the last of seven exchanges marked by word **how; 3: 13 – 15.** Review: **1: 2, 6 & 7, 2: 17, 3: 7, 8.** Priests & people were throwing love & grace back in God's face; blind to the fact that they were the guilty ones. **Judges 21: 25; In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**

V16 – 18: Despite evil in Israel during Ahab's time there were 7,000 faithful; & here, while numbers are unknown; *Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another.* Hebrews 10:23 & 24, and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. **Note:** *The Lord paid attention and heard them; a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name;* the revelation of himself & his Word; 1: 6. Daniel's vision; 7: 10, The court sat, and the books were opened. Custom in many nations. **V17;** *they shall be mine* = the remnant of v16. **1 John 3: 2, when he appears we shall be like him ... Rev. 3: 5, 12, 21,** to churches: Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea: *he who overcomes. -- my treasured possession; Exodus 19: 4 – 6, Deut. 7: 6 – 9 & 14: 2; you are a holy people to the Lord your God. **V18;** 2 Timothy 2: 19; the Lord knows those who are His and Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness. Love and grace must deliver*

holiness & truth for this is all the work God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. "Till all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more".

4: 1 – 6: For; **V1**, is the reason for 3: 18. *Behold* = the Lord of Hosts, Israel's Covenant God; Psalm 33: 9 & 11; *For He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast ... The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.* **V1** calls people; righteous, grumblers & wicked, to attention, to the final Day; *burning like an oven.* Numbers 23: 19; *God is not a man that he should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? The Day that is coming shall set them ablaze;* Two images of fire describing God as a refining fire; 3: 2 & consuming fire; 4: 1. *All the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble.* **[Not extinction].** Obadiah 15; *For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.* I Timothy 2: 19, *Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, 'The Lord knows those who are His', and 'Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.'*

V2; *But for you who fear my name ...* All his promises rest on the first promise given to fallen mankind in Paradise; Genesis 3: 15; *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring, he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.* The promised Messiah = *the Sun*; Isaiah 42: 6, *a light to the nations.* Jeremiah 23: 6, *The Lord our righteousness;* for in him, righteousness is personified. *The Branch of David* is Righteousness incarnate, a vicarious righteousness procured by him who fulfilled the Law as our substitute; dealing with the penalty, iniquity, guilt of our sin. *Healing in his wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.*

V3; *on that day when I act,* says the Lord of hosts. More than conquers! **V4;** as God's covenant people, the Jews are to *remember the Law of Moses; my servant.* Only in the NT were these ceremonial & political laws abrogated; fulfilled in Christ; Colossians 2: 17, *the substance belongs to Christ.* **V5 & 6;** *Behold, cf. V1; Elijah the prophet = my messenger. See Acts 28: 24 – 29.*

'Probably you hope to go to heaven when you die. Is that a mere wish, or a well-grounded hope? Why do you hope to be happy, when many will be: eternally miserable? Only those who know God's grace on earth will see his glory in heaven. You can have no genuine hope of heaven in the future if you have no love of holiness now, for heaven, were you there, would not be a happy place for you! If you do not love heaven but are merely afraid of hell, may God's grace deliver you, for at present you are an heir of destruction. If you leave this world in such a condition, that is how you will be eternally' (Abraham Booth, 1768, Grace Publications 1983, England, 68).

Zechariah 4: 1 – 7; *Grace, grace to it.*