

August 4, 2021

God is Separating

Read again **Malachi 3:13-18**. As we come to the final meditation on this passage, we notice in verse 18 that God will make a difference “between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” While we are often able to discern the difference based on the outer man, the truth is, we cannot see the heart and may therefore be easily fooled. In **I Samuel 16:4-7**, was Samuel able to discern God’s anointed based on what he could see? How was Samuel, the man of God, fooled? In **II Kings 4:25-27** was everything well with the woman of Shunem? Why could Elisha not perceive the difficulty? There are many things that are hidden from our eyes, but nothing is hid from the eyes of God. He sees and knows everything. He knows those who are His and those who are pretenders. Consider **Matthew 7:21-24**. Many people profess Christ who do not possess Christ. What is the difference? Outwardly it would appear they lived fruitful lives for Christ and based on **Matthew 7:20** we might conclude they were saved, but God saw something man could not see. While there was an outward obedience, they had never obeyed God in terms of salvation.

As we come to the end of Malachi and the end of the Old Testament, Israel has fallen on hard times because of their disobedience and rejection of God, but there was still a remnant of those who believed God and trusted in His Word. In **Malachi 3:17**, God said, as a father, He would spare His children in that day when He makes up His jewels. As God’s children, we are the jewels that make up His crown.

In this world, the saved and the unsaved dwell together, but there is coming a day when God will separate the wheat from the tares and the sheep from the goats. The first separation takes place at the rapture. Those who are saved will be caught up in the clouds, while those who are unsaved are left behind (**I Corinthians 15:51-57, I Thessalonians 4:13-18**). The second separation takes place at the final judgment. Read **Matthew 13:24-30**. The wheat represents the saved and the tares represent the unsaved. According to verse 30, which group is gathered together first? This is not referring to the rapture, because at the rapture the saved are gathered out, but at the final judgment, the unsaved are gathered out. Read **Matthew 25:31-46**. How do we know **verse 31** is not referring to the rapture? At the rapture Christ does not return to the earth to sit upon His throne. He only returns to the clouds, and we are caught up with Him. The end of this passage refers to the final judgment recorded in **Revelation 20:11-15**. At this judgment, Christ is seated on a great white throne from whence the lost are judged and sentenced to eternal death, eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. It is a certain, final, and irreversible judgment. It is from this judgment that Christ has saved those who believe or trust in Him. As believers should we glory or mourn over those who are judged at this judgment? What is your present attitude toward those who are lost or those who mistreat you as a believer? Remembering that we were like them, and that Christ has died for them, what ought our attitude to be? Are there those in your family you do not want to be separated from for all eternity? What can you do to help bring a lost soul to Christ?