

THE SUN SHINES

GOD'S PROMISE

"But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with
healing in its wings."

Malachi 4:2

MY PROMISE

"This year, I want to go out and leap like calves of the herd."

Bible Reading:

Malachi 3:1-3; 4:2-5

After having been reprimanded, our ears are usually ready to listen to a promise of a powerful blessing. That is what the book of Malachi is. Even though it is full of strong, severe words that reprimand, the goal of the book is to create in us tender ears to listen to us say that in God there is always promises of goodness.

Humanly speaking, we go through times in which we need to listen to strong words. On the other hand, we also need to hear words of encouragement. The God whom we serve, knows when we need strong words and when we are ready to listen to words of encouragement, hope and promise. After having heard words that call us to reflect, today is the day that we can listen to

beautiful words of promise.

The verses that will speak to us in this lesson are written in red letters in some of the versions of the Bible. When something is written in red letters, it means that it is no longer words of the writer of the book that have been written under the inspiration of God, but rather, they are the exact words of God for the people. It is interesting to see that in Malachi, both sections that appear in red letters are words of promise. What does that say to us? It says that God prefers us to live under His promise than under His curse. We are the ones who choose. Which of the two do we want? I hope that we all choose the words of blessings and promise. Are you ready to choose?

WE WANT THE LORD TO COME TO HIS TEMPLE - 3:1-3

In these verses, the Word of God is prophesying about a Messenger. This messenger is the one who was going to prepare the way for the arrival of Jesus. Matthew 11:10 tells us that he is John the Baptist. If you remember, John the Baptist came to avoid the people from thinking, acting or serving God differently. The passed could no longer be the rule of the day. If the people were going to receive the promise, they had to do it with a distinct heart. They could no longer be tied to lies and a mistaken service to God.

The promise of this passage is simple. "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (verse 3). This is very different from destroying and

killing. Hidden in every phrase, declaration, or warning of the book of Malachi, we have a promise. God wants us to be the best that we can be. This year, that we have already begun, our life cannot be faded or dirty; it should be clean and well tuned. God can do it. God will do it. God will tune us!

He had designated a man named John the Baptist to invite us to receive the promise. "Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," (verse 1) This is the promise that we want to happen as a result of our consecration. We want the Lord to come to our temple!

A CONSECRATED HEART IS A FEARFUL HEART - 4:2-5

When a person of authority invites us to reflect about areas of our lives that should change or be better, we respect them even more. This is the results of having duly heard the voice of God. God does not want our evil. He want our goodness. A fearful heart is a heart that will enjoy the promises prepared for them. Look at what is on the way, for those who have taken the attitude of fear, respect, and reverence:

1. THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL RISE - verse 2a - This phrase is designated for someone. The Sun of righteousness (written in capital letters) is our Savior. When we allow Him to be our Lord of Lords and King of Kings, we will then see His light shine on us.

2. YOU WILL GO OUT AND LEAP LIKE CALVES - verse 2b - The freedom that comes in knowing that we are favored by the promises of God, causes that we live victorious and satisfied lives.

3. THEN YOU WILL TRAMPLE DOWN THE WICKED - 3a - The curses of those things that have authority over us will be trampled by those who have a fearful heart.

4. THEY WILL BE ASHES UNDER THE SOLES OF YOUR FEET - 3b

When we believed that we were sufficient, we were under the weight of our pride and ego. Now that we are more than conquerors, we are possessed to live above our circumstances.

THE FINAL RESULTS: RESTORED HEARTS - 6^a- IT IS A YEAR OF RETURNING

The hearts of the fathers and of the children will be reconnected by the same God that had never wanted our lives to be victims of our own circumstances. In the times of Malachi, the people had come to a place of crisis so great that the family was in ruins. That happens when the hearts are hurt and hardened by the error due to having become distant from God.

Since those same hearts have gone through a process of restoration and renovation, the promise is that God is going to have them "return". This is the year for returning. This year should be a year in which each family, community, and congregation will see the results of a restoration of the

promises of God for His people.