

PostExilicProphets 22-06-08b

Let's resume our study now in Malachi. We're in chapter 3 and in the Hebrew Bible. There are only three chapters the Division at chapter 4 is somewhat arbitrary in our text But we have come to chapter 3 verse 17.

They shall be mine says the Lord of hosts These who are written in God's book of Remembrance are going to be God's God's possession now you could make the Observation everything is God's The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof they that dwell therein, right But he says they will be mine in a unique sense in a special sense They will be mine says the Lord of hosts on the day that I make them my Special treasure it says jewels in your new King James But this is special treasure really fascinating term It is the Word Sagala There was a an actress Some years back named Katie Sagal S-a-g-a-l and Her name comes from this Hebrew word and it means treasure it means special possession and this word is a Covenant word it is a an expression of special favor special attention special value You find it for example in Exodus chapter 19 verse 5 Now therefore if you will remember Exodus 19 the Ten Commandments remember Exodus Right around this area of Exodus is where Moses is on Sinai Now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant Then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people For all the earth is mine We entered our first session with the question. How can I? Possibly perhaps Be a name on the page in God's book labeled Special treasure Well one of the first times this word occurs in Exodus chapter 19 verse 5 it tells us how the people of Israel Could be entered onto that page now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice Obey my voice and Keep my covenant What is the very center heart of Malachi in terms of the charge against Levi and the charge against Judah Judah in particular you have you have committed a Travesty you have committed treachery against the wife of your youth and What did we discern that this picture of marriage? was really talking about the wife of Judah's youth is is a picture of God's covenant of entering into covenant relationship with God the way a husband enters into covenant relationship with his wife and To have forsaken that to have Abandoned that in favor of the daughter of a foreign God Was to enter into a new covenant with The gods of the land the religions the worship life of the of the people that surrounded them which God warned them for the From the beginning if you do this You're gonna be in in serious trouble judgment-wise So if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure All Israel is not Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called All children of Abraham are not party to God's covenant How many sons did Abraham have? Well, let me ask a simpler question. Who is Abraham's firstborn son? Ishmael is Ishmael party to the covenant of God that you have in your Old Testament law Reminded in the prophets illustrated in the writings Ishmael doesn't have that covenant does he? Abraham has other sons Chieftains Believe there are 17 memory serves other sons But in Isaac shall thy seed be called Isaac is the covenant son How many sons does Isaac have It's a binary question.

How many sons does Isaac have? He has two Mentioned in Malachi chapter 1 Jacob and Esau Who is party to the covenant? Not Esau only Jacob if you will Obey my voice and keep my

covenant Then you shall be a special treasure to me Even within the descendants of Abraham Isaac and Jacob Not all Israel is Israel Not only does it discriminate from the sons of Jacob but There is that other condition if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you are a special treasure You can be descended from Abraham Like the Pharisees talking to Jesus saying we have Abraham as our father That is not enough to spare you from judgment and To enter you into special treasure status. It is not by simple birthright You can be born anywhere and be a child of Zion or you can be born in Zion and be Two-fold the child of Gehenna that you started out as If you obey my voice to keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure To me above all people For all the earth is mine It's one thing to be possessed by God. It is something else to be a special possession Exodus 19 5 You find this same expression again In several places in Deuteronomy for example Deuteronomy chapter 7 verse 6 You Israel are a holy people to the Lord your God the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for himself a special treasure This is our word Sagal Sagala a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth God has chosen you You are elect Does that election Become Sure and certain inviolable Are you unconditionally elect because you are elect No, go back and read 19 5 of Exodus you will be a special treasure if So when you read in 7 6 of Deuteronomy You're a holy people to the Lord your God the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for himself The Lord your God has chosen you has elected you To be a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth That doesn't mean you will be you have been chosen for the purpose of being but there is another will involve besides God's and it is those people The chosen people can opt out of the covenant the chosen people can disobey the chosen people Who are delivered from Egypt to enter into the promised land can instead drop in Toto in the wilderness? with only two exceptions Moses himself didn't make it Caleb and Joshua do two out of potentially two million I was uh, you only need a narrow road for that many guys to travel Into life Deuteronomy chapter 14 verse 2 Reiterates, you know Deuteronomy is the second giving of the law as you remember Well, you've got seven six repeated in 14 to You are a holy people to the Lord your God and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for himself a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth verbatim literal repetition of this truth a reminder Deuteronomy 26 verse 18 Also today the Lord has proclaimed you to be his special people just as he promised you That you should keep all his Commandments he has proclaimed you to be his special treasure people his Sagala people Just as he promised in order that you keep all his Commandments It works both ways.

You are chosen to keep his Commandments. You are chosen because you keep his Commandments Psalm 135 verse 4 Centuries later The psalmist Reminds the people of God the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself Israel for his Sagala his special treasure All the earth belongs to God But those who fear him and value his name are his in a special sense They are written in a special place a special book We Reminded ourselves last time of that Passage in the New Testament that says God is not unrighteous to forget Your work of faith your labor of love your patience of hope He remembers it is a book of remembrance And we should remember that God remembers How have you loved us? God remembers how he has loved us and we should remember That God has not forgotten his special treasure people Those who fear him those

who obey his voice Those those who honor the Covenant keep the Covenant Those who reflect on his name in a way that produces action the Problem in Malachi Not remembering Not remembering the charge to Levi this is why it goes all the way back to these tribe originators Levi and Judah They are forgetting The stone from which they were hewn and the pit from which they were digged Don't dig up the old landmark remember what has gone on in the past remembering the goodness of God is a part of honoring his name and Reflecting on his name in a meaningful and motivating way And By the time you get to this Situation in Malachi people are Losing the ability to discern who is righteous and who is wicked what is right? And what is wrong? There are so many people doing so many things in the name of righteousness and in the name of Levi and in the name of Judah That are manifestly not right and there doesn't seem to be any action on God's part to take them down and to bless those who One would think are righteous and to judge those who one would believe are wicked That the lines are getting blurred and doubt is arising in the hearts of even the most faithful of God's people well Have I got my notions of righteousness and wickedness wrong? Have I got my notions of God's favor? And God's displeasure wrong This is an expansion of the wicked seem to be prospering and And God quotes them as calling this out what prophet that we've kept his ordinance that we've walked Carefully measuring the way We call the proud blessed those who do wickedness are raised up. They tempt God and go free Can you imagine anything more? to this point Than those who crucified the Lord Jesus Christ Imagine the onlookers the ladies at the foot of the cross those who had followed the Lord Jesus as his disciples those who had listened to his teaching and Responded to it even among the Pharisees We know there were believers in that group such as Nicodemus and and others such as Joseph of Arimathea and and John says there were many who believe that they were afraid to come out and say so and they would go along to get along and they didn't want to lose their place in their station and Here is the Lord of Glory being crucified by mockers and scorners and you would expect that some of that lightning and darkness would descend and incinerate these blasphemers and It doesn't Could a question have arisen in the hearts of Jesus? dedicated and legitimate followers God why have you forsaken him? Why have you forsaken us? How have you loved us when Your son the Lord Jesus is dying at the hands of evil men before our very eyes It's okay to ask that question This is God's answer.

I have loved you You got to look at the big picture look to the past and Now look to the future. There is a book of remembrance. God is going to remember those who are faithful Why does he have the book because he is going to take action on and for those written in that book in the future.

I See him now, but not near There is a star that is going to arise and smite the brow of Moab That was centuries in the fulfillment The fall intent of David being raised the root from the stump of Jesse sprouting was centuries in coming but God does not forget a Day with the Lord is as a thousand years a thousand years is as a day and he is not unrighteous So as to forget he's got a book of remembrance that book is there for our benefit. God, of course is perfect He doesn't ever forget anything But the book is a symbol. The book is a token God can promise to

never again destroy the earth by a flood But he puts his bow in the sky Not as a reminder to him as a reminder to us that he has made that promise.

This book is along that same line They shall be mine on the day that I make them my special treasure Fulfilling Exodus 19 5 Fulfilling Deuteronomy 7 6 and 14 2 and Psalm 135 for God promised that he would have a special treasure out of Israel and he's going to and this book records their individual names He goes on to say I will spare them as A man spares his own son who serves him There's a lot more here than meets the eye when you get to the word spare What would you think spare would mean It would mean well, you know spare the rod and spoil the child if I'll I won't I'll spare them when I'm judging everyone else. They just won't be judged Paul says we are not Appointed unto wrath but unto deliverance And so, okay. Well, so we're not appointed to wrath but this word is Hamal c-h-a-m-a-l and it is Translated as in the in the King James is translated pity.

I will pity them But pity has taken on a different connotation in our day Have compassion Is better It's not just spare in the sense of not inflicting something on or shielding someone from a bad circumstance I will have compassion on them as a man has compassion on his own son How much compassion Now we've seen in recent days and recent weeks parents who have been bereaved of their children and the Heart that they have for those children The the willingness to have gladly put themselves in their children's place on a day when lives are lost This is the idea of Hamal to have compassion is very strong word for that parental feeling for children and Not just any children But the son who serves him All parents love their children Pretty much regardless of how they turn out or what they do or how badly they choose There is a part of your heart that just can't separate itself from them. But this is not just any compassion this is the compassion of a Father for a son who is an obedient faithful diligent loyal son who is willing to serve He'll do anything for his father How much compassion is that father going to have on that son? Sometimes you can't have compassion on a child that goes off to feed the swine Pretty tough for the prodigal's father To express his compassion and his love for that son while that son is at a distance doing his own thing But the son who serves the son who is faithful and is near at hand how much compassion can the father express Toward that son. That's What God is going to do for his special treasure people in that day on that day Once again another use of Yom that is not a 24-hour day God's not just going to do this on a particular day where there's a sunrise and a sunset.

Well, okay I showed you my compassion now. We're going to do something different in the day. This is the era.

This is the time an undefined period of time when God Does what he is going to do for the people written in this book? Then it says in verse 18 then you shall again discern The word again here is a very unusual Turn of phrase Because it doesn't It doesn't mean again the way Palin in in Greek, you know Palin Genesis that the I will renew again This is the word shooove Shuv or shub shooove Shooove is the word the verb that means to return You can see how it could be used in an adverbial sense You say well, I was reading a book. I set it down now I'm

going to return and read that book or I'm going to read that book again Right returning to an activity or returning to a place You can see how again would become a part of the freight that this word carries again Hebrews only got a couple of thousand words where we've got tens of thousands. And so these words Can can be used in many ways, but think about it this way Then you shall return to discerning You've lost The things are so fuzzy and so chaotic and so mixed and so confusing in this day That you're having a hard time It seems that the proud are blessed and and the righteous are ignored God says when I read that book and when I express my compassion Like a father does on his obedient son Then you're going to return to Understanding the clear distinction that you lost way back in chapter 1 You've you've forgotten the difference between Jacob and Esau.

You've forgotten the difference between what I love and what I hate But you're going to return to that discernment. I think shoe is important here again doesn't catch it You will again discern is Close, but you're going to return To clear perception of the difference between God's love and God's judgment Between what it is to be blessed and what it is to be cursed. Think of the last word in this book You're going to know the difference and you're going to discern the basis for the expression of love versus the expression of justice To discern it means not just to see it But to understand it why is it God can express his love Why is it that God must express his justice Before we get through here people are going to be burnt to a cinder So then you shall return verse 18 to discern between the righteous and the wicked Because what is the definition of righteous versus wicked between one who serves God? The way the son serves the father and One who does not serve him serves self serves the daughter of a foreign God serves Whatever it is.

They've chosen in his stead and put in his place Well, this continues this is chapter 3 verse 19 in the Hebrew it's chapter 4 verse 1 for us and this is basically a Departure now from the pattern of the book which has been declaration question and answer now having given us that cookie if you will that is sandwiched the Concerns and God's answers to those who are concerned about God's love God's righteousness What was raised at the beginning is answered at the end this is how I have loved you and This is the difference between those. I love and those I don't It's the difference between what I do for those who serve me and those who don't Right. It's it's a really wonderful symmetry here.

Now. We have two Application blocks if you will they're called the commentators say well these look like an appendix This is an afterthought might have even been put in by a different writer Far later than the original book of Malachi Because it uses some vocabulary that's not used in the in the earlier part of the book And it's one of the reasons that it is set off as chapter 4 in our English But let's read it for behold the day is coming burning like an oven and all the proud yes All who do wickedly will be stubble and the day which is coming shall burn them up says the Lord of hosts That day will leave them neither root nor branch To you who fear my name the son? Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings and you shall grow up go out and grow fat like stall fed calves You shall trample the wicked they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I Do this says the Lord of hosts? There's you can already see a

symmetrical structure here. The day is coming on the day that I do this That's the outside bracket Burning like an oven the proud will be stubble And the day will burn them up says the Lord of hosts.

They will be ashes under the soles of your feet Right as you move in toward the center here, they will be left neither root nor branch They've got they've got nothing. They have no root. They have no branch.

They are nothing but ashes Where you are going to go out and grow fat like stall fed calves Stall fed calves stall fed is an interesting word it the literal meaning of it is to tie up or to to pin in a stall and You say well I'm confused because if you're stall fed you're getting fat in the stall and he says you're gonna go out like a stall fed calf And Trample the wicked You will go out and grow fat if you're stall fed you should already Grow fat and and this this is intentional my take on this is Think about this calf that is tied up in a stall the calf says I want to go out and cavort I want to run and jump and kick like calves do there's calves all over this countryside I see him every time I I go to an appointment and they're so fun to watch They just they'll be walking along and all of a sudden it's just like they get possessed and they just buck and kick and they'll They'll shy and and they'll they'll run and stop and they they're just Full of energy. They're just there's more energy in them than their little body can contain and they just have to They've got this stuff in them and it has to come out, you know But God says you're gonna be like an Installed a tied-up calf Well, the calf doesn't understand why it's kept up, but it is being kept up and fed It wouldn't be able to thrive on the outside Normally if you've got lush pastures Turn them out But let them go in the green pastures and beside the still waters and let them grow fat on the produce of the land But when there's not enough pasture and you want your calves to get healthy and live to adulthood You tie them up and you feed them by hand Calf doesn't understand that he's tugging at the rope He wants to be out but this stall fed calf will one day be untied and will go out and will cavort and buck and jump and Revel in the freedom and the opportunity that that big patch of pasture provides Trust The master who has currently tied you up in a stall All you see are the gray boards of the stall you're getting a bucket of mash But you think I'm a calf. Why am I not out doing calf things? God says be patient the day is coming and The reason you can't be let out right now is There's all of this Herbage that is harmful.

There are shrubs and trees Thorn bushes briars. There's a lot of trash Growth out there and if I turned you loose you would be caught up in it. You would be entangled in it You would be killed by it Wait for me to burn the thorn bushes wait for me to clear the pasture and get that fresh grass growing I'm gonna turn you loose and All of that stuff that used to be there is just going to be ashes under your feet harmless Good for the soil We take ashes out of our stove and put it out in the tree rings and such and and In the right measure, it's good for the soil Mix it in with other things and it's it's healthy puts carbon back in everything living is made out of carbon So put some carbon in the soil But God says you can't go out right now.

I got to tie you up Let me burn all of this trash and when I release you it's ashes under your feet It's a beautiful picture to those who fear my name Instead of the heat of flame that incinerates

all of this trash the Sun of righteousness It's the same glory, but it's not Reducing things to ashes in flaming judgment. It is it is a healing sunshine the glory of God comes in with healing in his wings Beautiful picture So the Wicked who have broken the covenant seeking unlawful gain are destroyed and this beautiful picture ensues in God's day and at God's time there are those who've tried to to say that the the the Sun rising that this is Borrowed from the Persians and Zoroastrianism and worship of the Sun God and Hebrew Scripture Rarely compares God to the Sun Because of a fear of you know Sun God worship and that sort of thing there are occasional places where he is Talking about rising With healing in his wings as here But generally speaking God this is rare for God to be directly compared to the Sun Rising you don't find this again until you get the day star rising in our hearts in in the song of Zechariah and Even there it's the day star not not the Sun itself But you come here to this This first Coda if you will Summarizing the message of the book. I don't think this was added later at all.

I think it is a summary in a distillation God Provides the application for everything that has gone before here be patient The reason the wicked seem to prosper now is I'm just letting these thorn Bushes get their full growth and have enough deadness in them that when I light them on fire They're gonna be utterly incinerated. There will be neither root nor branch It's got to get fully dead before I can really burn it out Takes time God's timing is perfect Just wait your turn keep eating that grain that you're getting fed in the stall The day is coming when you're going to be set free trust God's timing trust that he Values you as his special treasure as that obedient Serving son Bide your time wait on the Lord. That's the message This second part in our chapter 4 verses 4 through 6 We're gonna have to cover at another time because we're out of time for tonight, and it is so interesting here's your here's your study question for next time As You read this remember the law of Moses my servant Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel with the statutes and judgments This is what the Levites and Judah have forgotten and trampled underfoot in the book that makes sense behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord and He will turn shoo very same word.

He will turn the hearts We all understand John the Baptist and Jesus dialogue with the disciples about is he was he Elijah? He is Elijah if you understand what's going on But is he the last Elijah? Obviously not these prophecies resonate forward right the great and terrible day of the Lord is future So Elijah is still going to come right? So if you think about your Rapture at the end of the church age on the 70th week of Daniel and and you got your two witnesses, but that's two witnesses and they're not named and People have speculated well that must be Moses and Elijah because they both had unusual departures from this life, and so the they'll die In the visible sense the you know in in the revelation as as the two witnesses This doesn't talk about two witnesses it says I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord and he will turn the hearts There's no indication that those Witnesses turn anybody's hearts. There's no indication of a great revival There's no indication that that this is what suddenly sparks the appearance of the hundred and forty four thousand servants of God the the order is all wrong, so Your thought Experiment for next time is What Will this

look like in terms of fulfillment before the great and terrible day of the Lord? Who is Elijah? How's he going to come? What's he going to do? What is this turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and children to the fathers? Lest I come and strike the land with a curse Food for thought for next time we'll close here in a word of prayer Father we thank you for the wonderful reassurance both Old Testament and new that those who? Recognize you who are grateful to you who value the Lord Jesus Christ and his work on our behalf are special and chosen in your sight and That there are wonderful opportunities and blessings coming for us regardless of what may happen in this life to be written in your book And to be remembered For blessing is such a tremendous potential for us We pray that as we reflect on it that your Holy Spirit will help us to see whatever impediments are Preventing us from enjoying that status and fulfilling that criteria to be Numbered among the faithful and the righteous those who fear your name and who meditate on it We pray that as a result we can more fully Fulfill our opportunity to present ourselves as living sacrifices holy and acceptable in your sight and Be prepared for service and function now and in the ages to come we pray all these things in Jesus name. Amen