

3 Nephi 24 -25*Malachi*

1 As Jesus expounded the scriptures to his American saints, he quoted to them the revelations that now comprise Malachi 3 and 4 in the Old Testament....

Because of the fragmented nature of the material in Malachi 3 and 4, in which a diverse variety of topics is discussed in short (sometimes unconnected) segments, this section appears to be a collection of utterances—a quote book—and not a continuous prophecy. Perhaps some of the brief quotations may not even be those of Malachi himself. Elder Bruce R. McConkie suggested that Malachi was quoting (specifically in Mal. 4:1-2) from the words of the ancient prophet Zenos, whose writings were contained on the plates of brass but are not found in the bible as it stands today (see 1 Ne. 22:15, 24; Bruce R. McConkie, “The Doctrinal Restoration,” in *The Joseph Smith Translation Restoring Plain and Precious Truths*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Robert Millet [Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University Press, 1985], 18).

Kent Jackson, *Studies in Scripture* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988], 8:197-198, 206.

2 These heavenly messengers would include Moses, Elias, Elijah (see D&C 110:11-16), John the Baptist, Peter, James John (Joseph Smith History 1:68-74), Michael, Gabriel, Raphael (D&C 128:21), and perhaps many others. In addition to heavenly messengers, Malachi may have been referring to moral ministrants who would also be commissioned to lay the foundation of the Church and prepare the way for the Second Coming. Chief among these latter-day mortal messengers would be the Prophet Joseph Smith (D&C 1:17-30; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 3:10-12).

It may also be that Malachi was referring to the restored gospel as the messenger that would prepare the way before the Lord in addition to mortal messengers, for the Lord declared through the Prophet Joseph Smith: “I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me” (D&C 45:9, italics added).

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. 4, p. 163.

3 Nephi 24: 23 *Refiners fire and fullers soap*

A *refiner* is “a man who separates the precious metals from dross with which in nature they are usually found mixed. Part of the process consists in the application of great heat, in order to bring the mass into a fluid state, hence the term ‘refiner’s fire’” (Bible Dictionary, “Refiner,” 760).

The Savior is like a refiner, Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915-85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “His mission is to cleanse, purify, and refine the human soul so that it can return to his Father’s kingdom in purity, free from dross (3 Ne. 27:19-21.) His cleansing power ‘is like a refiner’s fire... And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver’ in that great day when he comes to judge the world. (Mal. 3:2-3; 3 Ne. 24:2-3; D&C 128:24).

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966]. 62

4 The Savior’s return will be a cleansing, refining experience by fire. The righteous will endure and be purified by this flame of truth, while the wicked will be burned as stubble, unable to withstand its unquenchable demands.

Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant*, 294.

5 In the pain, the agony, and the heroic endeavors of life, we pass through a refiner’s fire, and the insignificant and the unimportant in our lives can melt away like dross and make our faith bright, intact, and strong. In this way the divine image can be mirrored from the soul. It is part of the purging toll exacted of some to become acquainted with God. In the agonies of life, we seem to listen better to the faint, godly whisperings of the Divine Shepherd. (“The Refiner’s Fire,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 53.)

James E. Faust and James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust*, p. 250.

Into every life there come the painful, despairing days of adversity and buffeting. There seems to be a full measure of anguish, sorrow, and often heartbreak for everyone, including those who earnestly seek to do right and be faithful. The thorns that prick, that stick in the flesh, that hurt, often change lives which seem robbed of significance and hope. This change comes about through a refining process which often seems cruel and hard. In this way the soul can become like soft clay in the hands of the Master in building lives of faith, usefulness, beauty, and strength. For some, the refiner’s fire causes a loss of belief and faith in God, but those with eternal perspective understand that such refining is part of the perfection process.

James E. Faust, “The Refiner’s Fire,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 53.

The Silversmith

6 Some time ago, a few ladies met in a certain city to study the scriptures. While reading the third chapter of Malachi, they came upon a remarkable expression in the third verse:

“And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.” (Malachi 3:3.)

One lady proposed to visit a silversmith, and report to them on what he said about the subject. She went, and without telling the man the purpose of her errand, begged that he tell her about the process of refining silver.

After the silversmith had fully described it to her she asked: “But sir, do you sit while the work of refining is going on?” “Oh yes, madam,” he replied. “I must sit with my eyes steadily fixed on the furnace, for if the time necessary for refining is exceeded even the slightest degree, the silver will be injured.”

The lady at once saw the beauty, and comfort, too, of the expression, “He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.” God sees it needful to put His children into a furnace; His eye is steadily intent on the work of purifying, and His wisdom and love are both engaged in the best manner for us. Our trials do not come at random, and He will not let us be tested beyond what we can endure.

Before she left, the lady asked one final question... “When do you know the process is complete?”

“Why, that is quite simple,” replied the silversmith. “When I can see my own image in the silver, the refining process is finished.”

Author Unknown.

What is “Fuller’s Soap?”

7

The art of fulling, cleansing, and bleaching cloth was of importance because of the high cost of clothing and the need to cleanse the fibres of their natural oil or gums before dyeing. In some places the fuller was also the dyer.

It was customary for a fuller to work outside a town within reach of water in which clothes could be cleaned by treading them on a submerged stone. Hence the fuller was characteristically called a “trampler”. At Jerusalem the locality outside the east wall where garments were spread to dry in the sun was called the “fuller’s field.” Christ’s garments at the transfiguration were described as brighter than it was possible for any fuller to whiten them.

For cleansing natron (nitre) was sometimes imported from Egypt, where mixed with white clay, it was used as soap. Alkali was plentifully available in plant ash, and “soap” was obtained by burning the soda plant.

BYU BOM Student Manual, p. 434.

3 Nephi 24:3

Sons of Levi

8

All the ordinances and duties that ever have been required by the priesthood under the direction and commandments of the Almighty, in any of the dispensations, shall all be had in the last dispensation. Therefore all things had under the authority of the priesthood at any former period shall be had again—bringing to pass the restoration spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets. Then shall the sons of Levi offer an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord...

We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days prior to the Law of Moses, which ordinances will be continued when the priesthood is restored with all its authority, power, and blessings... These sacrifices as well as every ordinance belonging to the priesthood will, when the temple of the Lord shall be built and the sons [of] Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to—then all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever was and will exist when the powers of the Melchizedek Priesthood are sufficiently manifest. Else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy prophets be brought to pass? It is not to be understood that the Law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this had never been spoken of by the prophets. But those things which existed prior [to] Moses’ day, namely sacrifice, will be continued.

Words of Joseph Smith, p. 42-44.

9

It should be remembered that the great temple, which is yet to be built in the City Zion, will not be one edifice, but twelve. Some of these temples will be for the lesser priesthood. When these temples are built, it is very likely that provision will be made for some ceremonies and ordinances which may be performed by the Aaronic Priesthood and a place provided where the

sons of Levi may offer their offering in righteousness. This will have to be the case because all things are to be restored... The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fullness of the restoration in this dispensation. Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:93-94.

10 We have asked the members of the Church to further the work of turning the hearts of the children to the fathers by getting their sacred family records in order. These records, including especially the “book containing the records of our dead” (D&C 128:24), are a portion of the “offering in righteousness” referred to by Malachi (3:3), which we are to present in His holy temple, and without which we shall not abide the day of His coming.

Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, pp. 542-543.

11 These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings... Else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the Holy Prophets be brought to pass. It is not to be understood that the law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses’ day, namely sacrifice, will be continued. It may be asked by some, what necessity for sacrifice, since the Great Sacrifice was offered? In answer to which, if repentance, baptism, and faith existed prior to the days of Christ, what necessity for them since that time?

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, ed. By Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976], 173.

12 John the Baptist as a part of his prayer or ordination upon the heads of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, explained that the Aaronic Priesthood “shall never be taken again from the earth, *until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness*” (D&C 13). According to Oliver Cowdery, the Baptist said: “Upon you my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this Priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, *that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!*” (*Messenger and Advocate* [October 1834], 1:14-16; emphasis added; cited in 1981 ed. of *Pearl of Great Price*, 59). Likewise, a modern revelation speaks of the sons of Moses and the sons of Aaron offering an acceptable sacrifice in the temple to be erected in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 84:31).

R. Millet and J. F. McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 3:249

3 Nephi 24: 5

Those who oppress Widows and the Fatherless

13 The word *widow* appears to have had a most significant meaning to our Lord. He cautioned his disciples to beware of the example of the scribes, who feigned righteousness by their long apparel and their lengthy prayers, but who devoured the houses of widows [see Luke 20:46-47]

And to the Prophet Joseph Smith he directed, “The storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor [D&C 83:6]...

There may exist an actual need for food, clothing, even shelter. Such can be supplied. Almost always there remains [a widow in need]...

Let us remember that after the funeral flowers fade, the well-wishes of friends become memories, and the prayers offered and words spoken dim in the corridors of the mind. Those who grieve frequently find themselves alone. Missed is the laughter of children, the commotion of teenagers, and the tender loving concern of a departed companion. The clock ticks more loudly, time passes more slowly, and four walls do indeed a prison make.

Thomas S. Monson, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1994, 90-91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 70.

3 Nephi 24: 8-12

Tithes and Offerings

14 I bear my testimony... that if the people will pay their tithes and offerings, they will not only be blessed in their material affairs, but they will be abundantly blessed with increased outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord.

Heber J. Grant, *Gospel Standards*, p. 106.

15 One of the important things the Lord has told us to do is to be liberal in our payment of fast offerings. I would like you to know that there are great rewards for so doing—both spiritual and temporal rewards. The Lord says that the efficacy of our prayers depends upon our liberality to the poor.

Marion G. Romney, “Fundamental Welfare Services,” *Ensign*, May 1979, p. 95.

16 Tithing is paid by faith more than it is by money.

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, December 1989, 5.

17 Tithing is not a donation. It is not optional for members. It is a commandment from God, with great blessings and promises given to those who obey. The Lord’s promises to those who faithfully comply with this commandment are that spiritual and temporal blessings will be poured out on them; bounteous harvest (that is, hunger will not stalk the door of that home); and a blessing to an entire nation.

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, pp. 470-474

18 Tithing is a commandment with a promise... The promised blessings are temporal and spiritual... (3 Ne. 24:10-12; Mal. 3:10-12). I believe these are promises to the nations in which we reside. When the people of God withheld their tithes and offerings, Malachi condemned “this whole nation” (Mal. 3:9). Similarly, I believe that when many citizens of a nation are faithful in the payment of tithes, they summon the blessings of heaven upon their entire nation. The Bible teaches that “righteousness exalteth a nation” (Prov. 14:34), and “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (Gal. 5:9; see Matt. 13:33). The payment of tithing also brings the individual tithes

payer unique spiritual blessings. Tithing is evidence that we accept the law of sacrifice. It also prepares us for the law of consecration and the other higher laws of the celestial kingdom. Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, May 1994, p. 34.

19 Only a small percentage of the Church members worldwide are tithing payers today. For many who live in conditions of material poverty, there may be no other way to escape their impoverishment than to give obedience to this law. As I visit among the stakes of the Church, I find it is not uncommon to discover that fewer than 50 percent of the households are contributing to the fast offerings of the Church, and the trends are not improving. Dean L. Larsen, *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, p. 42.

20 During World War II, my widowed mother supported her three young children on a schoolteacher's salary that was meager. When I became conscious that we went without some desirable things because we didn't have enough money, I asked my mother why she paid so much of her salary as tithing. I have never forgotten her explanation: "Dallin, there might be some people who can get along without paying tithing, but we can't. The Lord has chosen to take your father and leave me to raise you children. I cannot do that without the blessings of the Lord, and I obtain those blessings by paying an honest tithing. When I pay my tithing, I have the Lord's promise that he will bless us and we must have those blessings if we are to get along. Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, May 1994, p.33.

21 The promise following obedience to... [tithing] is that the windows of heaven would be open and blessings would be poured out that we would hardly be able to contain. The opening of the windows of heaven, of course, means revelations from God to him who is willing thus to sacrifice. Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, Nov. 1971, p. 16.

22 During the Great depression... some of our bishops observed that members who paid their tithing were able to support their families more effectively than those who did not. The tithing payers tended to keep their employment, enjoy good health, and be free from the most devastating effects of economic and spiritual depression (see *Church News*, Dec. 1961, p. 16). Countless tithing-paying Latter-day Saints can testify to similar blessings today... Some people say, "I can't afford to pay tithing." Those who place their faith in the Lord's promises say, "I can't afford not to pay tithing." Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, May 1994, pp. 33-34.

23 By this principle the loyalty of the people of the Church shall be put to the test. By this principle it shall be known who is for the kingdom of God and who is against it. By this principle it shall be seen whose hearts are set on doing the will of God and keeping His commandments, thereby sanctifying the land of Zion unto God, and who are opposed to this principle and have cut themselves off from the blessings of Zion. There is a great deal of importance connected with this principle, for by it it shall be known whether we are faithful or

unfaithful. In this respect it is as essential as faith in God, as repentance of sin, as baptism for the remission of sin, or as the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Joseph F. Smith, *Conference Report*, Apr. 1900, p. 47.

24 My mother was a widow, with a large family to provide for. One spring when we opened our potato pits she had her boys get a load of the best potatoes, and she took them to the tithing office; potatoes were scarce that season... When we drove up to the steps of the tithing office, ready to unload the potatoes, one of the clerks came out and said to my mother, “Widow Smith, it’s a shame that you should have to pay tithing.”... He chided my mother for paying her tithing, called her anything but wise or prudent... My mother turned upon him and said: “William, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Would you deny me a blessing? If I did not pay my tithing, I should expect the Lord to withhold His blessings from me. I pay my tithing, not only because it is a law of God, but because I expect a blessing by doing it. By keeping this and other laws, I expect to prosper and to be able to provide for my family.

Joseph F. Smith, in *Conference Report*, Apr. 1900 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1900], 48.

25 [Speaking of the question “will a man rob God?”] I picture... in my mind... a masked burglar, sneaking about under the cover of darkness, taking that which was not his. To represent the theory of embezzlement I thought of a non-tithe payer. The Lord’s share came into his hands lawfully, but he misappropriated it to his own use. This seems to be the accusation.

Howard W. Hunter, in *Conference Report*, Apr. 1964 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1964], 34

26 The Lord has promised that he will rebuke the devourer for our sakes... May not that rebuke of the devourer apply to various of our personal efforts and concerns? There is the great blessing of wisdom, of knowledge, even hidden treasures of knowledge. We are promised that ours shall be a delightsome *land* if we will walk in obedience to this law. I can interpret the word land as people, that those who walk in obedience shall be a delightsome people. What a marvelous condition to be a delightsome people whom others would describe as blessed!

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1982 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982], 40.

27 The promise following obedience to... [tithing] is that the windows of heaven would be open and blessings would be poured out that we would hardly be able to contain. The opening of the windows of heaven, of course, means revelations from God to him who is willing thus to sacrifice.

Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, Nov. 1971 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1971], 16.

28 Some people say, “I can’t afford to pay tithing.” Those who place their faith in the Lord’s promises say, “I can’t afford not to pay tithing.

Some time ago I was speaking to a meeting of Church leaders in a country outside of North America. As I spoke about tithing, I found myself saying something I had not intended to say. I told them the Lord was grieved that only a small fraction of the members in their nations relied

on the Lord's promises and paid a full tithing. I warned that the Lord would withhold material and spiritual blessings when his covenant children were not keeping this vital commandment.

I hope those leaders taught that principle to the members of the stakes and districts in their countries. The law of tithing and the promise of blessings to those who live it apply to the people of the Lord in every nation. I hope our members will qualify for the blessings of the Lord by paying a full tithing.

Dallin H. Oaks, in *Conference Report*, Apr. 1999, 44; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 34.

I... suggest five reasons why all of us, rich or poor, longtime member or newest convert, should faithfully pay our tithes and offerings.

29 First, do so for the sake of your children... Teach your children that many of the blessings of the Church are available to them because you and they give tithes and offerings to the Church...

Second, pay your tithing to rightfully claim the blessings promised those who do so...

Third, pay your tithing as a declaration that possession of material goods and the accumulation of worldly wealth are *not* the uppermost goals of your existence...

Fourth, pay your tithes and offerings out of honesty and integrity because they are God's rightful due...

This leads to a fifth reason to pay our tithes and offerings. We should pay them as a personal expression of love to a generous and merciful Father in Heaven. Through His grace, God has dealt bread to the hungry and clothing to the poor. At various times in our lives, that will include all of us, either temporally or spiritually.

Jeffrey R. Holland, in *Conference Report*, Oct. 2001, 39-41; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 33-35.

Elder Lynn Robbins of the Seventy tells this story of a stake president in Panama.

30 As a young man recently returned from his mission, he found the girl he wanted to marry. They were happy, but very poor.

Then came a particularly difficult time when their food and money ran out. It was a Saturday, and the cupboard was literally bare. Rene felt distraught that his young wife was hungry. He decided he had no other choice than to use their tithing money and go purchase food.

As he was leaving the house, his wife stopped him and asked him where he was going. He told her he was going to buy food. She asked him where he got the money. He told her that it was the tithing money. She said, "That is the Lord's money—you will not use that to buy food." Her faith was stronger than his. He put the money back, and they went to bed hungry that night.

The next morning they had no breakfast, and they went to church fasting. Rene gave the tithing money to the bishop, but he was too proud to tell the bishop that they were in need.

After the meetings he and his wife left the chapel and started to walk home. They hadn't gone very far when a new member called to them from his house. This man was a fisherman and told them he had more fish than he could use. He wrapped five little fish in a newspaper for them, and they thanked him. As they continued to walk home, they were stopped by another member who gave them tortillas; then someone else stopped them and gave them beans.

When they arrived home, they had enough food for two weeks. They were even more surprised when they unwrapped the package of fish and found two very large fish and not the

five smaller ones they thought they had seen. They cut the fish in portions and stored it in their neighbor's freezer.

They have repeatedly testified that never since then have they gone hungry.

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 2006 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006], 117-118.

3 Nephi 24: 16

Lamb's Book of Life

31 We receive the gospel, not that we may have our names written in the Lamb's book of life, but that our names may not be blotted out of that book. "For," saith the Lord, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Why? Because he had overcome through his faithfulness. My doctrine—that there never was a son and daughter of Adam and Eve born on this earth whose names were not already written in the Lamb's book of life, and there they will remain until their conduct is such that the angel who keeps the record is authorized to blot them out and record them elsewhere. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:101.

3 Nephi 24: 16-18

32 The Lord promises that "secret" acts of righteousness, seen only by him, will be rewarded openly. (See 3 Ne. 13:4, 6, 18.) This open rewarding, however, may not always be obvious in mortality... In the meantime, as it continues to rain on both the just and the unjust (see Matt. 5:45), the properly motivated—and truly righteous—disciple is content with the inner peace he enjoys in service to and communion with God.

Daniel W. Bachman, "Sermon of Sermons," *Ensign*, March 1991, p. 39