

Lesson 8: Reckoning

Today's Bible Story

Often, the ending of a story is the most exciting part! We don't always know what will happen. Will the good guys win, or will the bad guys get away? Will everything go wrong, or will things turn out well in the end?

The Bible is a book that tells one big story. God is the hero of this story. He is the Good Guy! God cares for us as his people. Even though bad things happen, and sometimes people are mean, God protects us. He teaches us what is right. God will win in the end!

This was the message that God gave to the Old Testament prophets. Prophets were people whom God chose to speak his Word. God let the prophets know that he will give *our* story a happy ending.

One of the prophets was a man named Malachi (*MAL-ah-kai*). Malachi told the people about what would happen in the end. He told them that God will come to make things right. Malachi said that in the end, God will get rid of all the bad things in the world. When he comes, God will rescue all the people who believe in him. God will win in the end!

Malachi called this "The Day of the Lord." On that day, he said, God's people will no longer do bad things, but they will do only good things. Because we will trust the Lord with all our hearts, children will get along with their parents, and parents will love their children. We will no longer break God's commandments, but we will all listen to God and do what is right.

Malachi said that God would send other prophets to prepare his way as well. One of these would be a man named John the Baptist. He would be like the prophet Elijah, and prepare the way for Jesus to come.

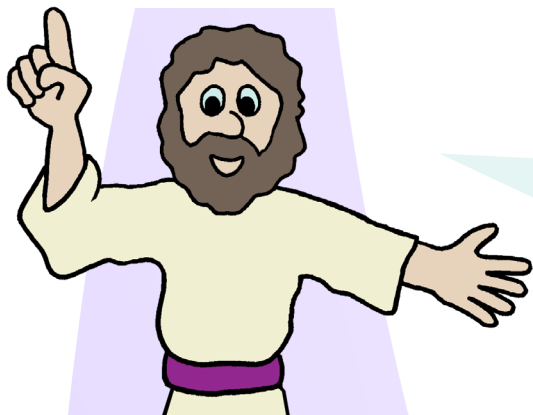
On that "Day of the Lord," the Lord Jesus will come to change the world. Jesus will make all things new, and show us the happy ending to God's great story!



From Malachi 4:1-6

Bible Rhyme

God gave his Word to Malachi
about a day that's drawing nigh.
"The day of judgment's sure to come,
my fire revealed to everyone.
"But for those who worship me,
a rising sun they all shall see.
"Happy they will be that day,
and jump for joy like calves at play.
"Before that special day arrives,
when I come to save their lives,
"my prophet will prepare the way,
so that my law they will obey."



Through the Prophet Malachi, God made a promise:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers...”

In Ephesians 6:1-4, the Bible gives us similar encouragement. Scripture says:

Children, _____ your parents in the _____, for this is _____.
 “Honor your _____ and _____” is the first _____ with a
 _____: “that it may go _____ with you and that you may live _____
 in the land.” Fathers, do not _____ your children to _____ but bring
 them up in the _____ and _____ of the Lord.

Fill in the definitions below, then use these words to fill the blanks of the Bible verses above.

- 1) _____ is required if we are to act in a right and responsible way.
- 2) _____ is the emotion we feel when we are upset or annoyed.
- 3) _____ is the opposite of wrong.
- 4) _____ means to listen to and follow the orders of someone.
- 5) _____ is the female parent in a family.
- 6) _____ is a title used in the Bible to refer to God as our ruler.
- 7) _____ means to let someone know what you will do for them.
- 8) _____ is how things are going when all is good and the way it should be.
- 9) _____ is a rule or law given by God.
- 10) _____ means to push or pressure someone until they respond badly.
- 11) _____ is the male parent in a family.
- 12) _____ is the opposite of short, referring to an object or period of time.
- 13) _____ is what we need to learn and understand a subject.



*Why does God want us to listen to our parents and do what they say?
 What are things older people know that younger people need to learn as they grow up?*