December 14–20: Malachi, "I Have Loved You, Saith the Lord"

The Second Coming

The Lord promises to send Elijah before His Second Coming.

Mal 4:5-6
5 ¶ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:
6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Could you make a case that this prophecy has been or is being fulfilled in our day?

D&C 110:13-16
13) After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said:
14) Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come
15) To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—
16) Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

"by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors"

Why is it so important that families be united for eternity before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

(lest I come and smite the earth with a curse)
Because the earth did not fulfill the purpose of its creation

L. Tom Perry
"The eternal family is central to the gospel of our Savior. There would be no reason for Him to return to earth to rule and reign over His kingdom unless the eternal family unit has been established for our Father in Heaven's children." (CR, Oct. 1973)

Todd Christofferson
"Our work for the dead bears witness that Jesus Christ will come again to this earth….

> "The vicarious ordinances we perform in temples, beginning with baptism, make possible an eternal welding link between generations that fulfills the purpose of the earth's creation. Without this, 'the whole earth would be utterly wasted at [Christ's] coming' (D&C 2:3)." (CR, Oct. 2000)

Why will the Second Coming be a "great" event for some people but a "dreadful" event for others?

> Ezra Taft Benson
> "[The Savior's] coming will be both glorious and terrible, depending on the spiritual condition of those who remain." ("Prepare Yourself for the Great Day of the Lord," New Era, May 1982)

Malachi explains why the Second Coming will be both a great and a dreadful event.

Mal 4:1-3
1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.
2 ¶ But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.
3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.

For whom will the Second Coming be a dreadful experience?

> (all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly)

What will happen to those who are proud and do wickedly?

> (the day that cometh shall burn them up
> it shall leave them neither root nor branch)

What do you think Malachi means when he says the wicked will be left with "neither root nor branch"?

> Theodore M. Burton
> "What is meant by the expression, 'that it shall leave them neither root nor branch'? This expression simple means that wicked and indifferent persons who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ will have no family inheritance or patriarchal lineage - neither root (ancestors or progenitors) nor branch (children or posterity). Such persons cannot be received into the celestial kingdom of glory of resurrected beings, but must be content with a lesser blessing." (CR, Oct 1967)

To whom will the Second Coming be a great event?

(unto you that fear my name)

Why?

(the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall)

The Doctrine and Covenants provides additional insight into "the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

D&C 133:46,50-52
46) And it shall be said: Who is this that cometh down from God in heaven with dyed garments; yea, from the regions which are not known, clothed in his glorious apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?
50) And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me;
51) And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment; for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart.
52) And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever.

In verse 51, how will His coming be "dreadful"?

(I did tread upon them in mine anger… for this was the day of vengeance which was in my heart)

In verse 52, how will His coming be "great"?

(they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them)

John Taylor
"When he comes again, he comes to take vengeance on the ungodly and to bring deliverance unto his Saints. 'For the day of vengeance,' it is written, 'is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come' (Isaiah 63:4). It behooves us to be made well aware which class we belong to, that if we are not already among the redeemed, we may immediately join that society, that when the Son of God shall come the second time with all the holy angels with him... we shall be among that number who shall be ready to meet him with gladness in our hearts and hail him as our great deliverer and friend." (JD, 10:113)

The events that are like a "burning oven" for the wicked will serve as a refiner's fire for the righteous.

Mal 3:2-4
2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:
3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.
4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

How will the Second Coming serve as a refining and cleansing process for the righteous?

(he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness)

Malachi contrasts those who question the value of serving the Lord with those who remain faithful and wait on the Lord.

Mal 3:13-15
13 ¶ Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?
14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?
15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

Why do some believe it was pointless to serve the Lord?

(what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance\we call the proud happy;
yea, they that work wickedness are set up
they that tempt God are even delivered)

Mal 3:16-18
16 ¶ Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.
17 And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

What does the Lord promise to those who remain faithful and wait on Him?

(they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels (2nd coming))

Erastus Snow
"Whether in life or death, we shall be His, we shall enter into His glory and be numbered with His jewels; for the Lord cometh to make up His jewels, and it will be those who have met together often and have spoken often one to another, that will be numbered therein; while all the proud and they that do wickedly, will become as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." (JD, 25:68)

Malachi prophesies of specific signs by which we can recognize the Second Coming.

Mal 3:1
1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

What events does Malachi prophesy will take place that relate to the Second Coming?

(I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me
The Lord.. shall suddenly come to his temple)

Could you make a case that this prophecy has been or is being fulfilled in our day?

Bruce R. McConkie
"It is with reference to the Second Coming that the ancient word promises: 'Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.' John the Baptist did this very thing in the meridian of time, but it remained for Joseph Smith to perform the glorious work in our day. He is the latter-day messenger who was sent to restore the gospel, which itself prepares a people for the return of the Lord." (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, pg. 629)

George A. Horton Jr.
"Joseph [Smith] prepared the way for the Lord's second coming by receiving the keys and powers of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods and the 'fulness of the gospel,' found in the Book of Mormon. Through him the holy temple blessings and the saving ordinances of the gospel were restored. Through him, the kingdom of God was restored to the earth, with all the keys, rights, powers, and authority necessary for the salvation of men-never to be taken from the earth again." ("Prophecies in the Bible about Joseph Smith," Ensign, Jan. 1989)

- A temple must be prepared for the Lord to come to.

Bruce R. McConkie
"The temple appearance was fulfilled, in part at least, by his return to the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836; and it may well be that he will come again, suddenly, to others of his temples, more particularly that which will be erected in Jackson County, Missouri." (Mormon Doctrine, pg. 693)

John Taylor
"Said he, Is [the Salt Lake temple] that Temple [from Malachi 3:1]? No, sir. What is this then? It is a Temple, but not the Temple your fathers spoke of. But you will yet build a Temple in Jerusalem, and the Lord whom you seek will come to that Temple." (JD, 23:175)

Tithing

Malachi teaches the importance of tithing and the blessings promised to those who pay it.

Mal 3:8-12
8 ¶ Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.
9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.
10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.
11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.
12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

How does paying tithing help the Lord's Church fulfill its mission?

The Church's fourfold mission is to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, redeem the dead, and care for the poor and needy. Fulfilling each of these responsibilities requires financial resources.

Bruce R. McConkie
"The work of the kingdom must go forward, and the members of the Church are and shall be called upon to bear off its burdens. It is the Lord's work and not man's. He is the one who commands us to preach the gospel in all the world, whatever the cost. It is his voice that decrees the building of temples, whatever the cost. He is the one who tells us to care for the poor among us, whatever the cost....

"This is his work. He is at the helm guiding and directing the destiny of his kingdom." (CR, April 1975)

What blessings does the Lord promise to those who faithfully pay their tithing?

(I will open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing
I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes
ye shall be a delightsome land)

Gordon B. Hinckley
"The basic purpose for tithing is to provide the Church with the means needed to carry on His work. The blessing to the giver is an ancillary return, and that blessing may not be always in the form of financial or material benefit….

"There are many ways in which the Lord can bless us beyond the riches of the world. There is the great boon of health. The Lord has promised that he will rebuke the devourer for our sakes. Malachi speaks of the fruits of our ground. 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!" (CR, April 1982)