

He Will Send a Messenger

We end our reading of the Old Testament this week with the story of a gifted leader named Nehemiah. When Nehemiah brought the third group of exiles back to rebuild Jerusalem, he encountered much resistance. But in the end, the walls were rebuilt thanks to his wisdom, skill and strong leadership.

Ezra focused his attention on leading the people into a renewal of their covenant with God, followed by a joyous celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. However, it is not long before the people are once again in disobedience. As the Old Testament winds down, we are faced with man's propensity for sin—his only hope is in God.

The very last book of the Old Testament, however, leaves us with a ray of hope. The Lord speaks through the prophet Malachi that He is coming one day and will send a messenger to prepare the way before Him. This messenger will bring the people into a right relationship with each other and with God, restoring the purity of worship He has so longed for. Then, the "Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2, NKJV).

We close the Old Testament with great longing in our hearts for this forerunner to prepare the way for the coming of the Promised One. Over the next 400 years, God will be busy at work setting the stage. And then the New Testament account of the forerunner's arrival will begin.

I hope you enjoy this week's Out of Zion podcast on "He Will Send a Messenger before Him." You can join us as we walk through the New Testament by downloading our Bible reading plan and get started reading right away! Invite your friends and family to join us!

If you would like to listen to my recap of the Old Testament, you can listen to that [HERE](#). {eo}

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