

Malachi 3:16-18 – GOD LISTENS as we speak together



Philip Shields

December 4, 2021

www.LightontheRock.org

*** **

God loves hearing us talk to one another and REWARDS that. Learn how in this teaching. I emphasize “talk.” So many never do that anymore, but just text or email, but GOD loves hearing our voice and so do our loved ones. How important talking to one another is, in God’s view. We cover: WHY we need to be talking and communicating with one another, how we do it, what not to do, how we get more involved in church services, and much more. This topic is more important than it might first seem.

*** **

Hi again. I’m Philip – and welcome to all you children of God, members of the House of God. I’m so glad you’re here today. Welcome to Light on the Rock.

There are three interesting verses at the end of Malachi 3. It underscores how much value our Father puts into his children talking with, speaking to, and obviously loving one another – and of course, speaking frequently to Him as well.

I know **as a grandpa myself**, I just adore having our five grandchildren in FL come by and have **Thanksgiving** with us, and have a family chat around the table, play games, tease each one, watch their delight if they beat me in chess for the first time, and then cap it all off with hearing each one of them – **from ages 5- 15 – give us an impromptu concert on the piano.**

It was so much fun even just watching *them* interact with each other. My daughter and her husband have done such a wonderful job – and the fun, love, joy that all 5 grandkids have with each other, made my heart sing. It seems we’re like God on this – he loves seeing his children interacting -- talking, loving, praying, and visiting together.

Malachi 3:16-18

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another,
(KJV: “spake OFTEN to one another”)

**And YHVH (the LORD) listened and heard them;
So a Book of Remembrance was written before Him
For those who fear YHVH and who meditate on His name.**

[Holman: "have a high regard for his name"]

17 "**They shall be Mine,**" says YHVH of hosts,

"On the day that I make them My jewels.

And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."

18 Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked,
Between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him."

There it is! Reading that brought tears to my eyes. **Imagine God feeling the same JOY I did when he sees his children getting along**, talking together, praying together, encouraging one another, loving one another, laughing, and living like his children should – with joyful love and frequent contact with each other.

So HOW do we do Malachi 3:16? Lots of ways. We can **go visit one another. Or talk** on the phone. Text. Email. Facebook. (Note: I may be discontinuing FB eventually, and not accepting new FB friends if I don't already know them). We can also send a note, a card. God wants us talking.

Let me add: Make this verse about talking to one another come alive in your life – especially talking with **the infirm, the lonely, the grieving, those living alone, the old** and especially anyone who would welcome the idea that someone -you- thought of them today. Ponder your call first and determine to leave a word of GOD'S encouragement, love, and affection.

So God not only KNOWS us, but it also says He listens to us and is SO delighted when we talk with his other children. He says because his children are doing that, YOU will be HIS. He sees us as his own prized JEWELS or treasured possession as we talk to one another.

He is SO happy as we do that, God also says he will SPARE you from the times of trouble coming. Our Father loves seeing us interact.

The book of Malachi really is an end-time book. It has a lot of parallels to messages to the Laodicean group of **Revelation 3**, the 7th of the 7 churches/fellowships of God, headed by Christ himself. Understand that Malachi is all about children of God in the very last days. *Try reading the book of Malachi again with that in mind and see what you glean.*

End time condition: And yet Yeshua warned us by asking if he **would find faith**, or the faith, still active upon his return (**Luke 18:8**). He says the love of many will harden, will “wax cold” in the last days (**Matthew 24:12**). He says many will be offended and snitch on their own father or mother or brothers and sisters – even handing them a death sentence by doing so (Mark 13:12).

And in fact, in these last times **we see God’s children split up into various fellowships** that rarely have anything to do with one another.

BE BRINGING God’s children together

Somehow, some way – be a child of God who does all in your power to be bringing people together. Visit various church fellowships so your message is clear: “I see all of you as my beloved brothers and sisters.” Yeshua said the days is coming when there will be ONE flock, and ONE Shepherd (**John 10:16**). Be living that out now. Don’t let anyone box God’s children into one fellowship!

(NOTE – the audio sequence is a bit different... but keep listening as you read these notes.)

Yeshua says if we’re not gathering people together, we are scattering! There’s no middle ground on this. Too many fellowships won’t have anything to do with anyone in other groups – or refuse fellowship with certain individuals.

Matthew 12:30

“He who is not with Me is against Me, **and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.**”

Pastors: We’ll read **1 Cor. 10:10-12**. Stop prohibiting GOD’S sheep from visiting flocks of God’s other sheep. Some of you prohibit this. That must stop. The flock need to be followers of the Chief Shepherd Yeshua – not you. Pastors, quit promoting just your fellowship. Urge brethren to reach out. *Pastors who preach basically the same things should work together more.*

1 Corinthians 1:10-12 NLT

“I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to **live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church.** Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. 11 For some members of Chloe's household have told me about your quarrels, my dear brothers and sisters.

12 Some of you are saying, "I am a follower of Paul." Others are saying, "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter," or "I follow only Christ."

Now we can choose to attend a fellowship where someone we don't like doesn't attend. How convenient not having to apply **Matthew 18:15-18**, which I'll write or speak on soon. God wants us repairing relationships especially between his children, if the relationship doesn't represent Him or His way. IMAGINE the POWER the true believers can have if we all practiced this!

(Extra, not in audio): There are also children of God who are suffering alone, hurting, or feeling abandoned. I've been there at times. It's no fun. Those people may not be your "cup of tea", as we say, but those are the very ones who need someone reaching out to them the most. Let them know you care. Send them a card perhaps that lets them know they are not alone.

Be living out the LOVE that is so spectacular that it shows you and your fellow believers belong to God as followers of Jesus Christ. We are to love one another in the same way as Christ loves his brothers and sisters (you and me).

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; **AS I have loved you, that you also love one another.**

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

So see this teaching as a prod to do what Malachi 3:16-18 says: to speak often with fellow believers and everything that implies.

But what if you're not a "people person"?

But some few of you are already saying, "That won't be me. I find it hard to talk with others. I'm an introvert."

Ask for God's miraculous GIFTS to help transform you into a person who can and does reach out. Remember a GIFT is not something you already had – but was given to you to use.

1 Corinthians 12:4-9

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one **for the profit of all:** 8 for to one is given the **word of wisdom** through the Spirit, to another the **word of knowledge** through the same Spirit, ..." – and it goes on from there."

When God gives us his gifts, it often takes courage to step out in faith and USE the gift He gave us. At first, it's scary crossing between huge towers of water – like crossing through our own Red Sea trial. But God told them... quit standing still and get moving! **Compare Ex. 14:13-15.** There comes a time to quit waiting – and to get moving! Step out in faith even when what God asks us is hard, such as talking to one another.

Story of TX LADY: I have a friend in Texas who took my encouragement to reach out and she sends emails to a man in FL who is bedridden from severe end stage MS. He can't move anything below his neck. But her emails certainly let the man with M.S. realize he is not forgotten or forsaken by his brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank God for her and others who communicate with him. She stepped out in faith – to encourage a man she's never met.

And if you more extroverted people sense some others are shy and introverted – reach out to them, you start the conversation, you invite them over to dinner at your home. We tend to prefer to invite those who are the “life of the party.” But Yeshua said to invite those NOT being invited; those NOT so likely to enliven your dinner gathering.

Luke 14:12-14

Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.

13 But when you **give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.** 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

So let's start communicating MORE and start letting God's spirit in us start to reach out, step out in faith, do what can be frightening to us normally and see how God can use you to do his work. And let's do this **somehow, some way, before events and circumstances make it much harder to.**

The time may come when we CAN'T talk together

We saw how government used a pandemic to stop churches from gathering. The Adversary loves to attack God's children. In a war, one of the first things an enemy does when he goes on the attack is to knock out his foe's ability to COMMUNICATE or defend themselves. So that's where Satan will attack us: he'll try to stop us talking to one another.

The lesson: USE the time we have now to talk to another WHILE WE CAN. Eventually you may not be able to talk to some.

I remember one day getting a very strong feeling in my heart to go visit my M.S. friend Paul – who can't move anything below his neck. He is in a V.A. nursing home about 2 hours from our house. I got up, proclaimed to my wife: "I gotta leave right now, and go see Paul." She asked why, and I said, "I don't know. It's a strong gut feeling or urging in my heart saying –'hey, you gotta leave, right now, and go see Paul.'" I immediately left.

So I went, we visited, and come to find out the very next day the federal government lockdowns to Federal nursing homes were announced. Learn to be responsive to when God speaks to you too, by his Spirit. When you get a strong feeling like that, pray about it, and then do it. Test the spirits, for sure. But I'm so glad I did what I "was told."

My point is, our ability to talk to one another in person at least, could be curtailed without notice – by pandemics, traffic snarl-ups, shutdowns, and death. Don't be sitting on the sidelines wishing you had made a trip or called or to go be with someone you love.

My own brother, who had suffered 2 strokes and a heart attack plus had a wife with late-stage Alzheimer's, was not even allowed to see her AT ALL for well over a year. A few days before she died, they finally let him in for an hour.

Our own ***loved ones may DIE quickly, unexpectedly.*** Then we can't talk anymore. Talk while we can!

When **my wife's mom** in England died also of Alzheimer's, it was so frustrating with England's lockdowns, quarantines, restrictions.

So we need to take advantage of opportunities to encourage, talk and share God's love now.

Other things can stop us eventually besides government lockdowns:

- **We're watching Satan's spirit around the world, as never before.** When Satan is cast out of heaven in his battle with Michael the archangel, Satan is angry. We already all sense something really strange has been happening all around the world. We're watching Satan's evil, foul and murderous spirit filling the planet! HE is our real enemy behind what we're watching. He comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

- **Natural disasters can stop cell phone and all communication or ability to travel** (EMP's, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, wild fires, EARTHQUAKES in “diverse places” – **NEW MADRID fault** in the TN, KY, AR, MO areas and beyond. 1811 a HUGE quake. West Coast also. “Ring of fire” around the world.)

STOCK UP now – food/water to last up to 3 months, even as we TRUST in God. Joseph saved up in the 7 years of plenty. Stock up on other things too – such as cleaning wipes, Toilet paper, batteries, firewood, or extra propane. Be ready.

- **DEATH of any loved ones – suddenly stops communication.** We never know when! **TALK – not TEXT – to your parents** and grandparents regularly. They cherish hearing your voice. I know many would text even God, instead of praying, if they could.
- **WARS can prevent us communicating. Yes,** even here in USA – as well as times of violence, which is happening more and more. People won't want to go anywhere when it's so dangerous. **Iran-Israel war? China -Taiwan? Russia -Ukraine?** These kinds of war could stop commerce in a big way and affect our day-to-day lives. In 1914 one bullet started World War 1 with assassination of Franz Joseph Ferdinand. We now have HYPERSOUND missiles from China and Russia that we can't defend against! Things as we know it can change quickly.
- **Watch the papacy** in this coming year especially. I sense something big could happen. **Watch Israel and Middle East** especially. Watch **EUROPE** – where I do believe the Anti-Christ end-time Beast and False Prophet will arise from. I need to give a sermon on this soon.

“But no one ever calls me”

Some don't reach out because “no one ever comes to see me or to call me to see how I am, so why should I call them?” Yeshua said ‘love one another AS I have loved you.’ Can you imagine him saying he wouldn't bother because people let him down? We are to love others and talk to others in the way Christ loves us in spite of our failings.

I also get very few calls, emails, texts from brethren except from 3-4 people now and then, plus then another 3-4 who might 1-2x a year. But call anyway!

Let's follow God's own example. He still sent his Son to show his LOVE to all of us while we were still sinners. SO love those who don't show you love

anyway. Love even your enemies, Yeshua said, anyway. Call and show concern for people who don't show you any concern – anyway. Pray for those who need prayers, anyway. Be one who fears God in the right way – and receive His blessings. Obey Malachi 3:16-18 – and talk more.

SO MANY will be encouraged simply by your quick 5–10-minute call. That person you talked to will think, “Someone actually thought about me, wow!”

Don't know what to say

What would you talk about? Any talking with others would not include any gossip (Prov 16:28; 17:9) Eph 4:29—impart GRACE.

Ephesians 4:29 NLT

“Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”

- **Speak of your love for our Father and Yeshua the king of kings... and how you are so looking forward to his return. LET others know you supremely love God and Yeshua.**
- **Share family news.**
- **If you're talking to someone sick or grieving** – please take time to ask questions and **LISTEN**. Be there for them. Listen more than speaking in especially those circumstances. Be encouraging and assure them of your love, your prayers and “I'm here if you ever need anything.”
- Share what you're learning from your own Bible studies.
- To the infirm, ask them if they'd like you to read to them from the Bible.
- Share interesting sermon thoughts you gleaned.
- Share some things that are encouraging and uplifting – vs. the depressing topics.
- Share your excitement about hoping Christ returns soon. Leave them encouraged.
- Confess health and personal areas where YOU need THEIR prayers.
- **THEN PRAY once in a while together during or at the end of your call. Acts 12. Peter in jail.** The whole church in Jerusalem gathered together and prayed. And God heard. When was the last time WE ever did that? I mean gather together to pray about a crisis.

Church services: Here's what Paul says. He expects each one to contribute to the body when we come together. Paul does not describe church meetings as being the kind of meeting where just one or two people run the whole show, do all the speaking... NO, it's a FELLOWSHIP. Go back and re-read 1 Cor. 14, in its entirety. These meetings are supposed to include INPUT from many who are there that day!

1 Corinthians 14:26 CJB

“What is our conclusion, brothers? **Whenever you come together, let everyone be ready with a psalm**, a teaching, or a revelation, or ready to use his gift of tongues or give an interpretation; but let everything be for edification.”

So even at our fellowship meetings/church services - we should all pray that, at least once in a while if not always, we have something to SAY and share with others that is uplifting.

In the new covenant, I don't think “church services” were supposed to primarily be just the pre-selected pastor or song leader doing 95% or more of the spiritual contributions. Pastors, LET your brethren ask questions and include their insights. 1 Cor. 14 is so full of examples of that.

So let's talk to one another lovingly and encouragingly while we can. It means a lot to God. He takes note of those who are doing this and will reward them and protect them in time of trouble. Plus – your name is more likely in the Book of Life at least partly because of your calls.

Can we commit to calling, texting, communicating somehow with at least 1-2 people a week – or more if you can? Especially the infirm or those in hospitals or bedridden and longing for a friend or brother or sister in Christ to call.

OUR OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO CAN STOP SUDDENLY. Our *calls don't have to be long. Even just a 5-minute call – or less – will be understood as, “Wow, someone thought about me today.” They'll feel better.*

Our God is listening. Our God is watching. Our God wants to add your name to his Book of Remembrance. Let's do this. Talking to one another with uplifting and encouraging thoughts pleases him so much.

Closing prayer.