

MALACHI

PROPHETIC HOPE: A NEW JERUSALEM (SEE EZRA, NEHEMIAH)

100 YEARS AFTER RETURN FROM EXILE

CORRUPTION

INJUSTICE

POVERTY

CLAIM

DISAGREEMENT

RESPONSE

← A SERIES OF DISPUTES →

4:4-6 CONCLUDING APPENDIX TO TORAH & PROPHETS

TORAH & PROPHETS

"REMEMBER THE TORAH OF MY SERVANT MOSES."
"I WILL SEND THE PROPHET ELIJAH BEFORE THE DAY OF THE LORD, AND HE WILL RESTORE THE HEARTS OF GOD'S PEOPLE."

• SUMMARIZES THE TORAH & PROPHETS AS A UNIFIED STORY THAT POINTS TO THE FUTURE...
• ...WHEN GOD WILL SEND A NEW MOSES & ELIJAH TO RESTORE GOD'S PEOPLE & HEAL THEIR HEARTS. (REMEMBER DEUTERONOMY 30, JEREMIAH 31, EZEKIEL 36)

3 CONFRONTING ISRAEL'S CORRUPTION & DAY OF THE LORD

1-2 EXPOSING ISRAEL'S CORRUPTION

DISPUTE #1

1:2-5

I STILL LOVE YOU (1:2)

HOW HAVE YOU SHOWN US LOVE?

I CHOOSE JACOB'S FAMILY TO CARRY MY COVENANT PROMISES...

BUT NOT ESAU'S FAMILY.

JACOB & ISRAEL

ESAU & EDOM

DISPUTE #2

1:6-7

YOU DESPISE ME & DESPISE MY TEMPLE.

IT'S... GOD ENOUGH

NO PROBLEM!

IT'S... FINE.

HOW ARE WE DESPISING YOU?

3-4 CONFRONTING ISRAEL'S CORRUPTION & DAY OF THE LORD

DISPUTE #3

3:1-10

IT'S POINTLESS TO SERVE GOD WICKED PEOPLE. SINCE GOD DOES NOTHING (3:2)

GOD'S RESPONSE: A SHORT STORY

DISPUTE #4

3:17-39

YOU'VE NEGLECTED US! WHERE IS THE GOD OF JUSTICE? (3:17)

I WILL SEND MY MESSENGER TO PREPARE THE WAY BEFORE ME... AND I WILL COME TO BRING JUSTICE. (3:19)

4:1-3 CONCLUSION

DISPUTE #5

3:10-12

TURN BACK TO ME (3:10)

START OFFERING THE TITHE AGAIN (3:10)

10% OF ANNUAL INCOME, DONATED TO SUPPORT THE TEMPLE (SEE LEVITICUS 27:30)

DISPUTE #6

3:13-18

THE FAITHFUL REMNANT

SCROLL OF REMEMBRANCE

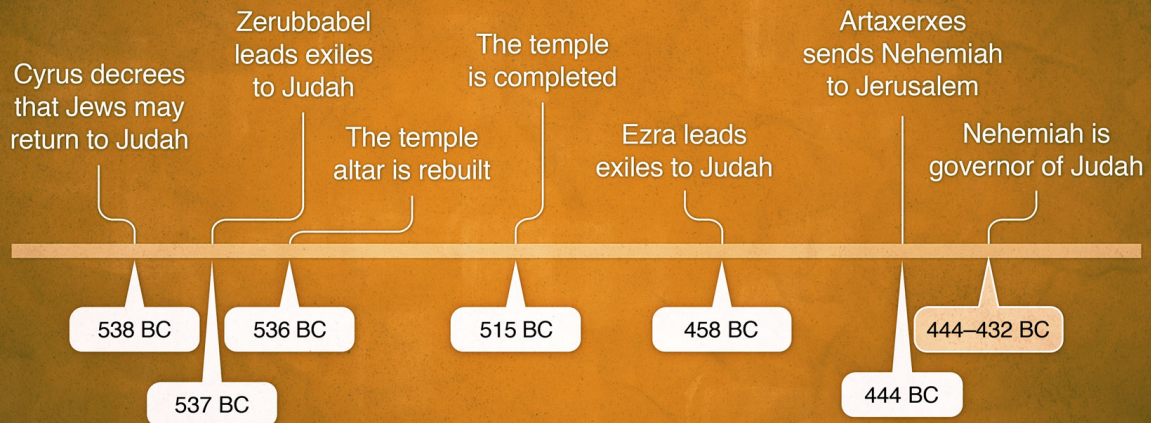
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WEEK 8

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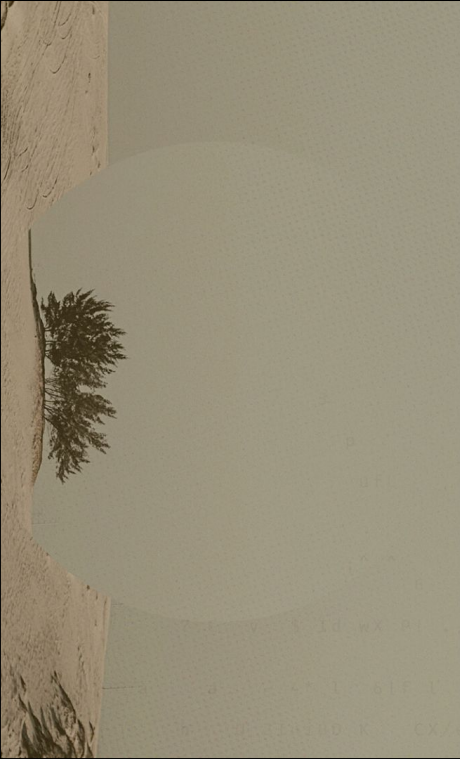
TIMELINE

MALACHI



*All dates are approximate





MALACHI

- **NAME:** a proper name, Malachi may be translated "my messenger" or "my angel".
- **PURPOSE STATEMENT:** Calls for the post-exilic community to repent to enter into covenant renewal with Yahweh.
 - Once this happens, the priests and people of God can restore proper temple worship and practice social justice within the community.
 - Not long after the temple was rebuilt, he sought to revive people who had forgotten their identities as a result of intermarriage, neglect of worship, and a cynical outlook.
- **KEY IDEAS:**
 - God desires wholehearted worship.
 - God expects faithfulness in marriage.
 - God hates divorce.
 - The day of the Lord affects both the righteous and the wicked.
 - An Elijah-like figure will announce the day of the Lord.

- Sometimes placed just after Ezra-Nehemiah (see previous chart), around 450-430.
- Hill, Walton, and Kingdom of Priests suggest a time from about 480-470BC, before the 2nd return of the exiles with Ezra.
 - The temple had been completed in 515BC under Haggai and Zechariah, but it had not ushered in the hoped-for messianic age.
 - Ezra and Nehemiah indicate that the oracles of Zechariah and Malachi had little impact on postexilic morale.
 - The expectations of a renewed Davidic state under Zerubbabel went unfulfilled.
 - The material prosperity discussed in Haggai did not come to full realization.
 - The return of exiles described in Zechariah was just a trickle
 - Zechariah's call for spiritual renewal went unheeded, and the prophet was even mocked for God's apparent failure to restore Israel's covenant blessings.

DATE OF MALACHI



- Little is known about Malachi (like Obadiah, the opening verse contains no genealogical information).
- Malachi shares similarities with pre-exilic prophets, with his focus on idolatry and social injustice. He also did not shy away from calling out priests and other social elites.
- The placement of Malachi at the close of our English OT does not consider its chronology.
 - Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles were all written after Malachi
 - The last event in Nehemiah would have been 425 (after Malachi, even with a later date).
 - The fact that it covers intermarriage with foreigners, divorces, priestly abuses, temple services, tithe, Sabbath, and the oppression of the poor, which Ezra-Nehemiah also covers, suggests that it was written during the time when Ezra and Nehemiah were working in Jerusalem.

- The terse sentences and blunt style suggest that the oracles were given initially orally and written down almost immediately after.
- Persian influences can be seen in Malachi's reference to the "scroll of remembrance" and "the sun of righteousness".
 - *The scroll of remembrance*, where the names of the righteous are recorded, represents theological development on the topic of the afterlife.
 - *Sun of righteousness*: reminiscent of the winged solar disk that represents Mesopotamian and Egyptian iconography.
 - *Often associated with the king and symbolizing protection and assured victory in battle.*
 - *The imagery in Malachi suggests that Yahweh will grant protection and restoration to those who fear the LORD.*

THE WRITING OF MALACHI

PURPOSE

- ▶ Malachi opens with "I have loved you, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have you loved us?'"
- ▶ Sin is not just a violation of God's standard but also the desecration of the relationship.
- ▶ The predominant theme is Israel's covenant relationship with Yahweh and its ramifications.
 - ▶ Malachi cites the covenant of Levi (1:6-2:9), the covenant of the fathers and the covenant of marriage (2:10-16), and the messenger of the covenant (3:1).
- ▶ The response to Malachi's message of repentance and covenant renewal:
 - ▶ Purification of the corrupt priesthood.
 - ▶ Transformation of worship into joyful sacrifice of praise.
 - ▶ Correction of abuses associated with the tithe and temple sacrifices.
 - ▶ Restoration of broken family relationships.
 - ▶ Social justice is rooted in the covenant ethic.

- Malachi has been considered both a type of poetry and a prose composition.
- Recent scholarship defines it as "prophetic prose" because of its simple, direct, and forceful approach.
- There are 55 verses in the book, and 47 of them are addressed to Israel in the first person.
- Most prophets use the "messenger formula" with "thus says the LORD" followed by an oracle.
- Malachi has 6 oracles that are punctuated with a series of 10 rhetorical questions and answers.
 - This is called a disputational format. It is unique to Malachi in the OT, and its focus is to "leave the opponent devoid of further argumentation and resigned to divine decision".
 - 1. statement of truth, 2. hypothetical audience rebuttal in the form of a question, 3. prophet's answer to the rebuttal by restating the initial premise, 4. the presentation of additional supporting evidence.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

1: Yahweh loves Jacob (1:2-5).

Malachi reminds the people of Yahweh's sovereign station and father, lord, and covenant maker (Deut 32:6-12).

2: He is Israel's father and desires honest worship (1:6-9).

The priesthood is called out for its failure to operate as the guardian of the covenant.

3: He is the father of all Israelites and expects steadfast faithfulness (2:10-16).

The people are also called out for their role in the breach of the covenant.

4: God wants honesty, not words, because he is just (2:17-35).

Reminds the people of the reality of God's judgment for covenant failure.

5: God is faithful to his word and desires genuine worship (3:6-12).

Calls Israel to repentance and covenant renewal.

6: God desires honesty (3:13-4:3).

Warns Israel about the day of the LORD, which will verify God's covenant love for Israel and vindicate his justice in dealing with the wicked.

OUTLINE

- His discussion of marriage and divorce sounds like wisdom literature. He emphasizes the companionship with the wife of one's youth and the shared responsibility of child rearing.
- Malachi believes that marriage is a sacred covenant blessed by God. It is between one man and one woman for the purpose of fellowship and establishing family life.
 - Ez 16:8 *"When I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness; I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, and you became mine."*
- Malachi draws a connection between covenant keeping with Yahweh and covenant keeping with one's spouse.
 - A VERY common analogy in the NT where Jesus is the bridegroom and the church is the bride.

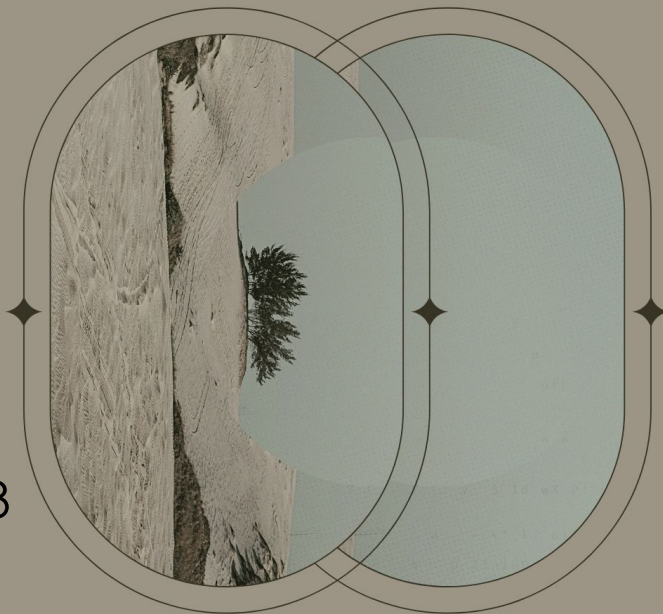
THEME: MARRIAGE

- Moses made provision for divorce because of humanity's sin, but it was not the ideal (Gen 3:1-19).
- **2:4** *"But you say, 'Why does he not?' Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant."*
- **"partner"** is a unique word related to the idea of nailing together pieces of wood in a construction project.
- God hates divorce because treachery and faithlessness shatter the covenant bonds between the partners.
- Malachi condemns those who not only divorced but then intermarried with pagans, often for economic gain, which causes contamination.
- His censure of easy divorce anticipates the strict words of Jesus and Paul in the NT.

DIVORCE

OR DO YOU NOT KNOW, BROTHERS—FOR I AM SPEAKING TO THOSE WHO KNOW THE LAW—THAT THE LAW IS BINDING ON A PERSON ONLY AS LONG AS HE LIVES? FOR A MARRIED WOMAN IS BOUND BY LAW TO HER HUSBAND WHILE HE LIVES, BUT IF HER HUSBAND DIES SHE IS RELEASED FROM THE LAW OF MARRIAGE. ACCORDINGLY, SHE WILL BE CALLED AN ADULTERESS IF SHE LIVES WITH ANOTHER MAN WHILE HER HUSBAND IS ALIVE. BUT IF HER HUSBAND DIES, SHE IS FREE FROM THAT LAW, AND IF SHE MARRIES ANOTHER MAN SHE IS NOT AN ADULTERESS.

► Romans 7:1-3



- A messenger would come and suddenly appear in the temple, signaling the final day of Yahweh.
- Mal 4:5-6: "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, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."
- For the prophets, nothing else mattered but to be aligned with God's vision of life in the world.
- The theme of "Day of the Lord" is so prevalent throughout the 12 that some regard it as *the* theme of the minor prophets.
 - Aaron Shcart: "No other prophetic book contains as many passages about this day, which are at the same time central for the overall structure."

THEME: THE FINAL DAY OF THE LORD

- **Amos:** It will pounce like a roaring lion on the people who had forgotten their mission. Israel would be counted among God's enemies.
- **Obadiah:** It would make Edom and all nations reel like drunkards.
- **Zephaniah:** It would descend like a gathering storm over Judah and the world.
- **Zechariah:** It will include a great battle, a great earthquake, and a great plague. It would be a day when Yahweh will triumph over all his enemies and bring justice and righteousness to the world.
- **Malachi:** (4:1) "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch."

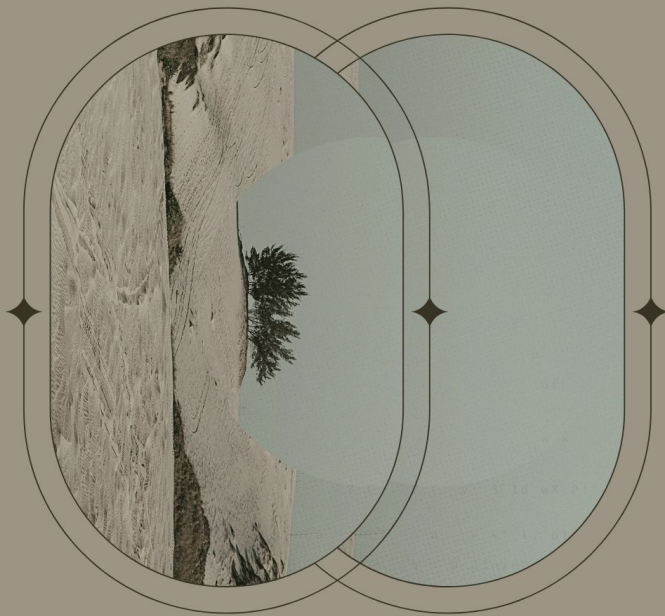
- The messenger mentioned in 3:1 is connected to an Elijah-like figure in Mal 4:5-6.
- Elijah is an archetype for prophetic ministry, representing a “forerunner”.
 - He confronted religious and political leaders on issues of theology, moral purity, and social justice.
 - They preached a message of repentance from sin in the face of judgment.
 - Miraculous signs accompanied his divine commission and message.
 - He was “the voice crying out in the wilderness”— his ministry was outside the recognized institutions of Hebrew society.
- Elijah's role as a herald proclaiming the time of Yahweh's wrath and inauguration of the messianic age was important in the Gospels. His appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Jesus lends support to the eschatological dimension of his prophetic ministry.

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

- It's no accident that the New Testament begins with the genealogy of Jesus, which is divided into three sequences of fourteen descendants: Abraham to David, David to the exile, and the exile to Jesus (Mat 1:1-17). In ancient Hebrew, numbers were frequently used to indicate numerical values, and the numerical value of the name David is 14. Matthew is making it absolutely clear at the beginning of the Gospel that Jesus is the ultimate David anticipated in the Old Testament.
- In Matthew 11:7-15, Jesus clearly understands the prophecy of Malachi as being fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist.
 - He lived an unconventional, Elijah-like life and ministry (Matt 3:1-2, Luke 1:14-17).
- The early church also recognized Malachi's prediction of the “forerunner: and being fully realized in John's heralding the initiation of the messianic kingdom with Jesus.

“AND HE WILL TURN MANY OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL TO THE LORD THEIR GOD, AND HE WILL GO BEFORE HIM IN THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THE CHILDREN, AND THE DISOBEDIENT TO THE WISDOM OF THE JUST, TO MAKE READY FOR THE LORD A PEOPLE PREPARED.”

► Luke 1:16-17



AS IT IS WRITTEN IN ISAIAH THE PROPHET,
“BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE,
WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY,
THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS:
'PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD,
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT,'”

JOHN APPEARED, BAPTIZING IN THE WILDERNESS AND PROCLAIMING A BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. AND ALL THE COUNTRY OF JUDEA AND ALL JERUSALEM WERE GOING OUT TO HIM AND WERE BEING BAPTIZED BY HIM IN THE RIVER JORDAN, CONFESSING THEIR SINS. NOW JOHN WAS CLOTHED WITH CAMEL'S HAIR AND WORE A LEATHER BELT AROUND HIS WAIST AND ATE LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY. AND HE PREACHED, SAYING, “AFTER ME COMES HE WHO IS MIGHTIER THAN I, THE STRAP OF WHOSE SANDALS I AM NOT WORTHY TO STOOP DOWN AND UNTIE. I HAVE BAPTIZED YOU WITH WATER, BUT HE WILL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

Mark 1:2-8

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:9-13