



**God's Love, Despite Another Failure  
God's Grace and Love  
Malachi 1:1-5  
Obadiah 17-21**

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We now come to the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi. His will be the last voice to be heard in the nation until John the Baptist shows up. Just like John will do, Malachi will also point to the coming Messiah.

We do not know much about him. His name does not show up anywhere else in the Old Testament, like Habakkuk's, and some scholars think it is a title for someone and not a name. My view is this is a Prophet, and this is his name, and he has a sense of humor which we will see pop up every now and then.



The name Malachi means “angel or messenger of the LORD; the messenger of Jehovah; my messenger.” (Smith and Cornwall 1998, 165)

He indeed is a messenger for YAHWEH. I know who our mailman is, at least his face, but I have no idea what his name is. He is simply the messenger, the one bringing the mail to me. As a messenger, Malachi would do the same. This is no different than what we do when we witness for the Lord, he puts the Lord first and himself into the background.

The message is not about Malachi, what is important is what it is he is bringing from the throne room to the nation from YAHWEH.

We knew exactly when Haggai and Zechariah prophesied. They gave very specific times and dates for us. Malachi doesn't. He refers to no datable individuals or events. But he does make a comment about “your governor” in verse 8 which indicates that he is prophesying after the return of the Jews to Jerusalem from Babylon and throws this into the period in which the Persian Empire is still ruling over them. So, it is after 538 BC.

Elsewhere Malachi refers to Temple worship and the conduct of the Priests and people which further tells us this is after the completion of the Second Temple in 516/515 BC.

Nehemiah instituted many reforms, and the similarity between what Nehemiah did versus what Malachi writes about makes it tempting to place his ministry during the period of Nehemiah's governorship of Jerusalem.

They both would deal with “priestly laxity (Mal. 1:6; Neh. 13:4–9), neglect of tithes (Mal. 3:7–12; Neh. 13:10–13), and intermarriage between Israelites and foreigners (Mal. 2:10–16; Neh. 13:23–28).” (Constable 2003, 2022, Mal 1:1)

I find it interesting that the problems confronted by both are problems that exist in the church here on the west today. In these last days, we look to our shepherds, the pastors of churches, for spiritual guidance but many decline to provide it because they are progressive and into social justice. Or they have fallen into the Laodicean trap are into numbers and providing pleasing words to those who show up, just not the words of God from the scriptures.

Pastoral laxity, yes, we are in the need of revival here in the west.

Neglect of tithes. Giving is the result of a heart changed and in love with the Lord. But for the people of Jerusalem and for the church in the west, giving is not a primary concern. Most giving today falls into the category of tipping. There are those who give from an overflowing heart, and then there are those who give from a perspective of what can I afford. Malachi talks about this.

Intermarriage. For the church in the west today, it is intermarriage between believers and carnal Christians, or believers and unbelievers.

The perspective I have on this comes not only from what the scriptures clearly teach. That being at no time ever was a believer, either in the Old Testament or the New, ever to join up in any type of venture to include marriage, with someone who is an unbeliever.

It also comes from growing up in a home where that was also the situation. Initially, we were all happy pagans. Over several years, this changed. First, Mom was saved, then my sister, then I too became a believer. Dad never did come to Christ and once we did. It was guerilla warfare every single day.



We wanted to go to church, he didn't. I wanted to go to Prayer and Bible study, and until I learned how to drive, somehow there was never time to take me unless Mom drove. I really did not want to do the things that my dad wanted me to do. He didn't want to do the things I wanted to do. And on and on.

So, my advice for anyone today contemplating marrying someone who is not as committed to Christ as you are...don't. If you are dating an unbeliever...stop. If you are contemplating a business partnership with an unbeliever...stop. If you are already in the situation...pray for an opportunity to share Jesus.

2 Corinthians 6:14–16

“Do not try to work together as equals with unbelievers, for it cannot be done. How can right and wrong be partners? How can light and darkness live together? How can Christ and the Devil agree? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? How can God's temple come to terms with pagan idols? For we are the temple of the living God! As God himself has said: “I will make my home with my people and live among them; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”” (GNB)

For the people in Jerusalem, this was something Ezra and Nehemiah thought they had corrected. But there was a point of time in the governorship of Nehemiah (445-420 BC) that he returned to Persia, possibly to give a report to the King, but we aren't told the reason in Nehemiah. It is entirely possible Malachi is writing while Nehemiah is absent.

We find out that behavior flipped back to following the local cultures rather than allowing the Torah to dictate the culture.

#### Minor Prophets

- Hosea – Israel 748 – 686 BC
- Joel – Judah 835 – 796 BC
- Amos – Israel 786 – 746 BC
- Obadiah – Edom 848 – 841 BC
- Jonah – Assyria 771 – 754 BC
- Micah – Judah 750 – 686 BC
- Nahum – Assyria 661 BC
- Habakkuk – Judah 625 – 597 BC
- Zephaniah – Judah 640 – 608 BC
- Haggai – Judah 520 BC
- Zechariah – Judah 520 – 480 BC
- **Malachi – Judah 455 – 432 BC**

If that was the case, then this book would have been written closer to 432 BC just before the return of Nehemiah. To give you an idea of the timeframe we are working with here:

- 537 BC – 50,000 Jews return from Babylon with Zerubbabel.
- 520 BC – Haggai and Zechariah encourage the people to complete the Temple.
- 516/515 BC – the Second Temple is completed.
- 482 – 473 BC – Queen Esther
- 480 – Zechariah murdered.
- 458- Ezra leads 5,000 more Jews to Jerusalem.
- 444 BC – Nehemiah leads another group of 42,000 returnees to Jerusalem.
- 444 – 420 BC – Book of Nehemiah events take place.
- 432 BC – Malachi, we think, deals with issues involving worship.



This means that Malachi would have seen the walls be rebuilt and worship reformed under the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah. But there was a cancer eating away at the nation, it was entanglements with the neighboring nations and those cultures were once again beginning to impact the daily life and routine of the Jewish people.

Similar to our culture today, compromise became the rule and the people once again drifted away from YAHWEH.

Haggai and Zechariah wanted so much for this second chance to be one of getting it right, and by the end of Zechariah's life, he realized that simply wasn't the case as he prophesied the spreading of the nation to all the nations of the world which would result when they would reject the Messiah.

Malachi now lives in a period of intermarriage with the surrounding pagan communities, which Ezra and Nehemiah tried to deal with. Divorce is rampant.

Families were being torn apart and in the culture of the day, they were marrying young. Later after children were born, the men would discard their wives in favor of a trophy wife.

As we see today, this disintegration of the family took place with a backdrop of a downward spiral of spiritual, moral and ethical values.

Once the worldview flipped to that of the surrounding cultures, it simply accelerated as the people no longer considered the Torah, the lifestyle it taught, and YAHWEH worship to be politically correct.

Just as we see with many today who say they are Christians, but don't look like it and hardly reflect any of the values or worldview of the Bible. The people of Jerusalem stopped looking Jewish and ceased to reflect the values and worldview of Torah. They began to look like everyone else. They forgot what YAHWEH said.

Leviticus 11:45

"For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." (NKJV)

We do too.

Luke 6:46–49

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and don't do the things I say? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. When the flood came, the river crashed against that house and couldn't shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The river crashed against it, and immediately it collapsed. And the destruction of that house was great." (CSB)

They were not running off into idolatry, but they were not going out of their way to follow the Torah either. It had gotten old fashioned to do so and they were more interested in fitting into the more cosmopolitan culture being espoused in the Persian Empire.

They no longer took YAHWEH seriously. They were still Jews, at least in name, but it was not their first concern. Having a worldview that was based on the Torah simply was no longer important to them. We will learn that began with the Priests. Ethical standards per the Torah were also thrown out.



Ethical instruction in the Bible does not depend on “blind obedience” but is based on the principle that “God acts first and calls people to respond.” (Taylor and Clendenen 2004, 233)

God had just demonstrated His sovereignty over the nations and over history. The nation had personally discovered that through the exile to Assyria and the exile to Babylon. As promised, they are back in Jerusalem, not because of their following the law.

As will be demonstrated, moral degradation was at an all-time high, with adultery, divorce, falsehood, fraud, and sorcery running rampant throughout the city; the source of much of the corruption was the priests themselves. (Fries, Rummage and Gallaty 2015, 200)

God had demonstrated His grace and faithfulness to His people yet once again, they had turned away and once they did so, they begin to whine about the declining relationship with YAHWEH thinking they had done nothing wrong.

We will learn that this is something we need to pay attention to as well. Whenever we find ourselves wondering why God doesn't answer our prayers anymore while we only pay attention to Him for a couple of hours on Sunday and then live as we want the rest of the week; we have crossed the same bridge that the nation did.

Revival is required. What is that? Revival is God's people, believers, coming back to God. It is not the lost realizing their need for Him, that naturally and organically takes place though as His people, believers, repent and get serious about living for Jesus.

When the prophets talk about revival, they are talking to those who at one point said they followed the Lord, then simply walked away. When we talk about revival today, it is the exact same thing. George Barna's recent study tells us how vital the need for revival within the church is.

Within the born-again population (just 33% of the adult population), a shockingly small proportion (13%) hold a biblical worldview. (Barna 2023)

We are in the church of the last days; the spirit of Laodicea is taking over many congregations today as the world begins to impact the way church is done. Church has never been about numbers and attendance; it has always been about faithfulness to Jesus and making disciples. Just as the people of Jerusalem fell away, we see the same happening all around us as well.

For the priests, Malachi would have a very specific message. They needed to repent. “Their carelessness in teaching God's ways truthfully (2:6–7) and in overseeing Israel's worship had so corrupted the sacrificial system that it was an insult to God.” (Taylor and Clendenen 2004, 233)

Again, unfortunately, the same is evident in many churches around the world today. It is the leadership who have let the flock down.

As we begin our study of this book, yes, we will indeed find application for today. As the Priest's were in a state of compromise, so we find much of the church in the same place. We see this clearly in the purposes given by Roy Gingrich for Malachi to write this book.

- To rebuke the Jewish remnant for their sins
- To correct the Jewish remnant concerning “The Day of the Lord”
- To teach the Jewish remnant the way to blessing
- To assure the Jewish remnant of the eventual triumph of the righteous
- To exhort the Jewish remnant to remember and do the law of Moses



- To promise the Jewish remnant the coming of a better day (Gingrich 1998, 5)

To apply this to our culture today, the message we are going to hear in Malachi has much the same purpose.

- To rebuke carnal believers for their sins
- To correct believers concerning “The Day of the Lord” and the Rapture
- To teach believers the way to blessing
- To assure the church of the eventual triumph of the righteous
- To exhort believers to remember and faithfully follow Jesus
- To remind believers of the promise of Jesus that He is coming back soon

### Outline

- A. Malachi 1 I love you, signed God
  - a. Malachi 1:1-5 God’s declaration of love for Israel
  - b. Malachi 1:6-14 The failure of the Priests
- B. Malachi 2 The failure of the Nation
  - a. Malachi 2:1-9 Discipline is coming for the Priests
  - b. Malachi 2:10-17 Treachery in the nation and in families
- C. Malachi 3 The coming of the Messengers
  - a. Malachi 3:1-5 Two Messengers are coming, the Second one with purification and fearful judgement
  - b. Malachi 3:6-12 Return to God instead of robbing God
  - c. Malachi 3:13-18 The benefits of faithfulness
- D. Malachi 4 The Sun of Righteousness
  - a. Malachi 4:1-3 The coming Day of the Lord
  - b. Malachi 4:4-6 The Old Testament concludes, be faithful and watching for future events

Malachi was called by God to do the same thing that Zechariah had apparently been murdered for, telling the people the truth. “It was his responsibility to rebuke the people for the sins they were committing against God and against one another, and to call them to return to the Lord.” (Wiersbe 1996, 139)

Many of us feel today that no one seems to have a grip on reality. Malachi, well he was one of a few who had a firm grip on reality. Everyone was into the lie of the day.

We all need a Malachi, someone who looks at the world today and tells us the truth about what is going on and what it means.

The temptation for us, as it has been throughout our study of the Minor Prophets, is to consider all of this as history which we can ignore.

Yes, it is history, but it is also taking place around us today. Solomon was right. We really don’t learn from history.

Ecclesiastes 1:9–11

“What has happened before will happen again. What has been done before will be done again. There is nothing new in the whole world. “Look,” they say, “here is something new!” But no, it has all happened before, long before we were born. No one remembers what has happened in the past, and no one in days to come will remember what happens between now and then.” (GNB)

Let’s take a good long look at the church of the 21st century as demonstrated by Temple worship, in the 5th century BC, as we listen to Malachi.



Malachi 1:1–5

“The pronouncement of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi: “I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have You loved us?” “Was Esau not Jacob’s brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and given his inheritance to the jackals of the wilderness.” Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”; this is what the LORD of armies says: “They may build, but I will tear down; and people will call them the territory of wickedness, and the people with whom the LORD is indignant forever.” And your eyes will see this, and you will say, “The LORD be exalted beyond the border of Israel!”” (NASB 2020)

This is a word straight from YAHWEH. Malachi is the messenger, and he is simply the conduit for what it is YAHWEH has to say to His people.

The first amazing thing we see is that YAHWEH speaks to His people, He has not stopped doing that.

Malachi is simply reporting to the people that the relationship with their God, the covenant they agreed to at Sinai, is still valid. This message comes after thousands of years of history and dealings in which there have been good times, every so often, and bad times due to the sin of the people. Yes, there has been discipline, but in all of this, God has been faithful and constant even though His people have not been. He has disciplined His people even to the point of exile, and now again, we come to another pointed conversation due to faithlessness.

The church today is in the same place. Jesus Christ died for His church and then rose again to stand among the churches (Revelation 1:12-16). He has appointed shepherds over His church, and it is some of those shepherds who have failed, just as the Priests failed the people of Jerusalem. Jesus hasn’t changed, but we tend to think that as we move along in time that He has changed to become part of the culture. This is not the case. It was not the case for the Jews either.

I have overheard believing parents while walking out of church, complain about the commitment it would take to get their children to Bible Study on Sundays and Wednesdays. They just simply don’t have the time for that.

I have counseled with couples who have told me that they simply do not have the time to come to church every week, yet they want a magic pill to solve the problems in their marriages.

I have seen countless young people simply walk away from the Lord and the church once they leave home.

Faithfulness and commitment to Jesus Christ is taught in the family, we simply support what you are doing here in the church.

If you think we can turn your child into a spiritual giant in 1 ½ hours per week of Bible study and then 1 ½ hours of youth group, for a total of 3 hours a week, and you do nothing, you are greatly mistaken. Raising spiritual giants is still possible today. Dr. George Barna has done recent research on this topic and the results are in a book he has just published, **Raising Spiritual Champions: Nurturing Your Child’s Heart, Mind and Soul**.

The ways in which we think about and engage in preparing children for life play a central role in who they become. The research is very clear that the more biblically prepared a child is to address life, the more likely they are to embrace a Christlike approach to daily challenges. (Barna, Raising Spiritual Champions: Nurturing Your Child’s Heart, Mind and Soul 2023, 8)



As we realize this, then we are enabled to make good decisions going forward about our own need to be faithful in these last days.

Some of this may sound harsh but it is a warning to us from Malachi. Many today seem to have a hard time finding time for Jesus or for His word and simply can't take the time to come to church and worship with other believers. "How dare we think of 'making room' for God the Lord? For the Lord God created and sustains all reality, and holds it together. The real question is this, 'Is there room for us in God's universe?'" (Adam 2013, 24)

Malachi will challenge his people in Jerusalem, and he will also challenge us. The pressure from Genesis 3, you know, making ourselves into little gods in place of the one true God, was their problem and is ours as well. They and we believe, but the temptation is to replace Him with our own version of who He truly is. And it starts with understanding how He created us.

Dr. Carl F.H. Henry tells us:

"God created man not as an omniscient godlet, but in his divine image as a dependent creature whose life in the present world is a discipline for eternity. Man was not created to be without tasks and trials. Although made in God's image he was no puppet waiting for Elohim to pull the strings; man had voluntary decisions to make and duties to perform. What precipitated the fall was Adam's failure in moral matters. Jesus' emphasis that no human concern is too insignificant for God's attention puts the debate over particular providence into proper focus. The fact is that no less than Christ—the incarnate, crucified and risen Son of God—gives us the supreme affirmation of the doctrine of divine providence." (Henry 1999, 462) And this is something we see many running from yet saying they are believers.

Even though the people of Jerusalem did not want to live in light of the fact that God loves them, He never stopped doing so and that is where Malachi begins. There is a lot to talk about, some of it will indeed be hard to hear, even for us, but YAHWEH wants His people to know, right up front, He loves them, and He loves us.

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (NKJV)

As a parent, before we discipline our children, we too make certain that they know we love them. That is why we discipline them. We do not want them to become self-centered unproductive members of society, so we discipline them.

That is also a reminder to us about the fall. Ever notice that you do not have to train a child to lie, you must train them to tell the truth. You don't have to train a child to be selfish, but you do have to train them to share and to love those who may not be lovable.

As believers, we are imagers of God, and we want our children to succeed as that as well, so we discipline them so they may learn what is acceptable behavior. God does that for us as well as we become more and more like Jesus Christ.

So here, before any talk of discipline, YAHWEH reminds His people that He loves them. But then God includes the question that many of us have asked Him before, "if you really love me, why are things the way they are?" Or, as He relates here, "In what way have you loved us?"





As we go through Malachi, we will pick up on His people asking pointed questions, which reveal where they are spiritually, seven times. “These questions revealed their doubting, discouraged, sinful heart.” (Guzik 2001, Mal 1:2-5)

These questions are the same ones we hear and at times have even asked ourselves.

### Questions We Ask Today

- “How have you loved us?” Malachi 1:2
- “How have we despised your name?” Malachi 1:6
- “How have we defiled you?” Malachi 1:7
- “How have we wearied Him?” Malachi 2:17
- “How shall we return?” Malachi 3:7
- “How have we robbed you?” Malachi 3:8
- “What have we spoken against you?” Malachi 3:13

The first question, “How have you loved us?” Good question, especially since we all live in a fallen world and tend to accuse God of the things that sin produces. We forget, we chose this over Him originally and now are only receiving what it is we wanted. Then we blame Him for it.

We decided that it might be fun to play with razor blades, not that I would ever do that. I remember finding my grandpa’s straight razor in the bathroom and discovering that it really was sharp. Yes, the razor was taken away from me, and my finger was bandaged up. And then I was given an incentive to never touch it again.

But it was fun playing with that straight razor and imagining myself shaving with it. I received exactly what I deserved by playing with razor blades. And today, I refuse to even consider using a straight razor to shave with. I heard that lesson clearly.

But what if I liked playing with razor blades and wanted to keep doing so, cutting myself over and over again as a result. It’s my fault, but I’m going to blame mom and dad for all the cuts I get. They warned me, but I insisted, and it must be their fault for allowing me to use something that is beneficial, but the wrong way. That is a lot like blaming God for those things which the sinful world system produces.

By this time, the disappointment that had begun to show up with the return of the nation under Zerubbabel that the prophecies of Ezekiel and Isaiah were not being fulfilled right then and there had grown. Yes, the Temple was rebuilt, but God had not shown up in it as they had seen prophesied in Ezekiel. The restoration, yet future, they thought was something they would experience in the here and now.

So, when God asks the question on their behalf, He knows that is the background behind that question.

God reminds His people and us just how He loves us. “He says, ‘I say I love you, but I know how you will respond to that. You would not say it out loud, but I know what is in your heart. You respond with a cynical question: “How have you loved us? How have we been privileged?”’” (Benton 1985, 20)

And that is what He answers from verse 2 to 5.

God, placing Himself into the courtroom with that question, provides evidence. He will point back in history as His part of His evidentiary testimony to the people. Basically, He tells them, let’s take a look.



Remember, Isaac and Ruth had twin boys. Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25:24-26). He knew beforehand the attitudes they would develop as they grew up and because of that, He knew ahead of time what Esau's attitude towards the covenant would be as well as Jacob's. They both had free will and were able to make whatever decisions in life they chose to, but God, being all knowing and eternal, knew ahead of time what those decisions would be.

Because he loves us, He gives us the leeway to make bad decisions which drive us away from Him as well as good decisions which draw us to Him. Esau could have said no to the offer from Jacob, of his birthright in exchange for lunch, but he didn't (Genesis 25:29-34).

He also could have made the decision to give grace and continue to love his brother after being defrauded, but instead he chose to hate (Genesis 27:41-45). And that hate impacted his family and his kids, and still does so even today.

The people of Jerusalem needed to be reminded of this as well.

Deuteronomy 7:6–8

“For you are a holy people, who belong to the LORD your God. Of all the people on earth, the LORD your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure. The LORD did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! Rather, it was simply that the LORD loves you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the LORD rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.” (NLT)

Malachi 1:2b–3a

““Was Esau not Jacob's brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau...”” (NASB 2020)

This is simply God saying “I chose Jacob because I knew His heart and what He would become. But I did not choose Esau because I knew the bitterness in him would turn towards a hatred that will wind up being dealt with in the future with his descendants.”

For those Jews familiar with prophecy, this is expected. They know that Edom must be dealt with. Things have not improved over the centuries.

The bitterness of Judah toward Edom grew increasingly intense in the post-exilic period. The insults and injuries inflicted by Edom at the time of the Babylonian captivity rankled in the memory of Judah and constituted a source whence increased significance was drawn and attached to every fresh injury, fancied or real. The constant encroachment of Edom upon Jewish territory, made necessary by the unceasing advance of the Nabataeans, kept the hostility continually alive. A love for Judah that did not involve corresponding hatred for Edom was unthinkable. The humiliation and downfall of Edom was an indispensable accompaniment of the coming of the Messianic age; cf. Obadiah 18–21, Isaiah 34:5, 6, 63:1–6, Jeremiah 49:13, 17, 18. (Powis Smith and Bewer 1912, 21)

In God's grace, He chose Jacob over Esau. God rejected Esau, Edom, because of their wickedness.

The Hebrew words for loved and hated refer not to God's emotions but to His choice of one over the other for a covenant relationship (cf. Gen. 29:31–35; Deut. 21:15, 17; Luke 14:26). To hate someone meant to reject him and to disavow any loving association with him (cf. Ps. 139:21). Nor do these words by themselves indicate the eternal destinations of Jacob and Esau. The verbs refer to God's acts in history toward both of the two nations which descended from the two brothers. (Blaising 1985, 1576)



When YAHWEH says this here in Malachi, it is not in the past tense but in the present tense. He is not only talking about His historical dealings but also present-day dealings as well. God restored Israel, and He is also doing so today. Israel is back on the land as promised in Ezekiel, yes God is still dealing with His people. He still loves them, and He is also still thwarting the attempts of Edom to rebuild.

The land of Israel is once again turning into a land of milk and honey as agricultural production begins to take off. For Edom, God gave them wilderness and Mount Seir. His love for Edom is not the same as for Jacob.

Malachi 1:4–5

“Though Edom says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”; this is what the LORD of armies says: “They may build, but I will tear down; and people will call them the territory of wickedness, and the people with whom the LORD is indignant forever.” And your eyes will see this, and you will say, “The LORD be exalted beyond the border of Israel!”” (NASB 2020)

Israel is in a covenant relationship with YAHWEH, Edom is not. The Persian government assisted in the rebuilding of Jerusalem; they didn’t assist Edom at all.

God was determined to defeat Edomite enterprise in rebuilding, and do this perpetually. Many prophecies refer to this (Isa. 21:11, 12; Jer. 49:7–22; Amos 1:11, 12; Obad.). (Rosscup 2008, 1443)

Edom intended to rebuild and reestablish their identity as a people. But YAHWEH has other plans in store for these people.

The threat here shows that God will never allow Edom to regain its former position and power. That which was properly and formerly known as the border of Edom, the territory of Edom, will be called the border of wickedness. Men will realize that the desolate condition of Edom is because of his sins. (Feinberg 1990, 251)

The final dealings with Edom are yet pending. We know from Obadiah that they will sustain judgment prior to the Day of the Lord and then again after.

Perhaps this is happening right now. As we gather for this study, Israel is in the midst of dealing with Hamas in Gaza. This is once again, the Lord renewing His promise of love for His people and denying Esau the opportunity to rebuild. We need to look at the last part of Obadiah to see how this fits in. First of all, timing.

Obadiah 15

“For **the day of the LORD is near** for all the nations. Just as you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.” (NASB 2020)

The timing of the actions we see outlined in Obadiah, dealing with Edom, which ties back into what YAHWEH is telling the nation through Malachi, will take place when the day of the Lord is near, like today.

The day of the Lord begins once the church is removed. All of the signs Jesus gave concerning His second coming are now taking place everywhere all at once with increasing frequency. I do believe the day of the Lord is near.

Obadiah 17–18

““But **on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their property. Then the house of Jacob will be a fire, And the house of Joseph a**



**flame;** But the house of Esau will be like stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,” For the LORD has spoken.”” (NASB 2020)

Verses 17-18 say that there will be a time when Israel returns to their land. The remnant of the house of Esau would be still living in the land; today we would refer to them as Palestinians.

How do we know today is the time period being discussed? The terms used for the people tell us. The house of Jacob ties verse 17 and 18 together and is a contrast to the house of Esau. But the house of Jacob infers both the northern and southern kingdoms reunited. This is seriously the case as “the house of Joseph is apparently mentioned so as to include the northern ten tribes, a designation so used repeatedly by the Old Testament prophets elsewhere. Even though the northern tribes had been removed from the land by the Assyrians (722 BC), they too will be returned to the land. Together once again, the twelve tribes of Israel will collectively subdue the house of Esau.” (Busenitz 2003, 276) But this has not happened yet, but we may be seeing actions currently in the Gaza war that may be changing that.

Israel will be like a fire is to kindling, which means highly successful. This is exactly what happened. In AD 1948, Israel was reborn as a nation. Within hours many Muslim nations attacked. The attacking nations told the Muslim inhabitants that they should flee until they had wiped out all the Jews, then they could return to life as normal. However, by the war's end the Jews had won and gained even more of their ancient territory back. Those who fled were displaced. Obadiah correctly reveals the result of the 1948 war.” (Johnson 2021)

A remnant of Judah will be restored on Mount Zion. Israel regained full control of Jerusalem in 1967 so this is in the process of being fulfilled. Once Messiah returns, it will indeed be holy, but currently, on Mount Zion, are those who escaped. The land is once again possessed by Israel. Some of the remnant who had been previously threatened by Edom, now are back in the land.

At some point in the future, those who remain from what was once Edom, will be eliminated. Edom physically was in what is today, southern Jordan.

Obadiah 19–21

“Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau, And those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain; Also, they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, And Benjamin the territory of Gilead. And the exiles of this army of the sons of Israel, Who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad, Will possess the cities of the Negev. The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion To judge the mountain of Esau, And the kingdom will be the LORD'S.” (NASB 2020)

In the process of Israel returning to the land though, we are told where those of the nations run to as Israel returns.

Israel became a nation in 1948 in the middle of the land. Those who left as “refugees,” later to be referred to as Palestinians, went to three locations.

Obadiah 19a

“Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau (southern Jordan), And those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain (Gaza strip); Also, they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria (west bank)...” (NASB 2020)

This is all in the process of being fulfilled right now.



Yahweh will empower his remnant to repossess the former territories once held by David and Solomon. Expansion will be effected in all directions, fulfilling the promises made to Jacob in his ladder dream at Bethel (Gen 28:14). (Busenitz 2003, 278)

Those areas will, prior to the beginning of the Day of the Lord, once again become part of Israel. Soon, Israel will finish the incorporation of the west bank into the nation. At present, Gaza is a question mark.

And since we see that Gilead is in the area we see today as northwest Jordan. The south of Jordan, in other words Jordan, may also become part of the nation too. Balaam, while Israel was still in the wilderness, also said the same.

Numbers 24:18

“Edom will be a possession, Seir, his enemy, will also be a possession; but Israel will act valiantly.” (NET 2nd ed.)

What we are seeing here is a yet future event. “Israel’s remnant would become a mighty army that would humiliate its former oppressors. The destruction of Edom and other enemy nations would enable the dispossessed Israelites to regain their lands. Some form of the root word “to possess” (yarash) appears five times in verses 17–21. Obadiah’s prophecy echoes the earlier oracle of Balaam that Edom would become an Israelite “possession” (yereshah) (Num 24:18).” (Fuhr and Yates 2016, 156)

Gilead, Moab and Edom (Jordan) will be possessed by Israel.

And this is to take place while the Day of the Lord is near, in other words, before the Tribulation begins. And there is more.

Obadiah 20

“And the exiles of this army of the sons of Israel, Who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad, Will possess the cities of the Negev.” (NASB 2020)

Zarephath is between Tyre and Sidon on the coast of Lebanon. All eyes on Hezbollah.

Seeing that Israel is to become vastly larger nation, we now learn that even those who are still outside the land, referred to as exiles here, will also return. “It is a promise of the territorial expansion of God’s people in all directions until they regain their ancient territory. The old promise of the land is reaffirmed as the implicit corollary of the restored covenant and God’s renewed blessing.” (Allen 1976, 168)

The Negev territory previously occupied by the descendants of Edom will once again be possessed by Yahweh’s chosen people. The references to possessing the land and dwelling in cities that they had not built recall the days of the conquest and settlement of the land under Joshua (e.g., Lev 20:24; Num 33:53; Deut 1:8, 21; 6:10–11; Josh 24:13). (Busenitz 2003, 280-281)

What we see is an assurance here from YAHWEH that no matter how far away His people may be from the land, they are not to far away for God to restore them to the land.

Obadiah 21

“The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion To judge the mountain of Esau, And the kingdom will be the LORD’S.” (NASB 2020)

God is moving forward today undeviatingly, unhesitatingly toward the accomplishment of His purpose; that is, of putting His King on Mount Zion. He says that He will turn and turn and overturn the nations until He comes whose right it is to rule (see Ezek. 21:27).



Nothing can deter or detour or defer God in His plan and in His program. No son of Esau, no animal, can stop Him. No proud man walking this earth can cause God to relinquish or retreat one inch. He is moving today to victory. The kingdom is the Lord's! (McGee 1997, 736)

And this just gets us through Malachi 1:5.

Jesus is coming back much sooner than anyone can imagine. Are you ready to go. You can be simply by becoming a believer. Now is not the time to wait until tomorrow, there may not be one.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### **ABC's of Salvation**

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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