



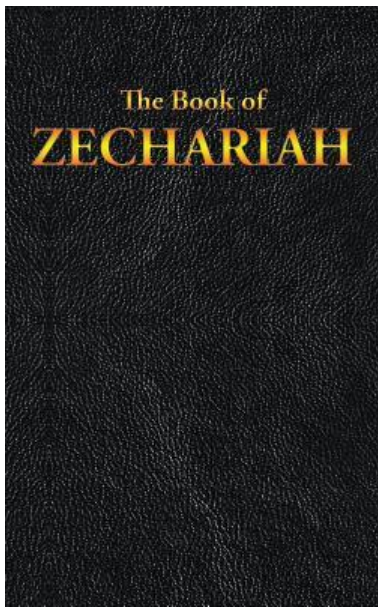
## **My Drift**

**Title: Bible – Books of Zechariah and Malachi**

**Written By: Jerry D. Petersen**

**Date: 7 Oct 2024**

**Article Number: (474-2024-33)**



### **A Challenge to Repent**

The book begins with Zechariah's challenge to his generation to turn back to God and not act like their ancestors who rebelled and refused to listen to the earlier prophets. That rebellion is what landed them in exile. The people's response to Zechariah was ideal, as they repented and humbled themselves before God—or so it seemed.

The enthusiasm of the Jews returning to Judah from their exile in Babylon was soon dampened by discouragement as they faced the pile of rubble which was all that remained of the Temple and the devastated land surrounding it. According to Ezra (5:1; 6:14), both Haggai and Zechariah prophesied about 520-516 B.C.E. With a series of visions and oracles Zechariah assures Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest, that together they will finish rebuilding the Temple, which they did accomplish.

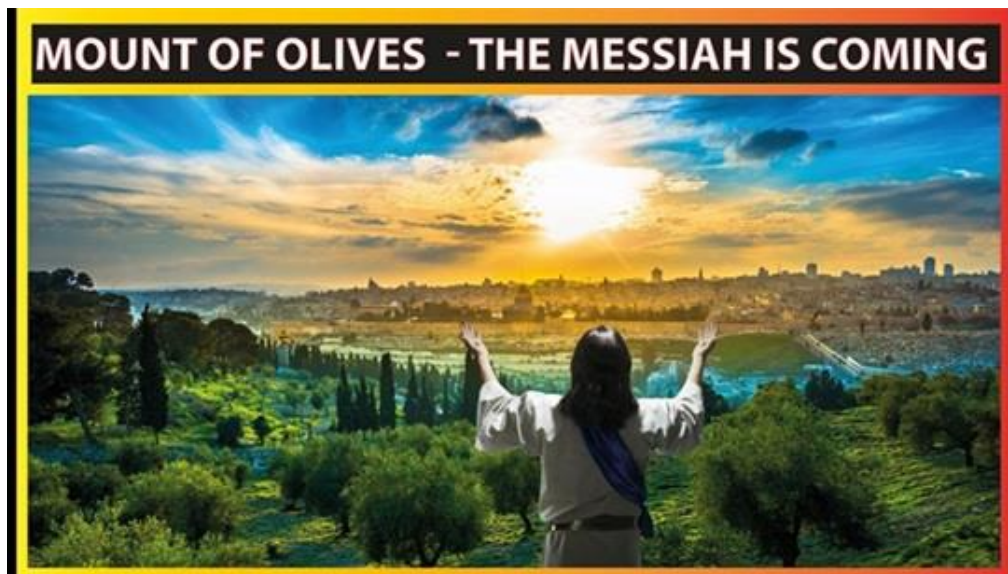
The prophet Zechariah wrote chapters 1-8 approximately in 520-518 B.C. (Before the temple was completed), and then wrote chapters 9-14

approximately 480 B.C. (After the temple is completed). The purpose of this book is that Zechariah wrote to encourage the remnant, who had recently returned from exile. Their faith in God was weak and they were not motivated to build the temple. They needed to learn and conform to the law of God again.

In chapters 1-8, Zechariah recorded his visions, encouraged the people to reinstate the priesthood, and other religious laws that were forgotten during the 70-year exile. Zechariah gives great hope and encouragement about the coming Messiah Jesus Christ, who will set up His throne and rule as the mighty Branch, the High Priest, who will offer up the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. “Then say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. “Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices” (6:12-13).

Chapters 9-14 are difficult passages to understand, many are prophetic and apocalyptic. Zechariah writes judgment against the neighboring enemies. Most importantly he declared the first coming of the Messiah who would be mounted on a donkey (9:9), His betrayal (11:12), and His crucifixion (12:10). Finally, he writes about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ descending from heaven the same way He had left in Acts 1:11, in the clouds. “In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south” (14:4)





## **Book of Malachi**



**Malachi was a mostly anonymous prophet whose ministry occurred in Jerusalem during the era of Nehemiah and Ezra. Although he spoke primarily to a specific time and place in history, Malachi also prophesied of the messianic “forerunner” who would announce the appearance of Christ more than 400 years after his lifetime.**

**In the entire Bible, the prophet Malachi is mentioned by name only once: in the first line of the slim Old Testament book that bears his name (Malachi 1:1).**

**In spite of this, his words are either quoted directly, or alluded to, at least 15 times in our New Testament. Even Jesus himself quoted Malachi’s prophecy when telling a crowd about the place of John the Baptist in heavenly history (Matthew 11:7-15).**

**So, who was this nearly anonymous prophet? When did he live? And what were his messages? Let’s find out.**

### **The Hebrew Meaning of Malachi**

**“The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi ...” (Malachi 1:1)**

**So begins the last book of our Old Testament. In that verse we have the only indication of the person who actually wrote this prophetic message to the people of Israel. What’s interesting is that the name “Malachi” likely isn’t really a name as we might assume it to be.**

**Malachi is a Hebrew term that means “my messenger,” which is an oddly self-referential designation for one who claims to speak an oracle of God. That, along with its isolated use in Malachi 1:1, has led some to believe that it refers to a priestly title rather than to a given name. The Septuagint— a Greek translation of the Old Testament made a few hundred years before Christ— lends credence to this idea. That ancient text renders the name in Malachi 1:1 as simply “his messenger.”**

### **The Book of Malachi Summary**

**(Starts on next page)**



## **The Book of Malachi**

Is the last (sequentially and chronologically) of the Hebrew Scriptures- the Old Testament.

It represents the last prophetic word of God the remaining Israelites (the exiles from the tribe of Judah who returned from 70 years of Babylonian captivity) received from Him prior to John the Baptist.

It most likely was written around the time of Nehemiah, which would make 445 – 432 B.C. the approximate time.

This means that between Malachi and John (the Baptist), God's people heard nothing from Him for over 400 years!

I don't know about you, but such piques my interest...what were the last things God said to His people before this 400+ years of divine silence?

## **Malachi**

- Is written in a style not previously utilized in the O.T. (though some parts of Romans are in the N.T.). It is officially called a **didactic-dialectic** method of writing or speaking.

What this means is that a charge is made, followed by an objection/answer that those charged would (or did) make. Then a refutation of the objection is made by the speaker, usually with substantiating evidence of the charge being given.

- Is a message of condemnation.

Virtually from beginning to end, this message is one of condemnation.

## **Malachi: Condemnations**

### **2. Defiled *Morality*-** they disregarded God's laws, **2:1-16.**

- **Vv.1-9** indicts the Priests for "*corrupting the covenant of Levi*":
  - They did not "*take it to heart,*" **v.2**
  - The covenant defined, **vv.5-7**
  - They "*turned aside*" from it, and "*caused many to stumble*" by their instruction, **vv.8-9**
- **Vv.10-16** the result was that the people likewise disregarded God's laws:
  - They "*dealt treacherously*" with one another, **v.10**
  - They "*married the daughter of a foreign god,*" **v.11**
  - They "*dealt treacherously*" with their wives by divorcing them without cause, **vv.14-16**
  - Then groaned because God rejected them, **vv.12-13**

## **Malachi**

Three major condemnations are presented:

1. Defiled *Worship*- they gave the "left-overs" to God.
2. Defiled *Morality*- they "dealt treacherously" with their wives.
3. Defiled *Perspective*- they spoke "arrogantly" against the Lord.

Let's take a brief look at these to learn lessons of respect and piety for Jehovah lest we too fall under His condemnation.

## Malachi: The Good News

With most all of the works of the Minor Prophets, along with the indictments for and judgments against sin, there is also a “glimmer of hope” section- and Malachi does not disappoint in that regard. 3:16 – 4:3 is that section:

- Those who *listened* to Malachi’s message, and *feared* the Lord were remembered and spared by Him, 3:16-18.
- Likewise, those who *feared His name* would “skip about like calves from the stall” and “tread down the wicked” in the coming day of the Lord, 4:2-3.

And what were God’s final admonitions through Malachi, before the 400+ years of divine silence?

- ✓ Remember the Law, 4:4;
- ✓ A prophet is coming, 4:5; and
- ✓ There will be both restoration of the faithful and a destruction of the wicked, 4:6.

In some senses, these things are still true, and great advice!

## Malachi: Comparisons Then to Now

- When it comes to worship, does God get the “left-overs” of our:
  - Time- do we come to worship and honor Him only when it is convenient to us; when we don’t have anything else pressing; when we don’t have something else we’d rather do, Heb.10:25?
  - Energy- do we come in here so worn out and red-eyed from our week-end recreation that we can’t stay awake, let alone worship “in spirit and in truth,” John 4:24?
  - Resources- while we don’t sacrifice animals and grain anymore (because we aren’t under O.T. law), do we truly make a “sacrifice” of our financial resources to Him, or just give Him the couple of dollars that we have “left-over,” 1Cor.16:1-2; 2Cor.9:6-7?
- Is our morality defiled?
  - Are we corrupting God’s laws for our own purposes; dealing treacherously with one another; and disregarding God’s covenant of marriage, 1Tim.2:5; Gal.5:14-15; Matt.19:9; Eph.5:22ff?
- How is our perspective of God?
  - Do we serve Him only when it benefits us *physically*; and view even that minimal service as “tiresome”? Psalms 122:1; Heb.13:15-16



## *The most popular Bible verses from Malachi*

### *Malachi 3:10*

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.*

---

### *Malachi 3:6*

*"I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."*

---

### *Malachi 3:1*

*"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.*

---

### *Malachi 3:4*

*And the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.*

---

### *Malachi 3:8*

*"Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings."*

---



*Malachi 4:5*

*"See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes."*

---

*Malachi 4:1*

*"Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them."*

---

*Malachi 2:3*

*"Because of you I will rebuke your descendants; I will smear on your faces the dung from your festival sacrifices, and you will be carried off with it."*

**[Bigdrifter44@gmail.com](mailto:Bigdrifter44@gmail.com)**

**[Bigdrifter.com](http://Bigdrifter.com)**