

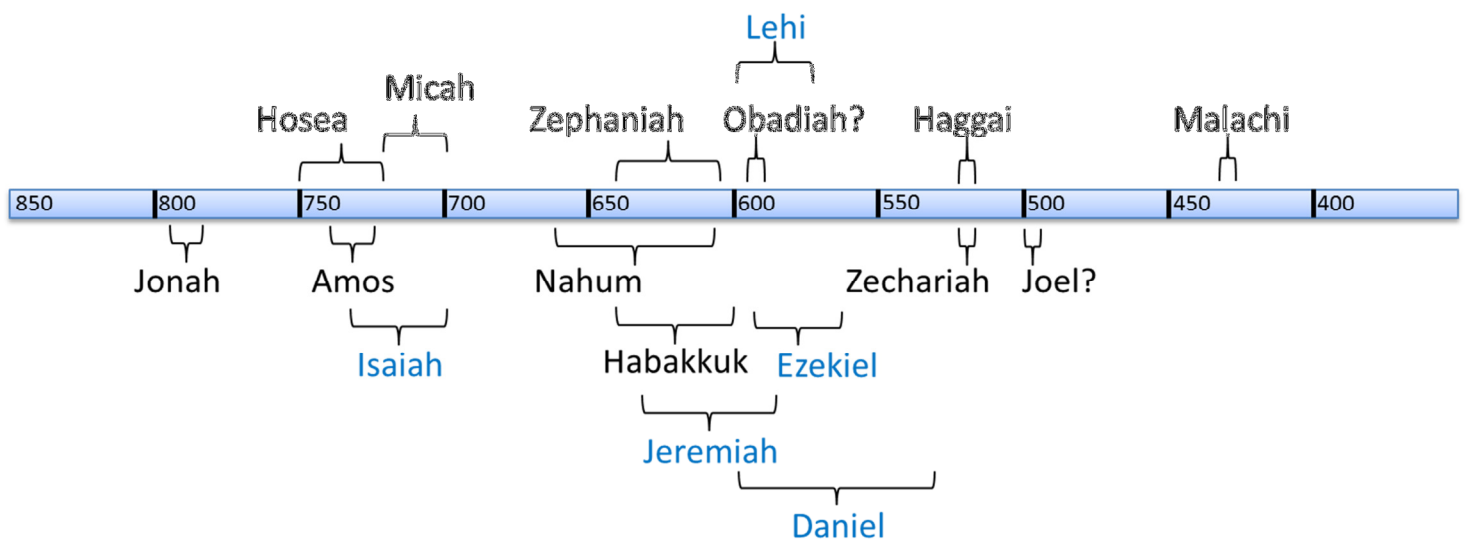
# HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI, AND BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

Lesson 36, Old Testament, Adult Religion Class, Tuesday, 22 May 2012

Study Guide

*Prepared by David A. LeFevre*

## INTRODUCTION



This lesson begins the last section of the Old Testament, the twelve books typically referred to as “The Minor Prophets.” This is not because their messages are not important but because their books are shorter than the prophetic books just preceding them. Jews call these books “The Twelve,” making them part of the “Latter Prophets” with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (the “Former Prophets” start with Joshua and conclude with 2 Kings). Anciently (probably starting in the second century BC), the Twelve were considered as one book and recorded on a single scroll, since their combined length roughly equaled one of the major prophets (62 pages in the LDS Bible for the twelve, compared to 80 pages for Isaiah). They were found on one scroll among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The length of the books varies from one to fourteen chapters, and the dates range from First Temple to late Persian periods. Some of the prophets are from

the north; most are from the southern kingdom of Judah and target their messages to those kingdoms.

Below is a list of the Twelve prophets as they are in our scriptures, with proposed dates of their ministries (some are very uncertain; most broad to cover the possible range of the ministry based on what is known, all BC). The chart above shows their proposed dates on a timeline and includes the other four major prophetic books (in blue).

- Hosea (750-725)
- Joel (post-exilic?)
- Amos (750-740)
- Obadiah (after 596)
- Jonah (790?)
- Micah (728-698)
- Nahum (660-606)
- Habakkak (630-600?)

- Zephaniah (640-609)
- Haggai (about 520)
- Zechariah (520-518)
- Malachi (about 430)

Key 'hook' dates that go with this lesson and the period shortly after this but prior to the New Testament (all BC):

- 586 – The destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians

- 538 – The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus and permission for the exiles to return
- 515 – The dedication of the Second Temple
- 332 – Alexander the Great conquers Darius and takes charge of Judah
- 168 – Under the Maccabees, an independent Jewish state is established; the temple was rededicated in 164 BC.
- 63 – Jerusalem becomes part of the Roman empire

---

## HAGGAI

---

Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries during the Second Temple period, ministering to the returned exiles under the leadership of Zerubbabel

and Joshua (see Ezra 5:1). Several dates in the book allow it to be precisely located in 520 BC, about eighteen years after the exiles' return.

---

### OUTLINE

---

- |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Rebuild the Temple (1:1-11) | 4) Cleanliness (2:10-19)   |
| 2) The Work Begins (1:12-15)   | 5) To Zerubbabel (2:20-23) |
| 3) Messianic Vision (2:1-9)    |                            |

---

### REBUILD THE TEMPLE (1:1-11)

---

1:1 **the second year of Darius.** Darius became king after the mysterious death of Cambyses in 522 BC, who was son of and king after Cyrus the Great. Darius' second year was when he finally consolidated power enough to have control over the whole empire. Haggai is thus dated to 520 BC. The exact date (first day of the sixth month) is 29 August 520 BC in our current calendar.

1:1 **Haggai.** The prophet's name means 'my feast,' which relates to his message about restoring the temple with its worship and feasts.

1:1 **Zerubbabel . . . Joshua.** The Persian province of Yehud (Judah) was led at this time by two leaders: Zerubbabel was a descendent of the last Judahite king, Jehoiachin, who had been carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadrezzar in 597 BC (2 Kings 24:8-16) and was the governor; Joshua (or Jeshua) was of priestly lineage and was the high priest. Their stories are told in the early chapters of Ezra.

1:2 **The time is not come.** Ezra 1-4 relates how the people had laid the foundation, built the altar, but

didn't finish because of persecution from the Samaritans. After eighteen years, though, the Lord chastised the people for not finishing the temple.

1:4 **dwel in your cieled houses.** The Hebrew word translated "cieled" here means 'covered,' referring to paneling, though some argue that in the context it simply means 'finished.' Haggai's and the Lord's point is that the people had spent their time building nice houses but had neglected the temple construction.

1:5 **Consider your ways.** The famous phrase from Haggai, challenging them to think about what they had done since returning to Jerusalem is equally applicable to Saints of all ages as a call to ponder and reflect on our commitment. It is repeated in verse 7 after and followed by several examples that illustrate that their labors are in vain unless they have done the most important thing first.

1:8 **build the house.** The direct command was to go to the mountains to get some wood (none near the

city any more, at least of the kind needed for building).

1:11 ***I called for a drought.*** To get their attention and remind them to do the work, the Lord declared a drought upon the land.

---

### THE WORK BEGINS (1:12-15)

---

1:12 ***obeyed the voice of the Lord.*** Led by Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest, the people rallied to the cry of Haggai and the Lord and began building the temple. See Ezra 4:24 – 6:22.

1:13 ***I am with you.*** As the people made the commitment to get the temple completed, the Lord

sent a simple but reassuring message through Haggai.

1:15 ***four and twentieth day.*** Haggai's call to action came on the first day and work began twenty-three days later, interestingly (relating to LDS history) on 21 September 520.

---

### MESSIANIC VISION (2:1-9)

---

2:1 ***seventh month, in the one and twentieth day.*** This next segment was addressed to the two leaders,

Zerubbabel and Joshua, about a month after they had begun the work on the temple. Tishri 21 was also the last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles (*Sukkot*).

2:3 ***that saw this house in her first glory?*** It had been sixty-seven years since the temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians, so there would be very few people, if any, that could remember that day. It has at least two implications. First, it could be that Haggai is old enough to remember the previous temple and is thus calling attention to his own witness. Or it could be a purely rhetorical question that really means, 'No one should be comparing this temple to the former one.'

2:5 ***my spirit remaineth among you.*** The Lord promised to be with his people (Exodus 29:45), which is manifest by the presence of the Spirit. He accepts that they are doing the best they can under the circumstances and does not judge their work even if the temple isn't as grand and glorious.

2:7 ***I will shake all nations.*** The Lord's presence will cause things to tremble and shake.

2:7 ***the desire of all nations.*** The Hebrew phrase refers to the 'treasure of all nations' coming to add to their meager efforts and allow the temple construction to be enriched (see verse 8 which references those treasures). Many see a Messianic prophecy here, which is appropriate, as Christ is the greater treasure of all nations.

2:9 ***greater than of the former.*** The second temple is prophesied to be greater than the first. This came true under Herod who greatly enlarged the temple, the surroundings, and other adjoining structures such that the Jewish temple in Jesus' day was one of the marvels of the ancient world. But more importantly than its appearance is that it will be the temple that will host the Messiah, the Son of God himself. Thus the promise was also that "in this place will I give peace."

---

### CLEANLINESS (2:10-19)

---

2:10 ***four and twentieth day of the ninth month.*** About two months after the last section on Chislev 24, Haggai had a discussion with some of the priests about issues of cleanliness, but his goal was to help them keep going forward with the building project.

2:18 ***from this day and upward.*** Or, backwards, meaning looking back to when the foundations were laid. They had been under curse up until this time because now they were finally building the temple. But the fullness of the Lord's blessings would come when the work was finished (2:19).

---

### TO ZERUBBABEL (2:20-23)

---

2:22 ***I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms.*** Speaking to the governor, Haggai told of a day when the world's kingdoms would be overthrown.

2:23 ***make thee as a signet.*** A signet was used to seal letters, contracts, and covenants, and was a representation of the owner's authority and

position. Zerubbabel was thus promised to be a representative of the Lord, with the authority and power of God given to him and his line. While Zerubbabel's completion of the temple certainly would have brought him into divine favor, the full accomplishment of this prophecy was in Christ who was the seal of God upon the earth.

---

## ZECHARIAH

---

With his fellow-prophet Haggai, Zechariah ('YHWH remembers') stirred the Jews to complete the work on the temple, that they might honor and worship the Lord according to the scriptures. But unlike Haggai's short writings, Zechariah went on from that call to repentance to speak of great events in the last days. Like Daniel and Ezekiel, he wrote much of it in an apocalyptic style (sometimes called 'proto-apocalyptic because it appears less fully-developed than later writings of the genre to textual critics),

speaking of the last days and the coming of the Messiah.

Zechariah's message focuses on repentance and obedience to the Lord in order to avoid the fates of the fathers. He teaches that Jerusalem will go beyond the small city status they were experiencing at the time to a major world power under attack and saved only by the great power of God. It is perhaps the most powerful and comprehensive book of the Twelve Minor Prophets.

---

## OUTLINE

---

- 1) Repent (1:1-6)
- 2) Eight Visions (1:7 - 6:15)
  - a) First: A man and horses (1:7-17)
  - b) Second: Horns and workers (1:18 -21)
  - c) Third: A man measuring (2:1-13)
  - d) Fourth: Joshua a type of Messiah (3:1-10)
  - e) Fifth: Lampstand and olive trees (4:1-14)
  - f) Sixth: Flying scrolls (5:1-4)
  - g) Seventh: Woman in a container (5:5-11)
  - h) Eighth: Four chariots (6:1-8)
  - i) Joshua crowned (6:9-15)
- 3) Four Messages (7-8)
  - a) First: Fasting (7:1-7)
  - b) Second: Causes of the exile (7:8-14)
  - c) Third: Jerusalem's Future (8:1-17)
  - d) Fourth: Fasts and Feasts (8:18-23)
- 4) First Burden: Rejecting Messiah (9-11)
- 5) Second Burden: Accepting Messiah (12-14)

---

## REPENT (1:1-6)

---

1:1 ***the eighth month.*** Zechariah's message came right in the middle of Haggai's messages as a second witness—in between Haggai 2:9 and 2:10, in fact.

1:3 ***Turn ye unto me.*** This is the Hebrew word *šûb*, which means to 'return' or 'turn back'—in other

words, repent. It is used twice in this verse. The first is the Lord calling on the people to turn from their own paths back to his—in imperative or command form. When we do that, he always stands ready to turn to us—in the imperfect form, meaning it is an ongoing, constant action.

---

## EIGHT VISIONS (1:7 - 6:15)

---

Zechariah had eight visions that were each designed to teach him something about his people, their condition, and their future. These were not

necessarily received at the same time but are collected together because they relate thematically.

---

### FIRST: A MAN AND HORSES (1:7-17)

---

1:7 **four and twentieth day of the eleventh month.** This date translates to 15 February 519 BC, meaning it was just prior to the Jewish new year (Yom Kippur) and Passover. It is about three months after the first pronouncement of Zechariah in 1:1.

1:8 **a man riding upon a red horse.** A red horse can be interpreted as the symbol for war and bloodshed. But in this case, the rider and horse are in a valley hidden under the thick, evergreen foliage of a myrtle tree. Waiting with him were other horses (and presumably riders), colored to represent confusion (speckled) and peace (white), all hidden in the grove of short, thick trees.

1:9 **the angel that talked with me.** It is common in apocalyptic visions to have a guide or interpreter, usually an angel or messenger from the Lord.

1:11 **at rest.** The messengers had been all over the earth and concluded that “the searh sitteth still, and is at rest.” It was a time of relative peace with the Persian empire reigning over most of the Near East, reflecting the window of opportunity for the Jews to accomplish their temple construction goal.

1:14 **I am jealous for Jerusalem.** The messenger told the prophet to cry out that the Lord is zealous (see the footnote) to help and bless Jerusalem.

1:15 **they helped forward the affliction.** The Gentile nations were used by the Lord to inflict punishment on Israel according to the Lord’s will, but the punishment was greater than Israel deserved, so the Lord was also displeased with those nations. This helps explain the troubling question back in Habakkuk as to why the Lord allowed the more wicked Babylonians to overrun the more righteous nation of Judah.

1:16 **returned to Jerusalem with mercies.** In Ezekiel’s vision, the Lord left the temple and Jerusalem (Ezekiel 8-11). Now the promise is to return and bless the city that had been abandoned.

---

### SECOND: HORNS AND WORKERS (1:18 -21)

---

1:18 **four horns.** Horns represent power and authority; here they represent the nations all around

them (four corners of the earth) that have scattered Israel and Judah (1:19).

1:20 **four carpenters.** The four craftsmen mentioned here will overcome the conquering horns; like the horns, these are not meant to represent specific people but rather those who come from all over to help rebuild Jerusalem (1:21). The vision assures them that they will be successful.

---

### THIRD: A MAN MEASURING (2:1-13)

---

2:1 **a man with a measuring line.** Similar to 1:16, the line is used to measure the city, like a surveyor might do today. In this case, the young man with the line is measuring Jerusalem, implying that he is examining the current sad state of the city, with no temple, walls in poor repair, and a small population (probably less than 30,000).

2:4 **towns without walls.** It was extremely unusual for a town of any size to not have walls; such protection kept out marauders and wild animals as well as conquering armies. Jerusalem would grow to a size that walls would be impractical, full of people and animals. But they would not be left without protection (see 2:5).

2:5 **a wall of fire round about.** Because the Lord would protect them with a wall of fire—representing his very presence—they would have no need for physical walls built by men. It’s a call to faith to trust the Lord and enjoy his blessings.

2:6 **Ho, ho.** A word to get their attention, with various meanings, including ‘alas,’ ‘woe,’ and ‘ah-ha.’

2:8 **the apple of his eye.** The “apple” is really the pupil, the most precious part of the eye. So Jerusalem is the most precious thing to the Lord.

2:10 **I will dwell in the midst of thee.** This phrase, repeated in verse 11 for emphasis, is of great comfort anciently and today. Knowing the Lord cares and is engaged personally in our lives provides strength to go on, desire to do what is right, and excitement about potential interactions with him.

2:12 **shall inherit Judah his portion.** Judah will be the Lord’s personal inheritance on the earth, and he will live there. We know from Latter-day revelation

that he will have two capitals—Jerusalem in the Old World and Zion in the New (D&C 133:21-25).

2:13 **raised up out of his holy habitation.** The whole earth needs to know that Jehovah has been roused out of his temple in the skies and is taking an active and critical role in restoring Jerusalem and Judah.

---

#### FOURTH: JOSHUA A TYPE OF MESSIAH (3:1-10)

---

3:1 **Joshua the high priest.** In this vision, Joshua represented the priests among those who had returned from exile. He was also a type of the Savior (he even had the same name, since Joshua was the same as Yeshua, which was Jesus' mortal name).

3:1 **Satan standing at his right hand.** Satan ('the adversary') stood in a judgment setting, with Joshua and his defense attorney, an angel. The accuser was not there to "resist him" but to accuse him (see the footnote).

3:2 **a brand plucked out of the fire.** The Lord through his angel spokesperson resisted the accuser's words, noting that they were like a stick pulled out of the fire—they had been tested and tried through their exilic experiences.

3:3 **filthy garments.** With no temple for several decades, they had not been able to perform the Mosaic ordinances that represented cleansing and forgiveness. The accumulated sins of their and previous generations clung to Joshua's clothing, staining and ruining it.

3:4 **I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.** Through the Atonement of Christ, grace, and mercy, their sins were forgiven (justified) and their soiled garments were removed and replaced with clean ones. What a tremendous lesson about God's forgiveness outside of the rituals of the Law of Moses!

3:5 **a fair mitre.** Or, "a clean turban" (NASB and NIV). The high priest wore a hat that represented his office and authority and Joshua was given a clean hat to wear, showing the restoration of that authority to the returning Jews.

3:6 **the angel of the Lord protested.** Not "protested" but 'testified to' or 'admonished.' The angel is giving the newly forgiven and restored to authority high priest strength and encouragement.

3:7 **If thou wilt walk in my ways.** The angel with witnesses proposed a covenant to Joshua: if he would be obedient to the Lord's commandments and his personal calling, then he would be supported in his leadership in the temple and would have a place of honor among the angels witnessing the covenant.

3:8 **they are men wondered at.** Or, "men symbolic of things to come." Joshua and the others experiencing the things in Zechariah's vision are types of something in the future, which is represented by the Branch.

3:8 **my servant the Branch.** The Hebrew terms translated "Branch" here (not the same word as in Isaiah 11:1 though with similar meaning) means a 'sprout' or 'shoot' from a tree. In the ancient Near East, this term was often used to refer "to the rightful heir of an established dynastic line" (Zondervan 5:217). Scholars have interpreted this figure variously, from Zerubbabel who finished the temple, to the Maccabees who overthrew the Greeks and established an independent Jewish state. But the King James Translators (making the word in all caps) and many believing Christians see this as a type of Christ, the ultimate heir to the line of David. That means that Joshua and his "fellows" were types of Christ, symbols of his priesthood and leadership at a future day.

3:9 **the stone . . . seven eyes.** I believe the stone represents Christ also (see Matthew 21:42-44; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8), with seven eyes, symbolic of perfect vision and understanding. It is through the Savior that God "will removed the iniquity of that land in one day."

---

#### FIFTH: LAMPSTAND AND OLIVE TREES (4:1-14)

---

4:2 **candlestick of gold.** Not a "candlestick" but a golden lampstand. Either the lamp was a bowl with seven pinched edges, each one holding a wick or 'lamp,' or it was a bowl with seven smaller bowls around the edge, each one its own lamp. Either way, seven lights represented completeness and the all-

seeing eyes of the Lord (4:10) upon Judah. The lampstand was similar to a menorah that was found anciently in the temple.

4:3 **two olive trees.** The two trees were flanking the lampstand. Later, in verse 12, we learn that they were constantly feeding olive oil directly into the lamp so that it could not run out.

4:9 **shall also finish it.** Zerubbabel had started the temple and would also see it finished. The Lord was assuring the people that the construction would be completed in short order.

4:10 **they are the eyes of the Lord.** The JST changes “eyes” to “servants.” In Zechariah, as in other apocalyptic literature, eyes represent the power of God to see and know all things. The seven eyes in this verse hark back to 3:9, where the stone, a representation of the Messiah, has seven eyes, the perfect number. In the divine economy of heaven, the Lord often sends others to gather information and act in his behalf. They become his ‘eyes’ on the earth—not because he needs them to see what is happening, but for the benefit of the servants.

4:14 **the two anointed ones.** The two olive trees represented two chosen by the Lord. In Zechariah’s day, that would have been Zerubbabel and Joshua, but in our day, this likely refers to the two prophets in the last days who will testify in Jerusalem, save that city but lose their lives, then be raised up in front of the world after three days (see Revelation 11; John also refers to them as olive trees). Note that the JST changes “stand by the Lord” to “stand before the Lord.” Though a subtle change, to stand before the Lord, especially in apocalyptic writings like Zechariah, is to be in a worshipful and supplicating position, as reflected in scriptures such as Ezekiel 43:24; 46:3, 9; Daniel 9:13, 20; and Revelation 5:14.

---

#### SIXTH: FLYING SCROLLS (5:1-4)

---

5:1 **a flying roll.** This is a scroll, and a huge one: 15 feet by 30 feet (5:2). It is unrolled so Zechariah can read it all, and suspending in the air before his view.

5:3 **every one that stealeth . . . every one that sweareth.** Why these two particular sins are called makes sense when the circumstance is considered.

In order for the work on the temple to begin, people would have to pledge money to the work—make an oath or swear. If they then did not fulfill that oath, they were stealing from the Lord that which they had already promised him. This could represent an important reason why the work on the temple was stalled for so many years.

---

#### SEVENTH: WOMAN IN A CONTAINER (5:5-11)

---

5:6 **This is an ephah.** An ephah was a large measure of volume, roughly equal to about two-thirds of a bushel. The text does not indicate what this item that was an ephah big was made of, but many often interpret this as a basket (because a pottery vessel of that size would be very heavy).

5:7 **a talent of lead.** The lid on the container was a very heavy one made of lead, lifted by supernatural means.

5:7 **a woman.** When the lid was lifted, there was a woman in the container. The angel interprets the symbol of the woman as “wickedness” or the sins of the people, which he promptly pushed back into the container and resealed it with the lead lid.

5:8 **two women . . . wings of a stork.** These women were merely those that carried the container far away, to “the land of Shinar” (verse 11, meaning Babylon), symbolic of the sins of the people being taken far away from them, back to the land they had left behind when they returned to Jerusalem.

---

#### EIGHTH: FOUR CHARIOTS (6:1-8)

---

6:1 **four chariots out from between two mountains.** The chariots and their horses are explained in the verses following to represent those who “go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth” (6:5), with four representing completeness across all parts of the world.

6:5 **These are the four spirits.** The JST changes “spirits” to “servants,” matching the change in 4:10. The servants in the chariots represent the Lord going out to all the world. This matches the four servants in Revelation 7:1-3, which Joseph Smith said were crying out to start reaping the earth (D&C 86:4-7), and which President Wilford Woodruff later

said had indeed been unleashed (Student Manual, 2:344).

6:8 **quieted my spirit in the north country.** From the perspective of Jerusalem, “the north country” included the ancestral lands of Haran (Abraham’s home country), Assyria, and Babylon. Under Persian rule, these lands had all been “quieted” so Israel could experience a period of relative peace.

---

#### JOSHUA CROWNED (6:9-15)

---

6:10 **Take of them of the captivity.** These verses don’t relate a vision but a symbolic action taken by the prophet to teach the leaders something about their task. Some Jews had come from Babylon to support the temple rebuilding effort, bringing silver and gold as a contribution.

6:11 **make crowns, and set them upon the head.** Taking some of the treasures brought by the

Babylonian Jews, Zechariah made two crowns. Only one is mentioned being set on a head—that of Joshua, the high priest. The other by inference went on the head of Zerubbabel the governor, though that is not mentioned.

6:12 **the man whose name is The Branch.** See 3:8. This leader will not only come from the Davidic line but will be the one to build the temple, rule on his throne as king, and be a priest unto the people.

6:13 **the counsel of peace shall be between them both.** Or, “there will be harmony between the two” positions (NIV).

6:15 **they that are far off shall come and build.** The building project would also be supported by many from distant lands; it happened in their day and will happen again in the last days.

---

#### FOUR MESSAGES (7-8)

---

Two years after Zechariah’s other visions of things that would impact the people in Jerusalem, he had four more revelations that were messages to the people. As with many revelations, these were triggered by a question about worship—should they continue the fasts that had been celebrated for many years after the fall of Jerusalem? The Lord not only revealed the answer to the question (messages one and four) but added two others to help them learn why their parents had been exiled in the first place and to give them a vision of the future of the city (messages two, three, and the end of four).

---

#### FIRST: FASTING (7:1-7)

---

7:1 **fourth year of king Darius.** With chapter 7, we move down in time two more years to 4 Chisleu (or Kislev, the ninth month, December in our calendar) 518 BC.

7:3 **Should I weep in the fifth month.** Representatives came from the surrounding area came to ask if they should continue the fast of mourning they had been conducting every year in the fifth month to commemorate the destruction of

the temple in Jerusalem in 586 BC (see 2 Kings 25:8-17).

7:5 **seventh month.** The people were also fasting in the seventh month to commemorate the assassination of Gedaliah, the leader of the Jews appointed by Babylon after the fall of Jerusalem (see 2 Kings 25:22-25). According to Jeremiah (39:1-2; 52:12-14, 67), they also had two other feasts to mourn the destruction of Jerusalem, one in the tenth month to remember the beginning of the siege and one in the fourth month to remember the breaching of the walls of the city (see also 8:19 below).

7:7 **cried by the former prophets.** Zechariah taught that they had mourned over Jerusalem long enough and it was time to get back to living the teachings of the pre-exilic prophets that would bring them closer to the Lord.

---

#### SECOND: CAUSES OF THE EXILE (7:8-14)

---

7:9 **Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions.** The Lord listed several messages that he had given to the people through the “former prophets” (7:12) that had been ignored by those



people and were thus the cause of their downfall, including executing justice, mercy, and compassion to others, taking care of widows and orphans, strangers and the poor, and not having evil in their hearts against another.

7:11 ***pulled away the shoulder***. From the wheel, to reference a favorite LDS hymn.

7:13 ***so they cried, and I would not hear***. In a poetic irony, the Lord said that as the people had not listened to his pleas for obedience, so he ignored their cries for help when they were in need. Instead, he “scattered them with a whirlwind” and “laid the pleasant land desolate” (7:14).

---

### THIRD: JERUSALEM’S FUTURE (8:1-17)

---

8:2 ***I was jealous for her with great fury***. “Jealous” is ‘zealous,’ meaning that the Lord was extremely anxious to bless Jerusalem again after the exile.

8:3 ***I am returned unto Zion***. After being ‘absent’ from the city for many years, the Lord was again with his people in the city.

8:3 ***the holy mountain***. As Isaiah and Micah had said, the mountain of the Lord’s house was to be rebuilt in the city. It would be made holy by the Lord’s presence.

8:4 ***old men and old women dwell in the streets***. Jerusalem would be a place of peace and prosperity, with old people happily and safely living there and children freely playing in the streets (8:5).

8:7 ***I will save my people***. The Hebrew for “save” here can mean delivered, liberated, or given victory. The JST changes it here and in verse 13 to “gather,” which are the last two changes Joseph Smith made in the entire JST work (not counting later revisions done years later). In the Church today, we say that we are gathering people to Zion as they are delivered from the world and liberated from sin—

not a physical gathering as it was in the early days of Joseph Smith or Brigham Young. But gathering scattered Israel was a primary concern of Joseph Smith in the summer of 1833, and these last changes in the JST manuscript reflect that priority.

8:12 ***the ground shall give her increase***. Unlike previous generations, where drought and crop failure were a constant concern, the Lord promised Zechariah’s people that if they were faithful, he would bless the ground for their sakes, and they would have sufficient water and healthy crops.

8:13 ***let your hands be strong***. Even with his great promises, the people still had to work to do their part to bring about the promised miracle. This phrase was stated twice, in verses 9 and 13, framing the blessings between.

8:16 ***things that ye should do***. Besides the hard work required at their strong hands, the Lord also expected them to speak truth, be just and peaceful, don’t plot evil things against a neighbor, and don’t make false oaths.

---

### FOURTH: FASTS AND FEASTS (8:18-23)

---

8:19 ***The fast***. The four fasts instituted in relation to the fall of Jerusalem were listed. These were sad fasts, commemorating tragic events. The Lord instructed them not to discontinue the fasts but to turn them into feasts of “joy and gladness” that would bring a love of “truth and peace” to the land.

8:21 ***Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord***. People from many other lands would recognize the peace and joy and love in the city of Jerusalem and would be drawn there to pray and worship the Lord by the example of the Jewish people.

8:23 ***We will go with you***. These people would come to the city, grab the clothing of a resident, and ask to go to the temple with them, saying excitedly, “We have heard that God is with you.”

---

### FIRST BURDEN: REJECTING MESSIAH (9-11)

---

9:1 ***The burden of the word of the Lord***. “Burden” has been used by other prophets and has the meaning of something lifted up or carried. A prophet lifted up this message as a call to repentance and as

a warning of the load that they would have to carry if they did not repent.

9:1 ***Hadrach, and Damascus***. Cities of Syria.

9:2 **Tyrus, and Sidon.** Tyre and Sidon, the land of Phoenicia. Other cities mentioned in 9:5-6 are those of the Philistines (Gaza, Ekron, Ashkelon, and Ashdod).

9:4 **he will smite her power.** Though the cities mentioned were indeed captured and destroyed by Alexander the Great in about 332 BC, it is likely that these are mentioned as representations of worldly power more than specific destinations, showing how the power of the Lord will overcome the evils of the world.

9:8 **no oppressor shall pass through them.** Even though these other cities will be destroyed, Jerusalem will be preserved during these challenging times, because the house of the Lord is there.

9:9 **thy king cometh . . . riding upon an ass.** Kings in ancient Israel came to be crowned while riding on a donkey—or more accurately, a mule—as a symbol of their peaceful intentions and humility. The New Testament writers saw in Jesus' action of riding on a donkey into Jerusalem a fulfillment of this promise (Matthew 21:1-11; Jesus' actions on this day were very deliberate—he knew Zechariah well and purposely arranged the ride into the city, even though he also knew he was not there at that time to be the Messiah that would fulfill the rest of the promises in this chapter, but those would come later). The King in Zechariah would come with justice, salvation, and humility.

9:10 **speak peace unto the heathen.** War will end with the coming of the great King; he will be powerful enough that he can also speak peace to Israel's enemies and extend his dominion without conquest.

9:11 **by the blood of thy covenant.** Or, "Because of the covenant I made with you, sealed with blood" (NLT). It is by virtue of the covenant that the King can free the prisoners, give them hope, and even grant them a double portion of what was taken from them (9:12).

9:15 **The Lord of hosts shall defend them.** Though the Lord comes in peace, if the wicked challenge them, he will make Judah and Ephraim "as the sword of a mighty man" (9:13) and send forth his arrow

and blow the trumpet that calls to war. The Lord of armies will defend his soldiers and they were "devour" their enemies.

9:16 **an ensign upon his land.** Saving his people, he will treat them like precious stones in his crown, protecting and caring deeply for them, and will raise them as a banner to the world, giving them of the bounties of the earth (9:17).

10:1 **rain the time of the latter rain.** Even today as they did anciently, Jews look for the first rains during the fall Feast of the Tabernacles. Such latter rain is a symbol of God's love and blessings for the coming year.

10:3 **Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds.** Ezekiel spoke of Judah's leaders being like evil shepherds and the Lord bringing one shepherd that would feed them (Ezekiel 34). Zechariah used similar imagery, portraying Israel as the flock and neglectful leaders as "no shepherd" (10:2). But the Lord would not only care for them, he would change the lowly sheep to mighty horses, ready for battle.

10:6 **as though I had not cast them off.** Both Judah and Israel will be returned to their former glory as if the exile had never happened.

10:8 **I will hiss for them.** Or, 'call for them' to be gathered together. He can do this because he had "redeemed them," paid the price to get them out of prison and unfathomable debt, as only he could do.

10:9 **I will sow them among the people.** Not future but imperfect or ongoing: 'I always sow them among other nations.' When Israel needed reminding of their covenant relationship with the Lord, he scattered them among other nations, so that they would remember him, repent, and turn back to the Lord, at which point he can gather them and bless them.

10:11 **pass through the sea.** By miraculous means, the Lord will bring them out of many nations, calming seas, drying up rivers, tearing down pride, and overcoming kings, with the result that they will "walk up and down in his name" (10:12).

11:7 ***I will feed the flock of slaughter.*** Though Israel has been poorly cared for by evil shepherds, the Lord now promised to feed them; however, the name “flock of slaughter” implies a flock being raised for food—their destiny is to be butchered one day.

11:7 ***two staves.*** Zechariah took two shepherd staffs and called one “Beauty” (‘kindness,’ ‘delightfulness’) and the other “Bands” (‘bindings,’ ‘unions’). These will be used symbolically with the “flock of slaughter.”

11:9 ***I will not feed you.*** The wickedness of the flock causes even the righteous shepherd to decide not to feed them anymore but to leave them to fend for themselves and even prey on each other.

11:10 ***Beauty, and cut it asunder.*** Cutting the first staff, called ‘kindness,’ in half represented the breaking of the covenant.

11:13 ***thirty pieces of silver.*** Though symbolically the price of a slave accidentally killed hundreds of

years before this time (Exodus 21:32), in this context it appears to be an amazingly poor payment for the flock of slaughter—his sheep are nearly worthless. So frustrated was he by this poor price, that he took the thirty shekels to the temple and cast it into the treasury (an alternate translation of “potter”).

11:14 ***cut asunder mine other staff.*** With the flock gone and nothing to show for them, the other staff was cut in two—“Bands,” representing the union of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

11:17 ***Woe to the idol shepherd.*** The shepherd that caused all these problems, that brought ruin upon Judah and Israel, will be punished by having his arm injured and wither up and by having his eye cut and blinded by a sword. This was the punishment of the leaders that ignored the prophets, rendering them as a burden to society—with a useless arm and blind in one eye.

---

## SECOND BURDEN: ACCEPTING MESSIAH (12-14)

---

12:1 ***formeth the spirit of man within him.*** The imagery is of the creator God—creating the heavens and the earth and putting the spirit of man in him. As he began creation with power, so in the end he will save his people with power.

12:2 ***cup of trembling.*** The Lord through his prophet used two metaphors for the power that Jerusalem would have in the last days. First, it was a “cup of trembling,” meaning a cup of wine that was so potent that it made the drinker reel or be stupefied (compare Isaiah 51:17-23 and Jeremiah 25:15-29). Then it was a “burdensome stone” (12:3) that was heavy and sharp-edged, so that all who try to lift it are both weighed down and “cut in pieces.”

12:4 ***And in that day.*** A statement that is intended to move the reader from the present day to the end of time, the Day of the Lord.

12:6 ***an hearth of fire among the wood.*** Or, “like a firepot among pieces of wood” (NASB). In other words, Israel will burn up its neighboring Gentile nations like a fire in the middle of a pile of dry wood

or a flaming torch in the middle of a pile of dry sheaths of straw.

12:9 ***I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*** Moving to the image of the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16), the Lord will fight the battle and protect the holy city against its enemies.

12:10 ***the spirit of grace and supplications.*** The day will look bleak, however, with the battle raging fiercely before the enemies are defeated. This dire situation will drive the inhabitants of the city to pray for salvation, to see the grace of God in their lives.

12:10 ***they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.*** The ‘enhanced’ version of these verses is in D&C 45:44-53, which changes the order and wording of the experience.

12:11 ***Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.*** Hadad-rimmon (‘Hadad of the pomegranates’) was a city in the valley of Megiddo. Some speculate that the context of the mourning there was the death of Josiah the king in 609 BC, but that cannot be substantiated. Whatever the cause, mourning at this

location was so proverbial that the mourning of the people after they see the King they have pierced will be comparable.

13:1 ***a fountain opened to the house of David.*** At the time of the Second Coming, a new fountain of water will spring forth. Jerusalem's only water source anciently and today (from the immediate area) is the Gihon Spring on the eastern slope of the city of David. This prophecy relates to Ezekiel 47 where a new water source is revealed that will cleanse and heal the land and the people.

13:2 ***the prophets and the unclean spirit.*** This and verse 3 refer to false prophets who pretend to speak for the Lord but instead preach lies. They will be recognized for their falsehoods and put to death by their own parents.

13:5 ***I am no prophet.*** Those who aren't killed for their crimes will be ashamed of being caught and go back to their previous occupation, such as caring for animals (no sense of repentance here, just self-preservation).

13:6 ***What are these wounds in thine hands?*** Jews read this quite differently: "What are those sores on your back?" he will reply, 'From being beaten in the homes of my friends.'" In other words, the false prophet was beaten for his lies by his former supporters and barely escaped with his life to a place of safety. D&C 45 clearly ties it to Christ, with wounds on his hands and feet and an unambiguous response as to the speaker's identity—"Jesus that was crucified" (D&C 45:51-52).

13:7 ***smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*** Christ taught and Matthew saw a fulfillment of this verse in the scattering of the disciples upon Christ's arrest in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:31, 56).

13:9 ***bring the third part through the fire.*** Like Revelation, the "third part" doesn't mean 33.3% but the third part (after first and second). In this case, the first part is cut off and the second part dies, leaving the third part to be refined and purified like a metal in the fire of a refiner.

14:2 ***I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle.*** Returning to the opening theme of 12:9, the

Lord will allow the city to be nearly taken, with death, rape, and slavery.

14:4 ***his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.*** This is the only reference to this mount in the Old Testament, though it is commonly referenced in the New Testament. In D&C 45, standing on the Mount of Olives comes first, followed by the conversation about wounds in hands and feet after he saves the people from destruction at the hand of their enemies.

14:5 ***all the saints with thee.*** Not only will the Savior appear to his people, but resurrected Saints from former eras will freely manifest themselves as well.

14:7 ***at evening time it shall be light.*** 3 Nephi 1 also recounts a night without darkness, as the people were anxiously awaiting the sign of the Lord's birth on the earth.

14:8 ***living waters shall go out from Jerusalem.*** Returning to the image started in 13:1, waters will flow from the temple and from Jerusalem. In Ezekiel, these only flowed down to the Dead Sea to heal it. In Zechariah's vision half of the waters flow toward the Dead Sea and half toward the Mediterranean Sea; both bodies of water are healed as a result. Living water is flowing, clean water, not just water running through a dirty or muddy source, like a wadi, or the still water of the shepherd's pasture (Psalm 23). It is dynamic and it is able to immediately and powerfully bless the lives of those who partake of it. Jesus taught that he was living water in John 4:10-11 and 7:38.

14:10 ***inhabited in her place.*** As a result of the Lord's coming and the living waters that issue from his presence, the land will be inhabitable from the north to the south. Jerusalem itself will be full of people but safe.

14:12 ***Their flesh shall consume away.*** This verse evokes D&C 29:19 (and the first Indiana Jones movie when the Nazis opened the Ark of the Covenant!).

14:13 ***rise up against the hand of his neighbor.*** There will be no trust among the people of the world as they all struggle to survive.

14:16 **the feast of the tabernacles**. The only feast that is mentioned being kept after the Second Coming, Tabernacles (or *Sukkot*) was a time to be thankful for the harvest and to see the rains and other blessings that would allow the next harvest to prosper. It was a time to remember being in the wilderness for 40 years (living in a ‘tabernacle’ or booth for the week) and being dependent on the Lord for everything—water, food, shelter, everything.

14:17 **upon them shall be no rain**. Supplicating for rain was an important part of Tabernacles worship

each year, as it remains today. The Lord will establish a clear cause and effect in that day so that those who don’t participate in Tabernacles will not be blessed with the rain of those who do. Those from Egypt will also suffer the plagues of the Exodus if they are not respectful of the feast.

14:20 **Holiness to the Lord**. In the Jerusalem of that day, after the Second Coming, everything about the city will be focused on worship of the Lord. Bells on the horses and pots used for everyday purposes will say, ‘Holiness [or consecrated] to the Lord.’

---

## MALACHI

---

Malachi is a short book, with only four chapters, but has the distinction of being quoted in every other book of scripture—the New Testament, Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. Malachi’s book doesn’t have a date in it, but from the context, he appears to have ministered before or during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, between 500 and 430 BC. The book is written mostly in question/answer format, sometimes with the Lord asking the questions, and sometimes the people.

Malachi’s name means ‘my messenger’ or even ‘my angel,’ especially interesting in light of Malachi 3:1 and other similar references. Jewish tradition sees his name as a title (it is) and identifies him with the effort to collect and preserve the scriptures—and thus with Ezra the scribe.

Malachi identifies and focuses on the parts of Jewish life that are distinctive down to the time of Christ—temple worship, Sabbath worship, payment of tithes, and practices of cleansing.

---

## OUTLINE

---

1. Israel’s Sins (1:1 – 2:16)
  - a. God’s love for Israel (1:1-5)
  - b. Rebuke of the priests (1:6 – 2:9)
  - c. Judah’s unfaithfulness (2:10-16)
2. Judgment on Israel (2:17 – 4:6)
  - a. The messenger coming (2:17 – 3:5)
  - b. Repent (3:6-12)
  - c. Judgment and consolation (3:13 – 4:3)
  - d. Moses and Elijah (4:4-6)

---

## ISRAEL’S SINS (1:1 – 2:16)

---

---

### GOD’S LOVE FOR ISRAEL (1:1-5)

---

1:1 **burden**. As with other prophetic books, the message was a burden to Israel—both something to be borne and something to be lifted up by the Lord. The very word is a symbol of the power of the atonement.

3:1 **I hated Esau**. A bit of divine hyperbole, the Lord didn’t hate Esau, but he was emphasizing the love of

God toward Israel, by contrast. The Hebrew term can simply mean ‘held in aversion.’

---

### REBUKE OF THE PRIESTS (1:6 – 2:9)

---

1:6 **Wherein have we despised thy name?** The priests had been offering sacrifices, keeping the lamp burning, putting fresh bread on the table, offering the daily incense, and otherwise performing their functions in the newly rebuilt temple. So they were puzzled by the accusation.

1:8 **offer it now unto thy governor.** The priests were offering the blind, lame, and sick animals on the altar, so the Lord challenged them to offer the same animals to the governor. Of course he wouldn't accept them, so why would the Lord?

1:10 **that would shut the doors.** Or, "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle *fire on My altar!*" (NASB). The Lord was so displeased with their hypocritical offerings that he wanted the gates of the temple just to be shut.

1:11 **my name shall be great among the Gentiles.** The Lord, though Malachi, told the people that even the Gentiles will one day be better worshippers than these people were then.

1:12 **the table of the Lord.** The temple altar, the showbread table, etc. Instead of polluted, a better translation might be 'defiled.' Perhaps they were tired of all the work involved to make sure everything was ritually pure, as verse 13 implies.

2:2 **I will curse your blessings.** The priests offered blessings on the people each day in conjunction with

the daily sacrifice. The Lord here said that he will turn those blessings into curses.

2:3 **spread dung upon your faces.** A graphic way to portray the Lord's rejection—they will be covered with the manure from the sacrifices and swept away with it as when the courtyard is cleaned.

2:5 **My covenant was with him.** This does not speak of Levi but of Aaron, the first priest of that tribe.

2:7 **he is the messenger of the Lord.** A little play on words here since Malachi means 'my messenger.' So he was saying, in essence, 'You priests should be speaking for God, and teaching his law, but you're not. You're supposed to be the messenger, but I am instead.'

---

#### JUDAH'S UNFAITHFULNESS (2:10-16)

---

2:11 **hath married the daughter of a strange god.** This section condemned the people for putting away the wives of their youth (their Jewish brides they married as young men) for Gentile brides in their older age (not said here explicitly but derived from Ezra and Nehemiah).

---

#### JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL (2:17 - 4:6)

---

Chapters 3 and 4 are quoted by the Savior in 3 Nephi 24-25 with some minor variations from our KJV text. Those that are interesting will be noted below.

---

#### THE MESSENGER COMING (2:17 - 3:5)

---

2:17 **Wherein have we wearied him?** This section opens with two questions, but we sometimes miss them because they are at the end of the previous chapter. The other one is, "Where is the God of judgment?" The response is the next five verses.

3:1 **my messenger.** This is literally "Malachi." We see this appropriately as a prophecy of John the Baptist, based on Matthew 11:10 and other similar New Testament interpretations. But it had meaning in Malachi's day also—that of affirming his own call. He was the messenger that came before the Lord, the herald that prepared the way for the arrival of the king. He predicted the destruction of the wicked if they did not repent. This applied to his day as well as

the First Coming and the Second Coming, where the '*malachi*' is (among others) Joseph Smith.

3:1 **the messenger of the covenant.** Not the messenger of earlier in the verse, but the Lord himself. This aligns with what Jesus said of himself: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:17); "he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (John 8:26).

3:2 **like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.** Fire and soap were both cleansing and purifying agents, as the next verse explains in more detail.

3:3 **that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.** As already discussed, the priests of that day were not offering sacrifices in righteousness, so the implied condemnation applies to them. But this scripture comes up in D&C 13 (and Oliver Cowdery's slightly different remembrance of the wording in JS-H 1:71 footnote). We do not know

what form these sacrifices will take, but that it will be part of the temple at some time is taught in D&C 124:39 and in Ezekiel’s vision of the Millennial temple (Ezekiel 44-46). Furthermore, Joseph Smith taught that animal sacrifice would be restored as part of the restitution of all things, and that this would take place when the sons of Levi were purified (HC 4:211).

**3:4 *the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant.*** The offering of Judah will be accepted, even as the lives of those who reject the Lord fall under judgment. In the end, the eternal God will pass over Jacob, and they shall not suffer the fate of the wicked.

**3:5 *turn aside the stranger from his right.*** The Book of Mormon deletes the italicized phrase *from his right*. The pattern of deleting italicized KJV words is something that Joseph Smith saw in his work on The Book of Mormon, and carried over to the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, though this particular verse remained unchanged in the JST.

---

#### REPENT (3:6-12)

---

This section turns back to the people of Malachi’s day, calling them to repent. The striking example refers to the temple tithes and offerings.

**3:7 *Wherein shall we return?*** The question that set up the tithing answer: Israel was accused of leaving God, and the question was, ‘What shall we do to return to God?’

**3:8 *tithes and offerings.*** We correctly apply this to our day, saying that not paying tithing and other offerings is like robbing God of what is his. However, in Malachi’s day, tithes, for the most part, went to pay for the temple and the ordinances and sacrifices made there. Offerings were the animals and other offerings made there. So in essence, the Lord was saying that they were not supporting the temple.

**3:10 *prove me now.*** It’s not often that the Lord, in essence, dares us to obey and see if we won’t be blessed. Here he does exactly that.

**3:10 *open you the windows of heaven.*** The cross-reference is Genesis 7:11, where the windows of heaven were opened to flood the earth. But here the

windows were open in blessing, bringing the rains that would allow the crops to grow. The blessing was directly related to the sacrifice; if Israel brought tithes and offerings (tithing was mostly in-kind donations in that day, offerings were animals, bread, oil, etc.), the Lord would bless them that they should not lack food and the other necessities of life.

**3:11 *the devourer.*** The locust and other insects, who devour the crops.

**3:11 *before the time in the field.*** The Book of Mormon makes the noun “field” plural.

---

#### JUDGMENT AND CONSOLATION (3:13 – 4:3)

---

**3:13-15** A quick step away from the great promises back to the reality of the behavior of the people of that day. It’s the old story—the wicked prosper and there seems to be no reason to justify the sacrifices of obeying God. In the previous verses, God challenged them to test his promise, and now they do indeed test him, but not in that way. Instead, they make a show of obedience, keeping ordinances and walking around mourning for sins, but in reality they are seeing how wicked they can be and still be “delivered.”

**3:14** The Book of Mormon changes two things here. First, the phrase “what profit *is it*” is changed to “what doth it profit,” again showing attention to italicized words. The other change is to make plural the noun “ordinance.”

**3:16 *book of remembrance.*** The Persian custom was to keep a royal record of good deeds in order to reward those who deserved it. This book was associated with the book of life, described elsewhere.

**3:17 *my jewels.*** This same word was used in Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; and others, translated as treasure or even just peculiar/special.

**3:18 *Then shall ye return, and discern.*** In the end, it will be easy to discern who is faithful and who is not.

**4:1 *burn them up.*** Continuing the thought from 3:18 (no chapter breaks in the original Malachi), now that the Lord had revealed the difference between the

righteous and the wicked, the latter will be burned up. Interesting that pride is singled out, then all other sins are lumped together as “wickedness.”

4:2 ***Sun of Righteousness***. It is universally agreed that this metaphorical phrase is the Messiah, whose brightness is like that of the Sun. Turning the metaphor to a title, The Book of Mormon changes this to “Son of Righteousness.” The only other two times this phrase occurs is in 2 Nephi 26:9; Ether 9:2. Given the translation process of The Book of Mormon, this use of the phrase is the first, then Ether, then 2 Nephi.

4:2 ***healing in his wings***. The Savior’s atonement is one of healing, as its power literally and metaphorically flies to bless the lives of the righteous.

4:2 ***and grow up as calves of the stall***. Or, “and leap like calves released from the stall” (NIV). Young animals that were kept cooped up all day, when released, often ran and jumped.

4:3 ***tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet***. There are at least two ways to see this. First, because the wicked will be “as stubble” and burned up (v. 1), the righteous will walk on their ashes. Second, anciently, they used to put ashes on dirt pathways to give more grip in the rain. Either way, it is a symbol of the end of wickedness and sin.

---

#### MOSES AND ELIJAH (4:4-6)

---

4:4 ***Moses my servant***. Citing Moses here reminds us of the law, while Elijah in the next verse is the representative prophet. Both play a role in preparing the people for the Second Coming.

4:5 ***I will send you Elijah the prophet***. Many Christians see this metaphorically or perhaps as a

prophecy of an Elijah-like person who will come at the last days. But Latter-day Saints know that Elijah literally came to the Kirtland temple and restored priesthood keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (D&C 110:13-16), in fulfillment of this scripture.

4:5 ***great and dreadful***. “Great” can also mean ‘immense,’ ‘loud,’ or ‘important.’ “Dreadful” can also be translated ‘awesome,’ ‘astonishing,’ or ‘terrible.’ The meaning is that the Second Coming will be of immense importance and will bring awe and wonder to everyone who sees it.

4:6 ***turn the heart of the fathers to the children***. This phrase is used many times in various scriptures, often with slight variations from Malachi:

- It was applied by the angel speaking to Zacharias in the temple, about his son, John (Luke 1:17).
- Moroni quoted it to Joseph Smith as something that would now be fulfilled (D&C 2:1-3; also JS-H 1:39).
- Quoting Malachi again, the Lord said that Elijah would be one of those with whom Joseph would one day “drink of the fruit of the vine” (D&C 27:9).
- In an interesting twist, the Lord used the phrase in relation to renouncing war and turning the hearts of the Jews back to their prophets (D&C 98:16-17).
- It was mentioned in D&C 110:13-16, as explained above.
- Malachi is one of the prophets Joseph F. Smith saw in his vision of the spirit world, and this phrase is used to remind us of who Malachi was (D&C 138:47).

---

## BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS

---

Between the time of Malachi, the last prophet in the Old Testament, and John the Baptist, the first prophet in the New Testament, was roughly half a century. During that time, the Jews underwent dramatic changes in their culture, language, religion,

and even holidays. The Jews of Malachi’s day were very different from the ones we see Jesus interacting with in the gospels. What happened in between is what is briefly discussed below.



---

## SOURCES

---

The main sources for knowing what went on in this period are:

- Josephus, a first century AD Jewish historian who wrote in detail about this period of time.
- Apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books written during this time.
- The Dead Sea scrolls.
- Some contemporary histories of Greeks, Romans, and others.

---

## ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND HELLENIZATION

---

Born in 356 BC, Alexander was the son of Philip II of Macedon, who united the Greeks. His father's goal was to conquer Persia, who had twice conquered Greece, but Philip died in 336 BC before he could achieve that, so Alexander took up his father's goal. Through military and political genius, he more than exceeded it, conquering everything between Greece and India, including Egypt and Judah. In the midst of these great victories, he died of an illness in 323 BC. He was 33 years old.

His conquest brought about not only the end of the Persian empire, but also the spread of Greek culture

throughout that entire part of the world. Called "Hellenization" (Hellas is the name for "Greece" in Greek), much of the world adopted Greek language, arts, philosophy, and military practices. This impacted even little Judah. Results included the splitting of Judaism into factions who supported or disdained Hellenism at various levels; many people in Judah learning to speak Greek; the translation of the scriptures into Greek; and a rebellion to throw off Greek rule and culture.

---

## THE MACCABEES AND HASMONEANS

---

Alexander's successors split his kingdom into four parts, two of which impacted Judah directly. The Seleucids ruled in Syria, north of Judah, and the Ptolemys in Egypt. At first the Ptolemys ruled Judah, and many Jews flocked to Egypt to live, so much that there were soon over a million Jews just in Alexandria (many times more than in Judah itself). Because most of these Jews spoke Greek, not Hebrew, they translated the scriptures into Greek for their own use. Today called the Septuagint (see below), it included many writings not in the Hebrew Old Testament today. Today we call these writings the 'Apocrypha,' which means 'hidden writings.'

In 198 BC, Antiochus III took control of Judah from the Ptolemys. He was welcomed to the territory, granting them freedom to worship as they pleased. However, after he was killed in 187 BC, his successor, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (meaning 'God manifest') determined to stamp out the Jewish religion. He made it illegal to be a Jew, forced people to eat pork or die, and defiled the temple by offering pigs on the altar and turning it into a house of Zeus.

In response to these actions, a family under the leadership of Mattathias of Modiin, started a guerilla campaign against the Greeks to drive them out. In 167 BC, they first took control of Modiin, then gathered supporters and began fighting all across the land. When Mattathias died in about 165 BC, his son Judas, nicknamed Maccabaeus (meaning 'hammer'), took over leadership and drove the Greeks from Jerusalem and the temple. They restored the temple and rededicated it in December 164 BC. Later the Jews celebrated that day by the Feast of Dedication, or Chanukkah, sometimes also called the Festival of Lights.

The family started a dynasty that lasted more than 100 years, and was named after their ancestor, Hasmoneus. They quickly moved away from their faithful Jewish stance into one of political intrigue and power, assuming both the offices of king and high priest. But their rule was the first independent Jewish rule since the days of Josiah (640 BC), and the last, as it turned out. Their story is told in the apocryphal books, 1 and 2 Maccabees.

---

## THE ROMANS AND THE HERODS

---

During this time, a new nation in the west had been rising to power—Rome. The Maccabees had reached out and made an alliance with Rome in 164, 143, and 139 BC. Toward the end of the Hasmonean period, two brothers, Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II, struggled for control. Both called upon Rome, and Pompey came, having just taken over what was left of the Seleucid empire. Siding with Hyrcanus, Pompey's army attacked Aristobulus' followers in Jerusalem, killing thousands in the city and even the temple courtyards. In his victory, Pompey walked right into the temple itself, including the Holy of Holies. Disappointed to find it empty, he then ordered the priests to cleanse it and continue their sacrifices. But after that day (63 BC), the Jews were under Roman rule, and continued until Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70.

One of Hyrcanus' advisors was Antipater, a wealthy Idumean. Idumea had been forcibly converted to Judaism under the Hasmonean rule about 120 BC, so Antipater was a Jew, but in name only. Antipater, with his Nabatean royal wife, had a son named Herod, who married a Hasmonean princess,

Mariamne (he had 10 wives total). Due to his father's influence, Herod was appointed governor in Galilee at the age of twenty-five. His leadership was admired by Jews and Romans alike. When his father was killed by an enemy, Herod established himself as indispensable to Hyrcanus. When attacked, Herod fled to Rome where Mark Anthony appointed him king of Judea. Returning to Judah, he established himself firmly by killing rivals, even in his own family, and putting down all rebellions. He launched a massive building campaign, not only remodeling and greatly enlarging the temple, but many other huge projects as well, including Masada, Ceasarea, Herodium, and a host of aqueducts, theaters, palaces, walls, and more.

It was Herod who met the wise men of Jesus' infancy, just as he was dying of a horrible disease. His last act was to order the execution of Jewish leaders throughout the country so that people would actually mourn when he died. Fortunately, it was not carried out. His sons inherited his kingdom, one of which is the Herod mentioned during the time of Jesus.

---

## SCRIPTURES AND WRITINGS

---

One striking thing about this period of time which was only really appreciated in recent years, was the amount of flux in what was considered scripture by various groups of Jews. Many scriptural traditions have now come down to us, as well as many writings which may not have been considered scripture but which were significant to the time.

---

### SEPTUAGINT

---

Legend has it that during the time of Ptolemy II (283-246 BC), he brought together seventy-two Jewish scholars to translate the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, the language spoken by most Jews in his Egyptian kingdom. Each of them miraculously produced identical translations of the Pentateuch (books of Moses). The resulting book is today called the Septuagint, which is Greek for 'seventy.'

The Septuagint (abbreviated LXX) contained the books that we have in our Old Testament today, plus a number of other books. These books are now called the Apocrypha by Protestants, though Catholics and Eastern Churches consider them scripture as much as the books in the western Old Testament.

For Christians, the greatest impact of the LXX was that it allowed the Jewish scriptures to be easily known among the Greek-speaking Gentile converts made by Paul and others. A comparison of the Hebrew text and the LXX shows that Paul nearly always quoted from the latter. Indeed, when the first Bibles were being compiled by Christians, they were all in Greek.

---

### DEAD SEA SCROLLS

---

First discovered in 1947, this collection of hundreds of scrolls and scroll fragments are the oldest copies of the Hebrew scriptures in existence, pre-dating previous manuscripts by about 1,000 years. But many of the scrolls are not what we consider scripture today. Some of them talk about rebuilding a great temple, some cover the rules of their community, and some give directions to buried treasure (never found). Some of the scrolls are intact and nearly complete, such as the Great Isaiah Scroll or the Temple Scroll. Others are minute fragments, some smaller than a postage stamp. Scholars have painstakingly reassembled as many fragments as they can, and the translations of these scrolls into English is readily available.

The scrolls teach us much about the beliefs of many Jews just before and after the time of Christ, when they were written. They show better than anything the openness of the canon in those days, as the owners of the scrolls produced and valued what are today non-Biblical scrolls as much as the ones we treasure as scripture. They give us different textual traditions, such as a dramatically shorter book of Jeremiah, and many minor details and changes when compared to our present day Hebrew Bible. And the scrolls tell us much about the social and religious life of the people of that time.

---

### SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

---

The Samaritans rejected the full scriptures as accepted by most Jews. Instead, they focused on the five books of Moses, called by their Greek name

---

### PHARISEES, SADDUCEES, SAMARITANS, ESSENES, AND OTHERS

---

One of the major changes to Judaism is the rise of various sects. Most of these are in response to the cultural forces around them, principally Hellenism, either for or against.

---

### PHARISEES

---

The origin of this group is not known, but by the time of Hyrcanus (circa 130 BC), they are a recognized group in Josephus' writings. The principles of the group were based on a strict adherence to the Laws of Moses, especially Sabbath, festival, and food laws. By Jesus' day, he considered

*Pentateuch* ('five rolls'). Because their worship tradition shifted north to Samaria, their scriptures reflected that change, and the Samaritan books of Moses speak of worshipping on Mt. Gerizim and of the leadership of Manasseh and Ephraim (the dominant northern tribes). Samaritans still today offer animal sacrifices and keep the laws of Moses, as defined in their scriptures.

---

### OTHER WRITINGS

---

Starting with Ezra, the custom of commenting on scriptures after reading them began. This activity, called *targum* which means 'translation,' became the basis for synagogue worship and Jewish teaching of the scriptures that has survived even to our day. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, rabbis began to write down these scriptural commentaries, and two books were born: the *Mishnah* and the *Talmud*, both collections of the interpretations of the scriptures and Jewish law by leading rabbis.

Pseudepigraphal ('falsely attributed writings') works in many forms come down to us from this intertestamental period of time. These are books like the Book of Enoch, the Testament of Levi, and many more. Many of these books were only found in translations, such as Ethiopic or Syriac, but then many were discovered in Hebrew among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

the Pharisees in a very negative light. Saul was a Pharisee until his conversion to Christianity. Pharisees were really the only group to survive the Roman conquest of Judea, and hence all the later rabbinic teachings in the *Talmud* and *Mishnah* and the majority of Jewish teachings today are Pharisaic in nature.

---

### SADDUCEES

---

Sadducees were typically members of the elite, the ruling class. Many of the priests were Sadducees, and the majority of the Sanhedrin, the rulers of

Jerusalem, were Sadducees. They share a belief with the Samaritans—that only the Law of Moses had the full status of scripture. They did not believe in the resurrection, judgment, heaven, hell, or other beliefs common to most Jews today. They did not celebrate non-Mosaic festivals, such as Purim or Chanukah. They accepted many Greek customs and practices, especially education and art. They disappeared with the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70.

---

### SAMARITANS

---

A mixture of Israelites left in their homes after the Assyrian conquest and the foreign peoples brought into that country, the Samaritans developed an animosity to the Jews when the returning Jews would not let the Samaritans help rebuild the temple in the time of Zerubbabel. That animosity was heightened when the Hasmoneans destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim. By the time of Jesus, the two were strong enemies, such that Jews would travel considerably further just to avoid going through their territory. Jesus did not follow that practice, and taught the Samaritans the gospel. His disciples also did that in Acts, and many Samaritans were converted. The religion survived the Roman conquest and continues to this day, with animal sacrifices on Mt. Gerizim each year at Passover time.

---

### ESSENES

---

Little is known about this group of Jews. The group was apparently founded by a man known as the Teacher of Righteousness. They considered the temple corrupt and did not participate in services there. They held to a different calendar (solar, as opposed to lunar) than other Jews, and thus celebrated feasts on different days. It's generally believed (though not proved) that they were the ones who produced the Dead Sea Scrolls as they lived their separate life in Qumran. If so, then we learn much about them from the Scrolls, including their initiation rites, their prayers and other religious ordinances, their consecration, and many other daily activities.

---

### ZEALOTS

---

The final group to mention is the Zealots, who strongly opposed foreign rule of Judea. More a political group than a religious one—though their motivations were religiously inspired—they led revolts, assassinated Roman leaders and Jewish ones sympathetic to Rome, and otherwise did everything they could to hamper Roman efforts to rule in peace. They were willing to die for their freedom, and many did in battles with the Romans. One of Jesus' apostles was a Zealot (Simon, Luke 6:15). It was the Zealots who made their last stand against Rome at Masada in about A.D. 72, ending with the suicide of nearly all of them as the Romans broke through their defenses.

---

## CONCLUSION

---

It has been a wonderful experience studying the Old Testament with you this year. I have greatly enjoyed the interaction and the study. I have dug deeply into the Old Testament texts again and have greatly benefitted from the effort. I appreciate that

opportunity, and hope you have found joy in the scriptures this year, and look forward to studying the life of our Savior and his early Church leaders next year.

---

## WORKS CONSULTED

---

Abegg, Martin, Jr., Flint, Peter, and Ulrich, Eugene, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (Harper Collins, 1999). (DSSB)

Arnold, Bill T., and Williamson, H. G. M., *Dictionary of the Old Testament Historical Books* (Intervarsity Press, 2005).

- Brown, Francis, Driver, S. R., and Briggs, Charles A., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Hendrickson, 2001). (BDB)
- Brown, S. Kent, and Holzapfel, Richard Neitzel, *The Lost 500 Years*, formerly published as *Between the Testaments* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006).
- Fishbane, Michael, ed., *The Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford University Press, 2004) (JPS for Jewish Publication Society).
- Harris, R. Laird, Archer, Gleason L., and Waltke, Bruce K., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Moody Bible Institute, 1980) (TWOT).
- Holzapfel, Richard Neitzel, Pike, Dana M., and Seely, David Rolph, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament* (Deseret Book, 2009).
- Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F., *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Hendrickson, 2001).
- MacArthur, John, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nelson, 2005).
- Old Testament Student Manual*, 2 vols. (Student Manual).
- Rasmussen, Ellis, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* (Deseret Book, 1993).
- Walton, John H., ed., *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, 5 vols. (Zondervan, 2009) (Zondervan).
- Wayment, Thomas A., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament* (Deseret Book, 2009).