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IN & OUT®

English Standard Version

Malachi

Revering the Lord, Standing in Awe of His Name

IN & OUT®

English Standard Version

MALACHI

REVERING THE LORD, STANDING IN AWE OF HIS NAME

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I Have Loved You

Have you ever questioned God's love for you? If so, what caused you to doubt the sincerity or genuineness of His love?

And what happened? What happens in or to a relationship when love is doubted?

TAKING IT IN

What a book you are about to study for the next three weeks! It is God's final word in the Jewish Bible, the closing book of what the Church calls the Old Testament. There were no books of the Bible written in the 400 years between Malachi and the Gospels. No accounts of prophets bringing God's Word to His people Israel as in former days. Silence from God. Like Amos prophesied to the northern kingdom in the days of Jeroboam, they experienced "a famine for hearing the words of the LORD" (8:11).

Yet God is sovereign, omniscient. He knows what He is going to do. Silence will follow these final words. So what does He say through Malachi—and why? What does He want the people to think about? To remember? (By the way, Malachi means "My messenger.")

This is what you are about to discover for yourself as you inductively study this short but incredibly timely book. Application to the people of God today couldn't be more needed. Therefore, we suggest that you begin each day with prayer, asking God to use this book to show any area of weakness that's causing you to stray from Him and His precepts of life.

1. Your first assignment is twofold:

    a. Prayerfully read the book of Malachi in a setting where there is no distraction. As you read it, remember these are God's words, not man's. They were written by holy men of God under the divine inspiration of God, thus they are "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16). Man did not invent them; rather these holy men carried along by the Spirit of God spoke from God as 2 Peter 1:20-21 tells us.

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If it is not too distracting, it would be good for you to read the book aloud, slowly, thoughtfully. Hearing the words has a powerful impact. As you read, color every occurrence of *says the Lord (of hosts)*. Some of us use yellow (our color for God). Use the text of Malachi which is printed out as Observation Worksheets in the Appendix of this study.

b. Now read Malachi again.

   1) Notice Malachi 1:1. According to this verse, what is the book of Malachi and who is it delivered to?

   2) Oracle means "burden."[1]

c. As you come to every *but you say,* underline or mark it in a distinctive way or color so that it pops and you can see its every occurrence throughout Malachi. (Also mark *by saying, when you say, you have said.*)

d. Now look at every place you marked "but you say." Using the chart at the end of the lesson, list what you learn.

e. Finally, think about what you've observed. How would you describe the spiritual condition of these people? Record your insights below in as few words as possible. Do you relate to any of this?

[1]James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996, H4853.

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2. What is the timing, the historical setting of the book of Malachi? Let's explore that so you can see *when*—in the history of Israel—this is being said.

   a. If you are just growing in your knowledge of God's Word and are not familiar with Israel's history, you might want to look at the chart "Israel's Division and Captivity," found in the Appendix. This chart will take you from the division of the kingdom into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, through their captivities, and beyond the seventy years of exile or captivity of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

   b. In light of all you've read in Malachi, take time now to look at another chart in the Appendix that is taken from *The New Inductive Study Bible:* "The Rulers and Prophets of Malachi."

      1) Record where, according to this chart, Malachi fits in time.

      2) Nehemiah is a historical book; Malachi is a prophetic book from a messenger of God sent at a specific time to speak for Him. What's the relationship between Malachi and Nehemiah?

   c. Looking at the events of Ezra and Nehemiah on "The Rulers and Prophets of Malachi," what do you learn about the state of Jerusalem and the temple that had been destroyed when Babylon conquered Judah?

   d. What part of temple worship is mentioned in Malachi?

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3. Now that we have an overview of Malachi, let's observe chapter 1 more closely so that we can see exactly what is happening.

   On the back cover of this workbook there is a **Key Word Bookmark** that serves two purposes.

   First, it lists key words which appear throughout the Bible and gives you suggested ways of marking them so that you can be consistent throughout the Word of God. A **key word** helps unlock the meaning of the text and is frequently repeated. Please note, the markings on the bookmark are merely suggestions—there is no right or wrong way to mark.

   Second, on the other side of the bookmark you will find space to list key words used in Malachi. Mark or color them as you will on your Observation Worksheet. Then you can use this as a reminder of the words you want to mark.

   a. Now let's observe Malachi chapter 1. Mark the following key words and their synonyms or pronouns in distinctive ways. Throughout this workbook, words with an asterisk denote those with a suggested marking on the bookmark.

      1) *love**
      2) *Esau, Edom*
      3) *priests*
      4) *sacrifice, offering*
      5) *despise(d)*
      6) *polluted*
      7) *profane*
      8) *fear(ed)*
      9) *My name (Your name)*
      10) *curse* (cursed)*
      11) anything that tells you *when* (references to time)* or *where* (geographical locations).*

   b. What do you think the main theme of Malachi chapter 1 is? How would you summarize its content using words from the text? Record this on the "Malachi at a Glance" chart found in the Appendix.

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4. Now let's look at the first five verses of Malachi 1. As you look and think about these verses, what point is God making and why? How is He making it?

5. Let's get a little biblical history on Esau and learn why he is also referred to as Edom.

   a. Genesis 25:19-34—Just do a read-through and note below who Esau is and why he is called Edom.

   b. Genesis 28:6-9 (Ishmael was the son of Abraham by Sarah's maid Hagar.)

6. Now let's go back to Malachi 1:3-4. The questions are simple, but answering them will help you make sure you've observed the text accurately.

   a. What has God done to Edom? For how long?

   b. What might Edom say?

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c. Who will prevail, and how do you know this?

7. Read Malachi 1 again using your Observation Worksheet.

   a. Who are verses 6-14 directed to?

   b. Now, paying attention to the key words which you have so carefully marked, what are the *main* issues the Lord deals with in these verses? List them below.

   c. Read Malachi 1:11, 14. What do you learn from marking *My name?*

   d. How does Malachi 1:5 relate to Malachi 1:11, 14?

Well done. Just two weeks to go and you will have a great grasp of the book of Malachi and God's reason for including it in His Book. Remember, the things written in the Old Testament are "for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

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LIVING IT OUT

1. Romans 9:6-13 quotes God's words about Esau in Malachi 1:2-3. How does God support His right to choose?

2. The whole vision of Obadiah concerns Edom, but he's also mentioned in the New Testament. Read the following passages and note what you learn about Edom or Esau.

   a. Obadiah 1:4, 10-16

   b. Hebrews 12:15-17

3. Now . . .

   a. How does this make you feel about God? From a strictly human perspective, what does it call into question about God? How might someone object who does not have a full understanding of God's sovereignty? It's all right to write it down; God knows even our thoughts and they don't scare or shock Him. He's God!

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b. How would you answer such an objection from the text? God has it covered. Read Romans 9:6-21. What does the Word of God tell you?

c. Where do you see God's sovereignty in Romans 9:6-21?

d. So what does faith do? What will you do with all this, beloved of God?

Whenever there was a problem, God sent His messenger to warn His people. O Beloved, do you realize that this is one of the roles of the Word of God today? The things which were written beforehand were written for our warning, for God does not change. Sin is always sin, no matter the culture.

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BUT I SAY/ BUT YOU SAY						
	Scripture	**God's charge**	**Group addressed**	**Their response**	**God's reply/action to the response**	**Theme (main subject)**

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MALACHI 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THE oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.

2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob

3 but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert."

4 If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.' "

5 Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!"

6 "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'

7 "By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that the LORD'S table may be despised.

8 "When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts.

9 "And now entreat the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

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10 "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.

11 "For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts.

12 "But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised.

13 "But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD.

14 "Cursed be the cheat who has a male in his flock, and vows it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

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MALACHI 2
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

"AND now, O priests, this command is for you.
2 "If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to
my name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you
and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already cursed them,
because you do not lay it to heart.
3 "Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces,
the dung of your offerings, and you shall be taken away with it.
4 "So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my
covenant with Levi may stand, says the LORD of hosts.
5 "My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to
him. It was a covenant of fear, and he feared me. He stood in awe of my
name.
6 "True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips.
He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from
iniquity.
7 "For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should
seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of
hosts.
8 "But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to
stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,
says the LORD of hosts,
9 and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch
as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction."
10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why then are
we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

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11 Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel
and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD,
which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.
12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob any descendant of the
man who does this, who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!
13 And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears,
with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or
accepts it with favor from your hand.
14 But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was witness
between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been
faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.
15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?
And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard
yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of
your youth.
16 "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the
LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the
LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be
faithless."
17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, "How have
we wearied him?" By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in the
sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is
the God of justice?"

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MALACHI 3

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

"BEHOLD, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before
me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple;
and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is
coming, says the LORD of hosts.
2 "But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he
appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.
3 "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the
sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring
offerings in righteousness to the LORD.
4 "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD
as in the days of old and as in former years.
5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness
against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear
falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the
widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner,
and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.
6 "For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are
not consumed.
7 "From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes
and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the
LORD of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?'
8 "Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have
we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions.
9 "You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation
of you.

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10 "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.
11 "I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts.
12 "Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.
13 "Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have we spoken against you?'
14 "You have said, 'It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts?
15 'And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.' "
16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.
17 "They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.
18 "Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

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MALACHI 4

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

"FOR behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

2 "But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

3 "And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

4 "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

6 "And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

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MALACHI AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Author:

Date:

Purpose:

Key Words:

Chapter Themes
1
2
3
4

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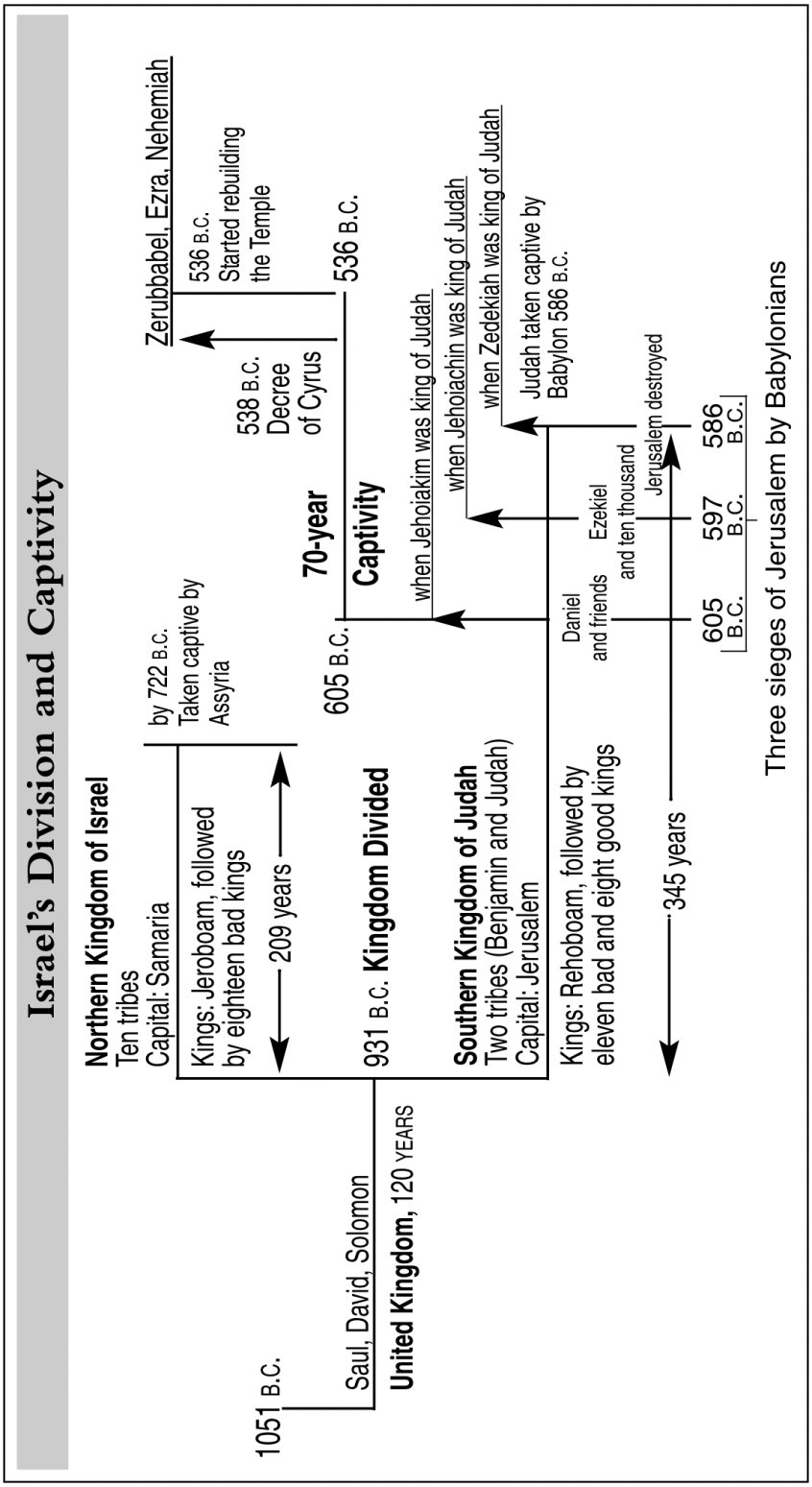
Israel's Division and Captivity
1051 B.C.
Saul, David, Solomon
United Kingdom, 120 YEARS
Northern Kingdom of Israel
Ten tribes
Capital: Samaria
Kings: Jeroboam, followed by eighteen bad kings
209 years
by 722 B.C.
Taken captive by Assyria
931 B.C. Kingdom Divided
Southern Kingdom of Judah
Two tribes (Benjamin and Judah)
Capital: Jerusalem
Kings: Rehoboam, followed by eleven bad and eight good kings
345 years
605 B.C.
70-year Captivity
538 B.C.
Decree of Cyrus
536 B.C.
Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah
536 B.C.
Started rebuilding the Temple
when Jehoiakim was king of Judah
when Jehoiachin was king of Judah
when Zedekiah was king of Judah
Daniel and friends
Ezekiel and ten thousand
Judah taken captive by Babylon 586 B.C.
Jerusalem destroyed
605 B.C.
597 B.C.
586 B.C.
Three sieges of Jerusalem by Babylonians

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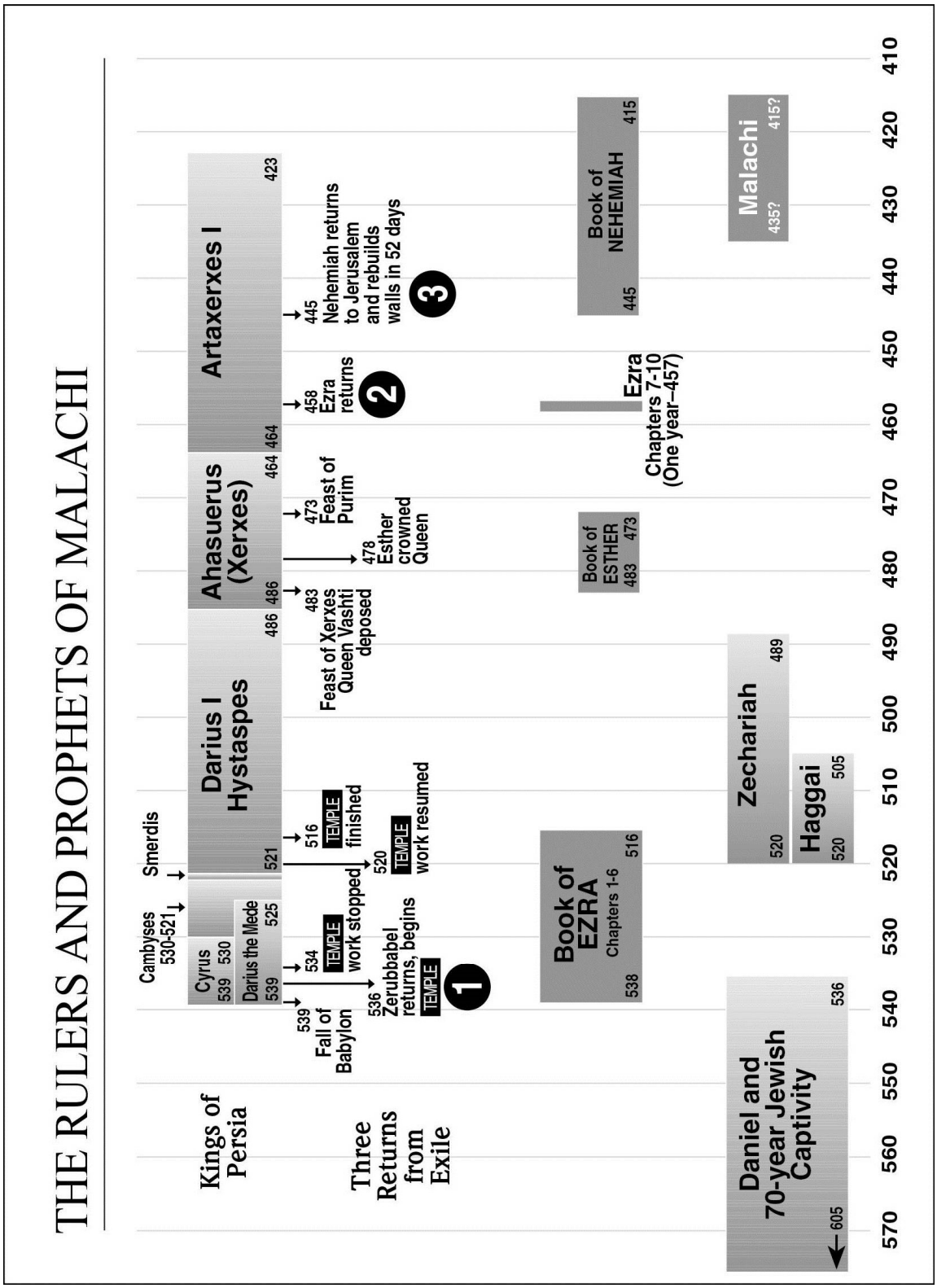
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536 Zerubbabel returns, begins TEMPLE
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