

# 3 TENTS, TEMPLES, PALACES 4

This study is outlined generally on the ICI course of the same name, authored by Rick C. Howard. Further information on the course can be obtained by contacting Global University, 1211 S. Glenstone, Springfield, Missouri 65804.

## 5 Lesson 10 6

### 7 THE RETURN AND RESTORATION OF ISRAEL FOLLOWING 8 THE CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON 9

10 Around 540 B.C. To The End Of The Old Testament  
11

12 Background:

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14 721 years before Christ, the northern kingdom of Israel was conquered and taken into  
15 captivity by the Assyrian Empire (capital: Nineveh). Then....586 years before Christ,  
16 the southern kingdom of Judah was conquered and taken into captivity by the  
17 Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar.  
18

19 It appeared that Babylon as an empire would last for ages. It did not. Babylon was  
20 ruled by Nabopolassar from 620 to 605 B.C.....then by his son Nebuchadnezzar from  
21 605 to 562 B.C.....who was followed by Evil Merodach whose reign was very short, 562-  
22 560 B.C....then Neriglissar who reigned only from 560 to 556 B.C. and the final king of  
23 Babylon was Nabonidus who ruled from 556 to 539 B.C. when Babylon was defeated by  
24 the Medo-Persian coalition.  
25

26 BELSHAZZAR was the regent king of Babylon only while his father Nabonidus was  
27 away on other business. Belshazzar was a fool who desecrated those things thought  
28 and believed holy unto the Lord. Daniel was there when Babylon collapsed overnight.  
29 Here is his first-hand account of that awful night:  
30

#### 31 Daniel 5:1-8

32 A number of years later, King Belshazzar gave a great feast for a thousand of his  
33 nobles and drank wine with them. [2] While Belshazzar was drinking, he gave  
34 orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar,  
35 had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem, so that he and his nobles, his wives, and  
36 his concubines might drink from them. [3] So they brought these gold cups taken  
37 from the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and  
38

1 his concubines drank from them. [4] They drank toasts from them to honor their  
2 idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

3 [5] At that very moment they saw the fingers of a human hand writing on the  
4 plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand  
5 as it wrote, [6] and his face turned pale with fear. Such terror gripped him that his  
6 knees knocked together and his legs gave way beneath him.

7 [7] The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be  
8 brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this  
9 writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and  
10 will wear a gold chain around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the  
11 kingdom!" [8] But when all the king's wise men came in, none of them could read  
12 the writing or tell him what it meant.

13  
14 Then somebody remembered Daniel, the man of God, and brought him before the king.  
15 To the shock of Belshazzar, God revealed to His prophet exactly what was about to  
16 happen before the sun rose the next morning:

#### 17 18 **Daniel 5:24-31**

19 So God has sent this hand to write a message.

20 [25] "This is the message that was written: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin. [26] This  
21 is what these words mean:

22 Mene means 'numbered'—God has numbered the days of your reign and has  
23 brought it to an end.

24 [27] Tekel means 'weighed'—you have been weighed on the balances and have  
25 failed the test.

26 [28] Parsin means 'divided'—your kingdom has been divided and given to the  
27 Medes and Persians."

28 [29] Then at Belshazzar's command, Daniel was dressed in purple robes, a gold  
29 chain was hung around his neck, and he was proclaimed the third highest ruler in  
30 the kingdom.

31 [30] That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed. [31] And Darius  
32 the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of sixty-two.

33  
34 Overnight, the Babylonian Empire ended and the Medo Persian Empire began. Now we  
35 encounter a real dilemma in scripture - a seeming contradiction. In the above 30<sup>th</sup>  
36 verse of Daniel 5, the old prophet tells us that "Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at  
37 the age of 62." But Ezra, the scribe, informs us:

#### 38 39 **Ezra 1:1-4**

40 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, the Lord fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecy

1 by stirring the heart of Cyrus to put this proclamation into writing and to send it  
2 throughout his kingdom: "This is what King Cyrus of Persia says: The Lord, the  
3 God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to  
4 build him a Temple at Jerusalem in the land of Judah. [3] All of you who are his  
5 people may return to Jerusalem in Judah to rebuild this Temple of the Lord, the  
6 God of Israel, who lives in Jerusalem. And may your God be with you! [4] Those  
7 who live in any place where Jewish survivors are found should contribute toward  
8 their expenses by supplying them with silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and  
9 livestock, as well as a freewill offering for the Temple of God in Jerusalem."  
10  
11

I am not straining gnats here. This is a problem. Was the conquest of Babylon led by Cyrus?  
Or was it led by Darius? I have on occasion heard it preached that they were one and the same  
man. Not true! **Cyrus lived from 580-529 B.C. Darius I lived from 522 to 486 B.C.**  
**They were not even alive at the same time! This poses a big problem to me because if I**  
**cannot reconcile Old Testament history with biblical history, one of those sources is**  
**incorrect.**

12  
13  
14 Here are the facts:  
15

16 1. Cyrus was man who founded Persia (Iran) by uniting two original Iranian tribes, the  
17 Medes and the Persians. He was known as a great conqueror; however, unlike many  
18 other conquerors, Cyrus is best remembered for his UNPRECEDENTED TOLERANCE  
19 AND MAGNANIMOUS ATTITUDE TOWARD THOSE HE DEFEATED. It was his  
20 victory over Babylon in which we saw his character as a liberator.  
21

22 Around 540 B.C., he allowed close to 50,000 Jews to leave Babylon and return to  
23 Israel and Jerusalem. More Jews could have come but chose to remain in Babylon - or  
24 Medo Persia as it became known. *It is interesting to note that many people today still*  
25 *do not choose liberty but are content to live in Satan's chains.* Cyrus was known to the  
26 Greeks as a "law-giver" and to the Jews as "the anointed of the Lord."  
27

28 2. I had to contend with Daniel 5:31 who recorded the death of Belshazzar the very  
29 night of the Medo-Persian invasion. He reported Belshazzar's death that very same  
30 night. Then he reported that Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of 62.  
31 Aha! He did not report that Darius became the leader that very day.  
32

33 Here is what history records: **"Persia dominated the land beginning with CYRUS**  
34 **THE GREAT in 539 B.C. and kept expanding its territories. It is said that Cyrus**  
35

1 was the ‘father,’ his son Cambyses was a ‘master,’ and Darius was the ‘shopkeeper.’

2  
3 So how did Cyrus conquer Babylon - a city deemed unconquerable because of its size  
4 and the great wall around it? Cyrus had led his Medo-Persian forces across India and  
5 the east. Then he came to Babylon. While Belshazzar, celebrated in a drunken orgy  
6 inside the city, mocking God by drinking out of the Temple’s golden cups, THE  
7 PERSIANS DAMNED UP A TRIBUTARY OF THE EUPHRATES RIVER,  
8 MARCHED INTO THE SEEMING-INVINCIBLE BABYLON CITY AND  
9 DEFEATED THEM. This fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy: **Isaiah 45:13** **I will raise up**  
10 **Cyrus to fulfill my righteous purpose, and I will guide all his actions. He will restore**  
11 **my city and free my captive people—and not for a reward! I, the Lord Almighty,**  
12 **have spoken!"** That was written nearly 150 years before it happened!

13  
14 One of the facts that separates the Bible from other alleged holy books is the fulfillment of  
15 prophecy to the letter!

16 3. Darius came along later and, contrary to Cyrus, was an abuser of power. For  
17 example, on New Year’s Day, Darius expected gifts from his subjects from every area of  
18 his empire. However, he improved the empire in many ways. He set up a good  
19 transportation system, with hotels or inns every 15 miles, the first postal service and  
20 introduced useful crops to new areas.

21  
22 IT WAS THIS DARIUS WHO TOOK A LIKING TO DANIEL (WHO BY NOW  
23 WAS ELDERLY) AND WHO WAS FOOLED BY DANIEL’S ENEMIES INTO  
24 SIGNING INTO LAW A DECREE THAT FOR A CERTAIN TIME PEOPLE MUST  
25 PRAY ONLY TO HIM. IF THEY BROKE THAT LAW THEY WOULD BE  
26 THROWN TO THE LIONS. DANIEL CONTINUED PRAYING TO GOD AND  
27 WAS, INDEED, SENT TO SPEND A NIGHT IN A DEN OF LIONS. GOD  
28 PROTECTED HIM AND MOVED DARIUS TO REPENTANCE.

29  
30 Cyrus, years earlier, had allowed Jews to return home to rebuild Jerusalem. Their  
31 efforts had stalled out and Darius encouraged Jews still living in exile to return to Israel  
32 and rebuild their nation.

33  
34 Perhaps, as we study together tonight, the Lord will spotlight areas in our own lives  
35 that need to be mended or rebuilt. Let this be not just a history lesson - or even a Bible  
36 study alone, but a time of introspection, a time of rebuilding the walls of our hearts.

## THE THREE REBUILDING EXPEDITIONS

The process of return and rebuilding covered a time span of about 100 years total. During this century, three major expeditions of Jews from Persia to Israel occurred. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah describe these events.

### The First Expedition-538-536 B.C.

When Persian King Cyrus decreed that all political prisoners were free to return to their homelands, it was an opportunity for the Jews to return to Israel after a 70-year captivity. Scripture informs us that only 49,697 Jews actually returned. This was a tiny percentage of those living under Persian rule. Many of those who remained had settled in and were prosperous. Cyrus provided a safe and non-threatening environment in which to live.

So what prompted the nearly-50,000 to return? **Ezra 1:5 Then God stirred the hearts of the priests and Levites and the leaders of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple of the Lord.**

Although it was a distance of only 600 miles or so to the west, the journey was difficult and required about four months of travel time. The people brought with them many things, most provided by King Cyrus:

### **Ezra 1:6-11**

**And all their neighbors assisted by giving them vessels of silver and gold, supplies for the journey, and livestock. They gave them many choice gifts in addition to all the freewill offerings.**

**[7] King Cyrus himself brought out the valuable items which King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Lord's Temple in Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his own gods. [8] Cyrus directed Mithredath, the treasurer of Persia, to count these items and present them to Sheshbazzar, the leader of the exiles returning to Judah.**

**[9] These were the items Cyrus donated:**

**gold trays — 30**

**silver trays — 1,000**

**silver censers — 29**

**[10] gold bowls — 30**

**silver bowls — 410**

**other items — 1,000**

**[11] In all, 5,400 gold and silver items were turned over to Sheshbazzar to take back**

1 **to Jerusalem when the exiles returned there from Babylon.**

2  
3 When the 50,000 Jews arrived back in their homeland of Israel and in the city of  
4 Jerusalem, they set up an altar and began laying the foundation of the Temple (Ezra 3).  
5 There was, of course, plenty of stone for construction purposes, but the wooden timbers  
6 had to be brought down from Lebanon.

7  
8 There was terrific opposition from enemies and for 16 years the rebuilding of the temple  
9 stopped (Ezra 4)

10  
11 **Ezra 4:1-5**

12 **The enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were rebuilding a**  
13 **Temple to the Lord, the God of Israel. [2] So they approached Zerubbabel and the**  
14 **other leaders and said, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God just as you**  
15 **do. We have sacrificed to him ever since King Esarhaddon of Assyria brought us**  
16 **here."**

17 **[3] But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the other leaders of Israel replied, "You may**  
18 **have no part in this work, for we have nothing in common. We alone will build the**  
19 **Temple for the Lord, the God of Israel, just as King Cyrus of Persia commanded**  
20 **us."**

21 **[4] Then the local residents tried to discourage and frighten the people of Judah**  
22 **to keep them from their work. [5] They bribed agents to work against them and to**  
23 **frustrate their aims. This went on during the entire reign of King Cyrus of Persia**  
24 **and lasted until King Darius of Persia took the throne.**

25  
26  

*The work of God is seldom easy. Weariness can set in. Disillusionment. Opposition. It is tempting to just say, "I'm done with this." Or.... "Someone else can finish this task."*  
Whatever you do for the Lord is in all probability going to be met with opposition. Satan does not just stand by the wayside, groaning and wringing his hands, when he sees God's people obeying the Lord's commands. Satan attacks, condemns, undermines and threatens. As we will see with Nehemiah in a few moments, he would not take the time to even come down from the wall to speak to the enemies. He was too busy doing what God told him to do.

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28  
29 During this time of opposition, God used the prophets HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH to  
30 inspire the people to begin working again. **Zech. 4:6 Then he answered and spake**  
31 **unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by**  
32 **might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.**  
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The Bible student should observe that something was conspicuously missing in this post-exile Temple: THE ARK OF THE COVENANT. After the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., we never see or hear of the Ark again. Some people believe it still exists somewhere. Most scholars do not believe that it does.

THE SECOND EXPEDITION (Ezra chapters 7 through 10)

This second wave came about 60 years after the first one, around 470 B.C. It was led by a scribe and priest named Ezra. The temple had been completed in Jerusalem, although it was in no way comparable to Solomon’s great Temple which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. Ezra’s mission primarily was a spiritual one. When he arrived in Jerusalem he observed heart-breaking abuses in the worship and practice of the people who had settled in that area. He stopped those abuses and made many reforms.

QUEEN ESTHER

Between chapters six and seven of Ezra, there is a gap of about sixty years. It was during this time that the story of Esther occurred. She was the queen of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus in Hebrew) Esther became queen about 478 B.C.

THE THIRD EXPEDITION (Nehemiah chapters 1 through 13)

**Neh. 1:1-4**

**These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah.**

**In late autumn of the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. [2] Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had survived the captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem. [3] They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been burned."**

**[4] When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.**

**Neh. 2:1-20**

**Early the following spring, during the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was serving the king his wine. I had never appeared sad in his presence before this**

1 time. [2] So the king asked me, "Why are you so sad? You aren't sick, are you? You  
2 look like a man with deep troubles."

3 Then I was badly frightened, [3] but I replied, "Long live the king! Why shouldn't  
4 I be sad? For the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins, and the gates have  
5 been burned down."

6 [4] The king asked, "Well, how can I help you?"

7 With a prayer to the God of heaven, [5] I replied, "If it please Your Majesty and  
8 if you are pleased with me, your servant, send me to Judah to rebuild the city where  
9 my ancestors are buried."

10 [6] The king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked, "How long will you be  
11 gone? When will you return?" So the king agreed, and I set a date for my  
12 departure.

13 [7] I also said to the king, "If it please Your Majesty, give me letters to the  
14 governors of the province west of the Euphrates River, instructing them to let me  
15 travel safely through their territories on my way to Judah. [8] And please send a  
16 letter to Asaph, the manager of the king's forest, instructing him to give me timber.  
17 I will need it to make beams for the gates of the Temple fortress, for the city walls,  
18 and for a house for myself." And the king granted these requests, because the  
19 gracious hand of God was on me.

20 [9] When I came to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates River, I  
21 delivered the king's letters to them. The king, I should add, had sent along army  
22 officers and horsemen to protect me. [10] But when Sanballat the Horonite and  
23 Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of my arrival, they were very angry that  
24 someone had come who was interested in helping Israel.

25 [11] Three days after my arrival at Jerusalem, [12] I slipped out during the night,  
26 taking only a few others with me. I had not told anyone about the plans God had put  
27 in my heart for Jerusalem. We took no pack animals with us, except the donkey that  
28 I myself was riding. [13] I went out through the Valley Gate, past the Jackal's Well,  
29 and over to the Dung Gate to inspect the broken walls and burned gates. [14] Then I  
30 went to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but my donkey couldn't get  
31 through the rubble. [15] So I went up the Kidron Valley instead, inspecting the wall  
32 before I turned back and entered again at the Valley Gate.

33 [16] The city officials did not know I had been out there or what I was doing, for I  
34 had not yet said anything to anyone about my plans. I had not yet spoken to the  
35 religious and political leaders, the officials, or anyone else in the administration. [17]  
36 But now I said to them, "You know full well the tragedy of our city. It lies in ruins,  
37 and its gates are burned. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and rid ourselves of  
38 this disgrace!" [18] Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been  
39 on me, and about my conversation with the king.

40 They replied at once, "Good! Let's rebuild the wall!" So they began the good  
41

1 work.

2 [19] But when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arab heard of our plan, they  
3 scoffed contemptuously. "What are you doing, rebelling against the king like this?"  
4 they asked.

5 [20] But I replied, "The God of heaven will help us succeed. We his servants will  
6 start rebuilding this wall. But you have no stake or claim in Jerusalem."  
7

8 I love Nehemiah. He had both PASSION and PURPOSE. His passion was to rebuild  
9 the walls of Jerusalem and his purpose would not be deterred by his opponents, led by  
10 Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem. In only 52 days, the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt in  
11 spite of the opposition. After the construction, Nehemiah took steps to bring stability  
12 and increase the number of people who lived in Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 7:4-5 and 11:1-  
13 2). He caused the wealthy to stop oppressing the poor and introduced other reforms.  
14 *But his greatest work was to re-establish the national life of the Jews upon the foundation*  
15 *of the written law. (Nehemiah 10:28-39)*  
16

## 17 THE PROPHETS BRING HOPE AND RESTORATION

18  
19 As we have seen, the task of rebuilding and spiritual rebirth had much opposition. There  
20 were those on the outside who did not want to see God's work restored. There were  
21 those on the inside who became easily discouraged. But during this time of rebuilding,  
22 God had a word for His people. BOTH HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH prophesied  
23 during the years the temple was being rebuilt. Their messages were meaningful to the  
24 people at that time but were also revelations of those things that would come in the  
25 future.  
26

## 27 HAGGAI

28  
29 Work on the rebuilding of the temple had stopped for nearly ten years when Haggai gave  
30 his first message. He rebuked the people for their lack of concern for God's house.  
31

### 32 Haggai 1:2-11

33 "This is what the Lord Almighty says: The people are saying, 'The time has not  
34 yet come to rebuild the Lord's house—the Temple.' "

35 [3] So the Lord sent this message through the prophet Haggai: [4] "Why are you  
36 living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins? [5] This is what the Lord  
37 Almighty says: Consider how things are going for you! [6] You have planted much  
38 but harvested little. You have food to eat, but not enough to fill you up. You have  
39 wine to drink, but not enough to satisfy your thirst. You have clothing to wear, but  
40 not enough to keep you warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting  
41

1 them in pockets filled with holes!

2 [7] "This is what the Lord Almighty says: Consider how things are going for you!  
3 [8] Now go up into the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild my house. Then I will  
4 take pleasure in it and be honored, says the Lord. [9] You hoped for rich harvests,  
5 but they were poor. And when you brought your harvest home, I blew it away.  
6 Why? Because my house lies in ruins, says the Lord Almighty, while you are all  
7 busy building your own fine houses. [10] That is why the heavens have withheld the  
8 dew and the earth has withheld its crops. [11] I have called for a drought on your  
9 fields and hills—a drought to wither the grain and grapes and olives and all your  
10 other crops, a drought to starve both you and your cattle and to ruin everything you  
11 have worked so hard to get."

12  
13 Haggai's challenging ministry stirred the people to begin rebuilding. But soon they  
14 became discouraged once again and God had yet another message for them:

### 15 Haggai 2:1-9

16 Then on October 17 of that same year, the Lord sent another message through the  
17 prophet Haggai. [2] "Say this to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah,  
18 and to Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of God's people  
19 there in the land: [3] Is there anyone who can remember this house—the Temple—  
20 as it was before? In comparison, how does it look to you now? It must seem like  
21 nothing at all! [4] But now take courage, Zerubbabel, says the Lord. Take courage,  
22 Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Take courage, all you people still left in  
23 the land, says the Lord. Take courage and work, for I am with you, says the Lord  
24 Almighty. [5] My Spirit remains among you, just as I promised when you came out  
25 of Egypt. So do not be afraid.

26 [6] "For this is what the Lord Almighty says: In just a little while I will again  
27 shake the heavens and the earth. I will shake the oceans and the dry land, too. [7] I  
28 will shake all the nations, and the treasures of all the nations will come to this  
29 Temple. I will fill this place with glory, says the Lord Almighty. [8] The silver is  
30 mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord Almighty. [9] The future glory of this  
31 Temple will be greater than its past glory, says the Lord Almighty. And in this place  
32 I will bring peace. I, the Lord Almighty, have spoken!"  
33  
34

35 And so thus challenged, the people completed the work on the structure *which, years*  
36 *later, King Herod the Great would modify and enlarge to what should have been one of*  
37 *the ancient seven wonders of the world. That would become (400 years later) the*  
38 *Temple that Jesus knew and that the Romans eventually destroyed (as Jesus predicted) in*  
39 *70 A.D. It has never been rebuilt.*  
40  
41

## ZECHARIAH

The book of Zechariah is not long - 14 chapters - but it contains some of the most prominent and important prophecies in all the Old Testament. The rebuilding of the Temple which had begun after Haggai's messages had stopped once again. It was then that Zechariah received a series of eight visions concerning the reasons why the rebuilding had stopped. (Zechariah chapters 1-8) He was also given some glorious promises of the future (Zechariah chapters 9-14).

Among the reasons for the work stoppage:

1. A sense of futility and hopelessness. The Jews saw themselves as unimportant. They felt their work did not really matter much. But God said He Himself would come to Jerusalem (which Jesus did!) And would claim the city as His own (1:17).
2. The results of sin and disobedience. God showed Zechariah that He would overthrow the nations that He had allowed to bring judgment upon His people (1:20-21).
3. A realizatin of condemnation and guilt. God showed Zechariah the high priest Joshua dressed in dirty garments being accused by Satan. But Joshua's garments were replaced by new ones and God promised to remove the guilt of the land. (3:5, 9)
4. A feeling of powerlessness. Zechariah was given a message of encouragement for Zerubbabel and all others: "You will succeed, not by military might or by your own strength, but by my spirit." (4:6)

Throughout the rest of the book are prophecies regarding Israel's future, including the glorious second coming of Messiah and the Millennial age.

### MALACHI BRINGS GOD'S LAST WARNING TO HIS PEOPLE BEFORE THE COMING OF HIS SON JESUS

Malachi is sometimes called "the little Old Testament" because it contains in short form several of the major themes of the Old Testament: God's choice of Israel, Israel's sins and disobedience, the importance of obeying the law, and the coming of the Lord. It is probable that Malachi wrote his message after many years had passed following the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. **THEIR FIRST ENTHUSIASM HAD LEFT THEM.** They were again religiously cold and morally loose.

1 Malachi spoke as a reformer, yet he also encouraged the people of God with a vision of  
2 the future. He prophesied that “the prophet Elijah” would appear before the coming of  
3 the day of the Lord (Malachi 3:1, 4:5). I personally believe that was fulfilled with the  
4 coming of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. Four centuries later those  
5 prophecies were fulfilled.

## 6 7 THE INTER-TESTAMENT PERIOD

8  
9 *There were 400 years that elapsed between Malachi and Matthew (and the other*  
10 *Gospels). During that four century period, the world went through massive political*  
11 *upheavals including the collapse of Persia, the rise of Greece, Alexander the Great, and*  
12 *the formation of the Roman Empire. We will study that time in our next series which*  
13 *concerns the New Testament. The next series will be **THE KINGDOM, THE POWER***  
14 ***AND THE GLORY** and will begin on December 10<sup>th</sup>, and continue each Wednesday*  
15 *thereafter.*