

The 16 Writing Prophets on the Prophet Messiah

Actually the full title of this chapter, the last of this volume 5, would be “The 16 Writing Prophets on the Prophet Messiah and Other Related Matters of The Message”. This is a continuation from the previous chapter, primarily on the Prophet Messiah, and on what all the OT had to say on Christ as the Prophet Messiah; however this chapter begins specifically with the Prophet Messiah and other related matters of The Message of the Writing Prophets with the 12 Minor Prophets and 4 Major Prophets {little will be included on Isaiah and Psalms as we have so extensively looked at them in previous chapters, and the space for this book comes quickly to a close, my wife only being able with our present equipment to bind 300 pages in one volume.} I would remind you as before that although most of the history of God’s people as recorded in the OT and in particular in the Writing Prophet is depressing, the messages God gave the Prophets to share, often direct quotes from Him, are depressing as they reveal so many continuous shortcomings and covenant violations of the people throughout their approximately 1500 years plus of history as a nation and a beginning nation; but part of The Message, as we have chosen to call it in the title of this volume 5 of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, is the good news and encouraging news--the most awesome and joyful news ever brought by the messengers in the world--is the Prophet Messiah, with all the implications of His teachings and salvation provision while on earth, and all the implications of the full salvation to come in eternity. There is no greater subject and message than that of the Prophet Messiah, chosen word though not often grouped together for the Lord Jesus Christ in the OT.

16-8: Listening More Important than Sacrifice.

You will recall in the Magic Outline of chapter 5, that topic #8 was "Listening More Important than Sacrifice", starting with some of the historical books, but not too many, that are quoted in the NT, then proceeding only with the pre-Isaiah Prophets like Jonah, Joel, Amos, and Hosea; and then getting into Isaiah 1-39 before a change label for a heading of "What Happened to the Jews as the Chosen People of God". (Of course we know now based on the Predictive History of Daniel; but we yet to look for verification of the probational covenant with a 7 year probational time in the Prophets around and after Daniel, primarily in the post-exile Prophets, which are yet to be covered in this chapter.) Where we were, subheading wise, as we come to the first of the minor Prophets is on the subject listed below. We will not dwell on these pre-Isaiah or Prophets of the Assyrian period, as we must save space for those after Daniel.

III. Listening Signs from the Early Prophets and Jesus.

Jonah

1. The Listening Signs for This Generation is Both Solomon, Jonah and Jesus as recorded in the Bible while in Niniveh's generation it was the Prophet Jonah and in Jesus time it was Him the Prophet Messiah: Jonah 3:1-4 and Luke 11:29.

Joel

2. Listen to the Apostle Peter on the first day of Pentecost after Christ's Ascension as he quotes from the Prophet Joel to explain both what happened on that day, and what would happen from this the beginning of the last days until the end of time: Joel 2:28-31 and Acts 2:16-21.

3. Listen to the Prophet Joel start the ball rolling on the prime theme of the Bible about eschatology, the One Day of the LORD: Joel 3:13, Mark 4:29, and Mark 13:24.

IV. Listen to God Himself tell in the Bible to what extent the nation of Israel was and was not His chosen people.

Amos

1. Immediately after rescue from Egyptian bondage God turned away from most of Israel, giving them up to worship the host of heaven; Amos 5:25-27 and Acts 7:42.

2. God takes a people for His name from among the Gentiles: Amos 9:11,12 and Acts 15:15-17.

Hosea

3. These same Gentiles shall be called sons of the living God: Hosea 2:23 and Romans 9:25,26.

Isaiah 1-39

4. If God had not chosen a small remnant out of Israel they would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah: Isaiah 1:9 and Romans 9:29.

V. Listen to God Himself in His book on matters or eschatology, or last things.

1. You must first of all see the double nature of predictions, actually the full spectrum or the way God uses something more immediate in the future to explain and get attention for the more distant, always dealing in blessing and/or punishment in the same general manner when His covenants are broken, and as agreed to by every generation that had the Book of the Covenant read in their presence, or were reminded of it many other ways in their daily life, as you know they were} as related to eschatology as when the Old Testament said, "I will call my Son out of Egypt." (Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15): (1). First it is the nation of Israel as the Son; and (2). Then it is Christ as the Son, as under the care of Joseph and Mary and after being warned by an angle in a dream, fled into Egypt shortly after birth in Nazareth to escape the wrath of King Herod.

2. Immortality and the sting of death: Hosea 13:14 and Isaiah 29:8.

3. Day of the LORD: Isaiah 2:3,12,18, and 19, and I Corinthians 14:36, II Thessalonians 2:2, and II Thessalonians 1:10.

4. Isaiah 35:51; 61:1 and Matthew 11:5

16-9: What Happened to the Jews as The Chosen People of God?

{This major topic of the Magic Outline, I think we have belabored sufficiently in this volume without any repeat of it from Isaiah.}

16-10: The Salvation of God.

{This skipping as already adequately covered is also true of "The Salvation of God" topic from the rest of the Isaiah, you must admit the time and space we have given to this recognized greatest of the Old Testament Prophets.}

16-11: The New King of the New Israel.

On this eleventh and twelfth and lasts topics of the Magic Outline is where we must get serious in order to do some justice to Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Post-Isaiah Minor Prophets. By this time we have come solidly to Jews and Gentiles as citizens in the new kingdom. Paul in explained the OT quotes makes no bones about it. Gentiles are also Jews in that they are chosen people of God; that only a very small remnant of the Jews will be saved as real "all-the-way" people of God; and that those of the real chosen "Israel" of God are primarily Gentiles with a lesser number of Jews or Hebrews. {Hebrews actually came to be called Jews, a short for "from Jerusalem" about the time of the Restoration from Captivity.} What may come as a major sur-

prise to those who have not chosen to revel in the Old Testament, is that it was firmly established in the Prophets years before the clearer revelations of the NT (especially Romans) how that there would be a New Israel of Jews and Gentiles with a New King with new characteristics beyond that of King David and King Solomon, this New King would be the New Lord Jesus Christ, born at a certain time as "the seed" of Israel with two phases to His Kingship: (1) phase one where He established His kingdom firmly on earth under the custodianship of the Holy Spirit; and (2) phase two where He comes the Second time to make His reign complete, then turn it over to God the Father in order that "God the Father may be all in all."

Isaiah 54-66

1. The unmarried have more children than the married, the Gentiles have more children of God than the Jews: Isaiah 54:1 and Galatians 4:27. **{One of the first among God's notification that the Jews will be replaced as the majority of people selected by God.}**
2. None comes to the Father except as drawn by the Father, and all those who are taught by the Father: Isaiah 54:13 and John 6:45. **{Mr. Graham and Prestonwood, the election of God, and of Calvinism can not be denied as indicated here and as clearly taught by the beginning of Ephesians where "we are chosen in Him from before the foundation of the earth."}**
3. God gave in the Temple to the Jews a House of Prayer, but they had turned it into a den of thieves by the time of Jesus: Isaiah 56:7 and Matthew 21:13 and Luke 19:46. **{Isaiah started talking about the "den of thieves practice" here and Jeremiah, years later, will continue with it; however we have missed the point, what we are being told is that it is like in the Westens today where crooks do whatever they want to out in the world then hide in the den of thieves; and so that will be spelled out as we come to Jeremiah and the famous Temple Message that he preached faithful for so many years though most of God's people refused to listen.}**
4. All the nation of Israel that is really the Israel of the children of God will be saved: Isaiah 59:20,21 and Romans 11:26. **{The fact from Romans that "all Israel will be saved" must be understood in the light of all that has come before it in the book of Romans, how that Israel is reidentified by the Word of God as primarily Gentiles and also a remnant of the nation of Israel. You see the outcome in Revelation when only 144,000 Jews stand before the throne of God and yet a multitude of Gentiles stand there that no man can number, the children of Abraham by faith.}**

II. Characteristics of the New King of Israel.

1. The message to Zion is that your new King comes meekly, riding on a donkey: I saiah 61:11 and Matthew 21:5. {A new king, although quite different from David, must have a new kingdom; and this kingdom will also be different.}

2. Jesus told them in Nazareth of how the Spirit of God was upon him: I saiah 61:1,2 and Luke 4:17,18: (1). God anointed Him to preach the gospel to the poor (A King especially for the poor people); (2) God sent Him to start the release of captives, and to make provisions that the blind might be able to see; (3) To provide freedom for the downtrodden; and (4) To make a Proclamation as to when is the Acceptable Year of the Lord (the last days) that leads to the One Day of the LORD and Lord.

3. Happiness in this new kingdom will come only to those who first mourn because of their inability to do it for themselves: I saiah 61:1,2 and Matthew 5:4. {See above in [2.] And here how different the kingdom is with characteristics of kingdom members that are far different from the world and what the world acknowledges and expects.}

III. The Method of Citizenship Only That From God, on Gods terms as dictated in the Old Testament and made evident in the New Testament.

1. The New Citizenship found of those who sought it not or who searched not for it (grace): I saiah 65:1 and Romans 10:20,21.

2. Jerusalem is the city of the Great King: I saiah 66:1 and Matthew 5:33.

Micah

3. The Christ, the Prophet Messiah, born in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:5,6, and John 7:42, to be: (1). A ruler of the people; and (2). A shepherd of the people.

4. The sowers of the Old Testament and the reapers of the New Testament will rejoice together in this New Kingdom: Micah 6:15 and John 4:37.

IV. The Good News of the Gospel of the Kingdom preached by messengers.

Nahum

How welcome across the way on the mountain is the first sight of those who come with the Gospel: Nahum 1:15 and Romans 10:15.

Jeremiah 1-30

2. Yet most do not believe the report, foolish people without the ability to see or hear: Jeremiah 5:21 and Mark 8:18.

3. God established a House of Prayer but the nation of I srael turned it into a den of thieves: Jeremiah 7:11 and Matthew 21:13, and Mark 11:17.

4. Trust in God: (1) Whoever boasts, let him boast only in God: Jeremiah 9:24 and I Corinthians 1:31; and (2) Trust only in God: Jeremiah 17:5,7 and II Corinthians 11:9.

THE MESSAGE according to Jeremiah

This is a good place to puzzle on how not only did Israel lose out on being the total nation of God, lose the promise to the land in the cutoff three and one-half years after the Crucifixion of the Prophet Messiah; but basically lose out in every generation from the wilderness to the time of Christ, hardly every having more than the 7,000 that had not bowed the knee to Baal of Elijah's generation. It seems that one of our major problems in understanding this is that we mostly have in the Prophets a group look at what happened to the Hebrews or Jews, every seldom does it give us a look at the individual, Mr. and Mrs. Average citizen in the kingdom of Israel. {There are some exceptions, for example in Jeremiah--to be discussed in the next subsection--where the worshippers came to the temple to claim security in spite of the way they lived, where men, women, and children took Jeremiah on individually; and where the women that participated in the worship of the Queen of Heaven in their homes told Jeremiah of how the men and youth knew about it and helped in preparation of the cakes dedicated to an idol.} Jeremiah summarizes THE MESSAGE with the words of Jeremiah 2:13, words again recorded directly from God Himself.)

“For My people {at least God is calling them His own people at this point, remember a they broke the covenant in the wilderness, they were Moses' people} have committed two evils: (1) they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and (2) hewn themselves cisterns--broken cisterns that can hold no water.” (Jeremiah 2:13)

In the context the broken cisterns are the idols Israel often worshipped, influenced by their neighbors and the women that they married of their neighbors, even by the Egyptians that came out of Egypt with them; and I would think that 400 years of residence and influence from that country in Egypt did them no good, leading them to stray from the faith in God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God chose Abraham and promised to bless a nation from Abraham as the people of God, but either the genes failed them or the environmental influences. Hardly ever for any long period of time from approximately 1500 Before Christ did they make it for a whole generation dedicated to God. Now, if we seek a look at individual citizens when confronted by God through Christ, we look at the encounters with individual religions leaders of Christ's own generation--the scribes, Pharisees, Saducees, and priests. What we find there by way of explanation of what happened to the Jews is much like we find in this generation of the Falling Away, individually it was a matter of lack of faith in God, a matter of pride which is the opposite of respect for God, a matter of worldliness and of Satan. {Since God needs a certain number of people of the new kingdom to repopulate the earth, and needs to get a certain number from each generation in order to reach the repopulating number of Gentiles which no man can number, only God; then Satan resists as strongly as possible with old ways and new twists each generation in order

to delay the time when God can say, "Enough and this is the end of this age and this old heaven and old earth.") Perhaps much is explained in the Pastor James quote of {by the way perhaps the most Jewish of all the apostles} Proverbs 3:34 in James 4:6.

"Adulteres and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world i emity with God? Whoever threfore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The Spirit who dwells in us years jealously'? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says, 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'" (James 4:4-6 and Proverbs 3:34)

God actually rejected and rejects the prayers of the proud Jewish leaders, the words "God resists" states that; and you know that when God opposes or resists something, without any repentance on the part of the resisted individual, it is great and supernatural resistance. All of the graces that come to the humble like the first apostles and first disciples and men like the Apostle Paul, are given to the proud in the opposite manner by resistance. A key to understanding what individual Israelis had to be proud about in Christ's generation is from individual conversations recorded in the Gospels between them and Jesus, where Jews expressed the pride of "Abraham is our father"--in other words their families and genealogies--the pride in the former glory of their nation under David and Solomon; and even pride the unique things that God did among them as the people of God, the like of which has never been seen for another nation on earth, that is for the miracles God performed among them and for them. I would think that the very inability to see, to hear, and be converted is a matter of pride preventing "eyes to see, ears to hear, and conversion", along with worldliness {seeking after things over God and righteousness} and Satan. Also we must add a certain pride in their own religiosity beyond any nation that has ever lived on earth, and then the only justifiable pride in that to them were given "the oracles of God"; yet a pride which ultimately comes down to the work of their Prophets, a very small group with a very small remnant, who were rejected by and large by the Hebrews of their own generation.

About the time of the so-called "triumphant entry" {not a phrase in the Gospel, a phrase that shows worldliness and the influence of the religious who have become worldly as an expression of popularity and acceptance of the claims of Christ, which indeed it was not, as the people in their popular references to another king and kingdom like of David} had finalized their rejection of the real kingdom of God and of His Christ, Christ as instructed by the Father pronounced His final rejection of the Jews as God's people, holders of God's land, and as God's nation in favor of only the one-third of the Jews that according to Zechariah would survive but with extensive persecution. Did you miss this in the reading of your Gospels? After the predictions of Danile of a probational covenant of a probational period after the cutoff of the Messiah when the Jews in turn would cut off themselves; after the predictions of

Zechariah of a more spiritual restoration of one third of the Jews; after the fake and popular acceptance of the "triumphant entry"; after the lesson of the withered fig tree, that tree representing as often in the OT the fruitlessness to God of the nation of Israel (Matthew 21:18,19); after the parable of the wicked vine-dressers where Jesus like also in the OT Prophets compared Israel to the vine-dressers that killed the owner's Son with a response with any one of logic and reality that God would cutoff the vine-dressers and give the vineyard to others (Matthew 21:33-46); after Jesus quoted from Psalm 118:22,23 of how He was the stone that the builders and movers and yea the people of Israel rejected that God in turn made the chief cornerstone of the new and finally to be restored temple of all believers (Matthew 21:42); we have the finalized words as follows from Jesus.

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it." (Matthew 21:43) {Obviously the US has been this nation right up to the recent Falling Away as the Fullness of the Gentiles was completed with the preaching of the Gospel to every nation.}

What part of this teaching from Jesus do you not understand? The kingdom of God was at this point taken away from Israel and given to another nation, by way of decision from God and Jesus, but finalized three and one-half years, according to the prediction of Daniel, after the Crucifixion of Christ. You see this finalization of the judgment, a supernatural sealing of the fate of Israel as the rejected by God people of God, in the words of Jesus about Jerusalem in Matthew 37-39. It is in the form of a "lament" like the Lamentations of Jeremiah which also predicted this same rejection of Israel as the people of God except for the elect few.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" (Matthew 23:37-39 and Psalm 118:26)

While we would not want to be among people like the Millerites who set a date for the Second Coming of Christ, a false date of course, then selling all their worldly belongings went out to a specific site to meet Christ; we can make certain Engineering-like estimates of probabilities. Therefore, but don't sell anything or make any major decisions based on this except to be ready, the most probable time of the Second Coming, of course immediately preceding by the great shaking of heaven and earth, is 2030, with the beginning of the 40 year famous Falling Away of II Thessalonians as the flood of the mystery of iniquity overwhelms God's people of this generation to the extent, according to Daniel at the same time travel and knowledge increase exponentially, that "the power of the holy people is completely shattered", approximately 1990.

Amazingly this is also the year of beginning on which the world focused on the Middle East with the start of the Persian Gulf War. Also it is approximately the same time that the largest Protestant denomination in the world, the Southern Baptist Convention, started its downward demise with the takeover by the fundamentalists. {Formal and tradition religion, by the way the religion of the moral majority, replaced a true spirituality of grace and graciousness with a fighting spirit which can not be of Christ. In other words false brethren went to war against brethren. And intolerance toward sound doctrine increasingly has become the norm, centered around such seemingly harmless matters of rejection of God's marriage plan, of the taking of God's name in vain--a sign of pride and lack of respect among those churchmembers who claim to be the modern people of God; and rejection of pastors who preach the Word in favor of slick talkers who can rationalize and justify churchmembers as the elect of God.}

The Temple Message of Jeremiah, "We Are Safe"

God's own people of Jerusalem and Judah placed ahead of "trust in God", trust in the temple, the city, and the land--all originally given by God to them before they broke the continuously broke the covenant. Although a little shattered at 9-11 and causing additional thoughts after Katrina and other hurricanes, and earthquakes, and fires which are legally recognized as "acts of God" though the messages of the Old Testament Prophets on the same subject are not admitted or clearly understood, it is still that the people of the United States like the people of Jerusalem and during worship in the Temple are saying to themselves and each other, "We Are Safe". Well, even if you survive the Falling Away and the physical tribulations of the before the Second Coming of "fire, and wind, and vapor of smoke", you will not survive the burning up of the whole earth along with the heavens by fire. Your business, your governments, your movements and institutions will not survive as Jesus sets up the complete reign of His kingdom. It is only a matter of time. You might say, "Well, we are a good kingdom and they are bad kingdoms". It does not matter has all kingdoms and nations will come under the rule of Christ.

The Prophet Jeremiah told the people of God of his day, and the same message echoes through the pages of the Bible to us and our country today, that they were like a den of thieves, and Jesus quoted that to echo the emphasis. Yet we still fail to appreciate that the main point is that the people of Jerusalem and the Temple—supposedly God's people though already victims of a Falling Away for the most part—these people were living any way that they wanted to during the week, so of like thieves who go through the country robbing, killing, and murdering and then go to a hideout called "a den"; from which they will again after some time of secure feelings go out to do more. You see that is what God's people were doing during the time of Jeremiah. God saw it and gave Jeremiah the message to preach to these people directly from Him—how God had sent their worship of other gods which are not

gods, how they had mistreated the people in the land, and so on. Well, let's read it directly from Jeremiah 7.

"The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh: 'Stand in the gate of Yahweh's' house and proclaim there this word. Say {God directly tells Jeremiah to say this, giving him the words, and do you think these word any less applicable to us and our churches, temples and our nations today}...Say, Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah {Judah was all that was left of the nation since Israel to the north had already been taken into Captivity}...who come through these gates to worship Yahweh! {You are about to get God's own perspective of their weekly worship} This is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: Reform your way of life and your actions and I will allow you to remain in this place. Do not put your trust in the words of the Lie and keep saying, 'This is Yahweh's temple, Yahweh's temple, Yahweh's temple! {Does that no sound like people today in large and small churches saying, 'This is the house of God', and the ministers saying, 'these are the people of God!}'

Only if you truly reform your way of life and your actions, if you really act justly with one another, do not oppress the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow, shed no innocent blood in this place, and do not run after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you remain in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers of old for all time. But look, you are putting your trust in the words of The Lie to no good purpose. Can you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn sacrifices to Baal, run after other gods which you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house which bears my name and say 'We are safe!—Just so that you may continue doing all these abominable things? Has this house which bears my name become a robbers' cave in your eyes...." (Jeremiah 7:1-15)

America, in your vast land of the free and home of the brave, and in your many churches through the land, YOU ARE NOT SAFE. You are not safe from the world wide movement of the terrorism of Muslims, you are not safe from hurricanes like Katrina, you are not safe from earthquakes, you are not safe from drought and winds and fires—you are not even safe from Tsunamis and temperature and climate changes caused by the disappearing Ozone layer, and you are not safe from "fire and wind and vapor of smoke", the world-wide signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath during the Falling Away and just before the end at the Second Coming. Some of these signs and workings of God, according to the Old Testament Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles are on automatic control, others are direct interventions by God through angels to get the attention of the world. Indeed that is what sign are: they point to something besides themselves. They point to heaven and a watching for the end with the return of Jesus.

16-12: The Living God Wants Others to Live.

I. God begins to promise another people of the Gentiles to be called by His name.

Jeremiah 31-52

1. Rachel weeps for her children: Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:17,18.

2. Gods desire to walk among and dwell in His own people: Jeremiah 31:1 and II Corinthians 6:18.

II. The just, justified, or righteous must live by faith in God.

Habakkuk

The Five Woes on the Oppressors from Habakkuk: Since Habakkuk predicts the rise of the Chaldean dynasty that will conquer Judah, the book can be considered either as the first of the Chaldean Captivity or the last of the Assyrian captivity. Even as we noticed in Isaiah, where actual history becomes intermingled with predictive history, so we will find something similar here in Habakkuk.

1. Righteousness by faith; Habakkuk 2:4, Galatians 3:11, and Romans 1:17.

Daniel

2. Kingdom of God starts out small then grows larger: Daniel 4:9 and Mark 4:32.

III. The sanctified and glorified must live by faith in God.

1. The beginning of glorification is when see the Son of Man coming in great power and glory: Daniel 7:13, Matthew 24:20, and Mark 13:26.

2. The end of the ordinances of the law and the temple worship came during the Abomination of Desolation of Daniel, 70 A.D.: Daniel 9:27, 11:31, and Mark 13:14, and Matthew 24:15.

3. Before the Second Coming there will be a time of tribulation {the final tribulation} in which even the heavens and earth are affected: Daniel 12:1-3 and Mark 13:19.

4. Shook only the earth before, the last time will shake earth and the heavens: Hague 2:6 and Hebrews 12:26.

IV. Final Messages to Disciples and to All, especially to the remnant of the remnant that will be left when God cuts off all the Jews but one-third of the people in the land.

While Ezekiel was a Prophet in captivity in Chaldea, the far south of the Babylonia kingdom where many from Jerusalem and Judah had been taken, the process of the captivity with the full destruction of Jerusalem and Judah with the land being made desolate, and a larger deportation of the people had not finalized, and Ezekiel looked both through the eyes of God to see in prophesy what was still going on in Jerusalem and the temple in rebellion against the covenant of God, and to predict the full destruction. History separates Ezekiel as a prophet of captivity, from the post-exile

Prophets to come after him like Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi--the prophets of the Restoration; however the flow of the total message of progressive revelations of the Bible is smoother than the history. Above, you will see a summary in a sub-heading of that continuity in the final messages; and although the probational cut-off for Israel is still in effect from Daniel, and Zechariah will talk a great deal about that, Ezekiel prepares hearts for a new heart, a new way to keep the righteousness of God through faith and a new heart, as these post-exile Prophets will contribute to progressive revelations the concept of a one-third remnant of the remnant.

Ezekiel

{Because of the extensive discussions of Ezekiel in chapter 4, the chapter on "The Message of the Writing Prophets", the discussion here will be brief, briefly visiting the Magic Outline on the same for continuity.} What God considers most important in that He had it quoted in the NT from Ezekiel is: (1) To Disciples--do you not see, hear, and remember (Ezekiel 12:2 and Mark 8:18); and (2) To Jewish religious leaders--in vain they do worship (Ezekiel 33:31 and Matthew 15:7); and above all (3) the promise of a new heart to know and remain faithful to God

Haggai

We are indebted to Haggai for one of the most illustrative pictures of what will happen in the final destruction of heaven and earth. Haggai calls it a great "shaking of heaven and earth"; and clarifies much of OT history in the comparison between the Flood during the day of Noah when God shook only the earth--you know to have all of that moving water on top of it, not only did it destroy all things living but it shook the earth with some evidence that the forces through the years after the migration of peoples across the then one solid continent, start drifting apart like we find the continents today {by the way there is still a small continental drift every year, and between the final shaking of both heaven and earth shortly before Christ comes again.

"See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth {the children of Israel in the wilderness refused at Mount Sinai to meet with God and listen to His voice for fear that they would die, and indeed after 40 years of rebellion in the wilderness they did die in the desert without going into the Promised Land, nor did they receive God's eternal rest}, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven' (Haggai 2:6). Now this 'Yet once more,' indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken {AMEN!}, let us have

grace {as if we could determine the amount of grace and faith we can obtain, which we can to a certain extent though the grace of God is always a non legalistic under the control of God commodity, and I wonder how Frank Graham would include this in his dogmatic "Truth on Grace"}, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:25-29)

Restoration Background for What Was Happening in the Land

While we have two historical books for background on the Restoration, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel promised, with words from God, that the exiles of captivity would return to the land. The turn around started when Cyrus {Cyrus the Great} the Persian took control from Babylon, Babylon falling to his armies in 538 B.C, and almost immediately Cyrus issued a decree that is recorded in Ezra 1:2-4: (a) a acknowledgment that Jehovah, the God of heaven had given him all the kingdoms of the earth; (b) that this God had charged him to build a house for him in Jerusalem of Judah; (c) whoever of "His people" left among us let him go up and build that house; (d) in any place that these people live in my kingdom left the men of that place give these people silver, gold, goods, and beasts along with a free will offering for the house of God. 42,000 Jews responded to the decree, taking with them 7,000 servants {certainly they had grown prosperous} with Zerubbabel the prince and Jeshua the high priest as their leaders, making the journey safely and settling in the land according to the record of Ezra 1,2. Of course the land was desolate and Jerusalem in ruins, but the next year in 534 B.C. they laid the foundation of the temple. {The old men who had seen the Temple of Solomon wept over its magnitude and beauty compared to what meager thing they could do now.} When the heathen living in the land offered to help in the building of the Temple and it was refused, they weakened the hands of the Jewish builders, troubling them (Ezra 4:1-5). For 14 years work on the temple ceased; but in 520 B.C. when the Prophet Haggai rebuked the people for neglecting the house of Jehovah while building and beautifying their own homes, speaking to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah and Joshua the high priest, telling them of how the drought they were in had been sent from God as a punishment for their selfishness (Haggai 1:1-11). Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people obeyed the voice of God through Haggai and the work on the temple resumed (Haggai 1:12-15): Jehovah through Haggai encouraged them forward to complete the temple with promises of enough money, and that though small now compared to Solomon's temple that someday, and this is a prediction of Haggai (2:1-9), this one would be greater than the first. Jehovah promises special blessings on the people because they have gone to work on His sanctuary, and also a special blessing on Zerubbabel (Haggai 2:10-23). {You see the change of mind of God toward this people precipitated by their willingness to work on His house in Zechariah, a change about which God explains like the renewal of the covenant, announcing that at the beginning of the temple rebuilding he had part of the division between the people and the neighbors.

It seems that at this point God had not gotten over the anger of the 70 years, and saw little real effort from the people that would change His mind.}

Two months after Haggai started preaching to the people about rebuilding the temple, Zechariah in 520 B.C. with words from Jehovah for encouragement in the rebuild effort. {While it may seem that God was always intervening through a Prophet in the affairs of His people, and even as we notice here messages from God from two prophets within 2 years, we forget that in approximately 700 years from Isaiah to Malachi only 12 real Writing Prophets spoke. That is more like a Prophet on the average every 60 years, or approximately one Prophet per generation. And while we might begrudge the lack of God's attention to His people today in such detail, we must recall that the Holy Spirit is at work everywhere and all the time; that is, until during the Falling Away He is withdrawn from earth, allowing the loosing of Satan and the revelation of the final Antichrist, the man of sin.} The many visions God gave Zechariah were to encourage the workers on the temple. The preaching of these two Prophets worked so that the building was successful.

“And the elders of the Jews builded and prospered, through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo”, history tells us in Ezra 6:14.

THE SANCTUARY WAS FINISHED IN 4 YEARS, DEDICATED WITH GREAT CELEBRATION IN 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:14-22); and this appears to be the very event and time that lead God to change His mind about the remnant in the land as recorded in Zechariah 8:11. And it would seem, although we can not fully comprehend the mind and heart of God except in that He lets us know it through the Prophet and Apostles, also through Jesus; but it seems as the attitude of God when the builders first started is that they were doing the building for other reason. As often spoken in the Prophets, God said did you fast and feast for Me, did you eat and drink for Me or for yourselves. After all the people were virtually being paid to come back home an rebuild the Temple with silver, gold, and goods out of the Persian kingdom, and a free will offering for the Temple. We will not even speak now of the differences and similarities of the Jews who stayed in Babylon as compared to the Jews that came home, or even the ragtag nomads that had wandered in the land, left behind in the captivity, for 70 years. We do know, however that many devout Jews stayed resident with their businesses throughout the kingdom of Persia {Babylon}, called the Jews of the Dispersion, also the Jews to whom Peter wrote, who came to Jerusalem during the days of the Apostles and the Holy Spirit for the day of Pentecost, as the record tells of how they were from every nation in the Roman Empire. Also we know that only Jews with credentials that could prove their former residence in Judah were allowed to return. It appears according to Zechariah that God appreciated “that day of small things” as the Temple was rebuilt on a much smaller scale, but that the people had given their all, much like Jesus spoke of the widow's mite and the cup of water, these also being

small things in the world but big to God. He as He promises in Haggai and Zechariah will take this rebuilt temple and make it more grand than the Temple of Solomon., which He did by using Herod and you recall how magnificent it appeared to the Apostles of Jesus before in Matthew 24 he told of how it would again be destroyed in 70 A.D. By Titus with his Roman army. Yet the temple was there for Jesus, and the country; and 3 and one-half years after the Jews cutoff the Messiah, they in turn were cut off, the full impact of their transgressions of the covenant and 1500 years of rebellion not completed until the temple was destroyed with the daily sacrifice in 70 A.D.

“But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days {those first days before the work ceased for 14 years}, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Zechariah 8:11). {And then follows in Zechariah a host of covenant blessings with of course warnings on not to do like the forefathers who broke the covenant, and with further guarantees of punishment if they did, also listing exactly what He expected out of His people in behavior.}

Zechariah

What we have in Zechariah as considered important to God in quoting is: (3). Zion: your King is Coming, Zechariah 9:9, Matthew 21:4, and John 12:14., the Prophet Messiah is also a King; also the Crucifixion of the Messiah by the crucifying, the (4) of tormentors, they gaped on Him whom they pierced (Zechariah 12:10 and John 19:37); what will happen to the disciples of Christ when the Christ-Messiah to killed, the (5) of Disciples, will strike down the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered (Zechariah 13:7 and Mark 14:27). Zechariah, a long book for a minor Prophet, of 14 chapters deals with a call of repentance among the people to “return to Me” so that “He will return to them”--we have heard this from God before in other of the Prophets--with the plea to not be like their forefathers who were told by the Prophets “turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds”, yet they did not hear (Zechariah 1:4). The contemporary problem is further introduced in 1:5-6 based on the history of their forefathers: how the words and statutes of God overtook them in judgment of their misdeeds, and how they recognized those judgments, which were just according to their ways and their deeds {you will recall for example how Daniel made that long prayer of confession for his people before the appearance of Gabriel, a prayer which recognize their sins, the just recompense of God for their sins, and yet which admitted that the people still had not turned from the evil of their ways.}

Zechariah is difficult, something like Revelation and even Daniel, in that it is full of visions from God {the goal of the visions was to encourage work on the Temple} to Zechariah: (1) the vision of the horses--where the key question is “how long {the how long reminds you of Revelation} will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years? (1:12) {it is much like the prayer of David for what will happen to my people after the seventy years, except we see that here after the restoration, the people recognize that God has

not extended mercy on Jerusalem and Judah, God is still angry at them as He has been 70 years plus}, and the answer in 1:16,17 must be of the New Jerusalem, eternal mercy, and a New tabernacle {called "house" here} of the distant time, not really immediate here; (2) the vision of the four horns, remembering how they were nations in Daniel with the little horn being the man of sin, and how that even here the horns are the nations that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem (1:19), and four craftsmen appeared to in turn scatter the four horns; (3) the vision of the measuring line--who measured Jerusalem and learned that it would become so prosperous of people and cattle so as to be beyond walls, which by the way were not needed because God has said He will be a wall of fire around it for protection (2:5), God promising punishment on Babylon, and then again as in other Prophets of this period we have the after that time coming of the Lord to be in the midst of them, another reference in more veiled terms to the coming of the Messiah, and I am afraid although we would like to see in it the Israel of this day, that it is another reference to eternity and the New Judah, New Jerusalem, and New Holy Land; (4) vision of the High Priest in Zechariah 3--with a promise of iniquity removal like the removal of dirty clothing, the LORD of hosts tells of "My Servant the Branch" {yes, the Prophet Messiah} that He is bringing forth in the more immediate days, so that in "one day" {we know to be the one day of the crucifixion} God will remove the iniquity of the land of Israel {thus we have verified with another Prophet, Zechariah, and with more words directly from God that the time of the Messiah would be a time of atonement for sins--that much of the probational covenant and the new covenant is verified by another Prophet}; (4) the vision of the lampstand and the olive trees {truly it is getting more and more like Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation}--like Daniel, Zechariah had an interpreter to explain that the lampstand and olives trees were "the word of the LORD to Zerubabel {the governor} that by God's power and might the foundation he has laid for the Temple will be completed in the Temple, not to despise "the day of small things" {the Temple was less than the first temple and the restored Jerusalem was now less than the first Jerusalem}, the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel is "the eyes of the LORD" (4:10), scanning the earth, and that the two olive trees were the two Anointed Ones who stand before God {which I must think is God the Son and God the Holy Spirit}; (5) the vision of the flying scroll (5:1-4)--which is "the curse" across the whole face of the earth against every thief and every perjurer that they will be expelled; (6) the vision of the woman in a basket (5:5)--the basket is "their remembrance in the earth" and the woman in the basket is "wickedness", so that then two women with wings carried the basket to "build a house in the land of Shinar {Babylon} so that when Babylon was read the basket would be set there on its base (5:11); (7) the vision of the four chariots--the four chariots being "four spirits of heaven" who rotate from their stations in the north and the south to before the Lord of all the earth; (8) the command to put a crown on the head of Joshua the high priest, symbolic of what could happen in the land with

"And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God". (6:15)

Should We Weep and Fast?

Zechariah received another "word of the Lord" (7:1) as to whether they should weep in the fifth month and fast as they had done so many years: In the word from God Zechariah was told:

"Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me--for Me? When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves? Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed through the former Prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were inhabited?'" (Zechariah 7:5-7)

A Summary of the parts of the Message from these former Prophets, the very ones which we considered before this time of Zechariah and the restoration period is given by Zechariah with quotes of the word of the LORD Himself.

"Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother." (Zechariah 7:9-10)

And what does God Himself say happened when His word came to the people in the time of the former Prophets, Zechariah 7:11-14.

"But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. {We now how often this happened to Jeremiah in the preaching of the Temple message which included those parts mentioned by God above}...Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former Prophets. {Surprise of all surprises we have an equivalent of as the Spirit moved them of Peter, and here in an OT Prophet.} Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. But I scattered them with a whirlwind among the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that on one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate." (Zechariah 7:9-14)

Zechariah 8: God will return to Zion and Jerusalem; the city of Jerusalem shall be called the city of Truth; the sounds in the city will be again of old men and women of great age and children playing in the street (8:4,5); and IT IS MARVELOUS IN THE EYES OF THIS REMNANT, God says (8:6), will it be in the future of this blessed Jerusalem, marvelous in God's eyes. In other words what will the people do with these blessings. God promises the people through Zechariah that: He will save the people from the east and west that have been scattered, bring them back to dwell in Jerusalem, they shall be His people again and He will be their God (8:8). God contin-

ues that while in the days of the Prophets at the time the temple foundation was laid when there was no wages, no peace from the enemy, and God Himself set men against neighbor; now--"But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days, says the LORD of hosts" (8:11), so that right here and right now as recorded in Zechariah and at this period of time, God makes a major change with the following words.

"For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give its fruit, the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew--I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these. {Here you have a much better picture of prosperity from God than today's Gospel of Prosperity and Wealth: her it is fruit, increase in crops, dew, and the people possessing all these blessings.} And it shall come to pass that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you, and you shall be blessing. Do not fear, Let your hands be strong." (Zechariah 8:11-13) **{You can find in the history of the inter-biblical period that these very things happened even to the extent that the kingdom reached to the very limits of the time of David.}**

Oh yes, there were strings attached for we know this to be a probational covenant with a probational time according to Daniel, and in 8:14-17 that God can still determine to punish them and not relent as with their forefathers, then listing the things they should do to prevent that: (a) speak truth with neighbors; (b) rule judgment in truth, justice, and peace inside the gates; (c) no evil in your heart for your neighbor; (d) no love for a false oath. These are things that God hates; and how much do they sound like the teachings of Jesus, the real meaning of the Law.

Predicted History from the time of Zechariah to the time of Christ

We can not do better than that on the history from the Prophet Zechariah, approximately 520 B.C. to the time of Christ, that is from God Himself. What will happen: (1) people will come to inhabited many cities with free enterprise between the cities (8:21) with a common cause to go worship God in Jerusalem; (2) many other strong peoples and nations will come to Jerusalem to seek and pray before God (8:22); (3) God will cast out Tyre by fire including her navy (9:3,4), the king will perish from Gaza and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited (9:5), a mixed race will settle in Ashdod and cut off the Philistines; (4) during this period a King is coming that "is just and having salvation" (9:9,10), a king of humility that rides on a donkey, a King of a kingdom of peace and that speaks peace to the nation {I hope you recognize this as the Prophet Messiah and King}, the dominion of His kingdom being to the ends of the earth; (5) because of the "blood of your covenant", God will set free the prisoners of the "waterless pit"--a promise of full atonement when the Messiah-King dies on the cross; (6) God promises that very day that He will restore "double to them", in "that day" the LORD God will save them {we see eternity here again, sort of like Jesus told the disciples that no one who forsake all to

follow Him would fail to receive more in this life and in the life to come); (7) God telling of the need for a shepherd for His people, promises a shepherd; (8) God has more restoration of the people to do, bringing them back to Judah and Israel from far countries, from Egypt and Assyria.

Cutoff of the Messiah and Cutoff of the Jews

We must pause in the history of the future from Zechariah to Christ, and beyond, as we have in Zechariah 11:4-17 with the "Prophecy of the Shepherd" come across the probational covenant with probational time of Daniel, indicated by the following key words and thoughts {it seems as those God with all the promises of the future does not want to give a false impression that in the long term, that is during the time of Christ, that all is well as far as the covenant with the people is concerned as God knows what the majority of them are going to do to His son in crucifixion, also of how the majority have never recanted of the sins that cause them to break the covenant}: (a) there is a call at the beginning for the Shepherds of the people, no doubt primarily the religious leaders of Jesus' day--the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and priests--to feed the flock with their malarkey for 500 more years, selling them off to the slaughter of the probational cutoff; (b) "For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land" (11:6), no longer three and one-half years after the cutoff of the Messiah, and the soon to follow withdrawal of the covenant part of the possession of the land, which started happening in 70 A.D.; (c) they {Rome and Titus} will attack the land and God will not deliver the people from their hands (11:6); (d) Christ is more speaking here than God the Father, and of His time to come in the land, "I dismissed the three shepherds {I would say more three classes shepherds in the religious leaders of the day; that is the political, priesthood, and the scribes.} In one month. {And we recall the pathos of Jesus as in the Gospels He laments how Jerusalem rejected Him then and for so many years in the past, although He tried to put them under His wing as the true Shepherd.}...My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me." (Zechariah 11:8) {We see this loathing between these false shepherds of Jesus' day and Jesus all the time in the battles, the efforts to kill, and the woes from Jesus on them, also of how all the blood of the Prophets up to that day would be on their heads.}.

Continuing the indications that Zechariah 11 is about the probational covenant of a probational period of Daniel: (e) Christ refuses to feed the majority of the people anymore, letting the dying die and the perishing perish (11:9), even letting them eat each others flesh as we know happened as the Romans under Titus encompassed about the city for so long, the equivalent of what Jesus taught in His life about "let the dead buried the dead"; (f) Christ and God take their Shepherd staff "Beauty" and cut it in two pieces, clearly a symbol as They say in plain words, "THAT I MIGHT BREAK THE COVENANT WHICH I HAD MADE WITH ALL THE PEOPLES" {the encouragement ray of hope here, which God wants us to pick up and that will be emphasized more in the remnant of the remnant of Malachi, is that there is a dis-

inction between a covenant with all the peoples of Israel, which will be broken and cutoff after Christ, and a covenant with a small group of the people)--I just do not see how God could make it any plainer in His work in these words of Zechariah 11:10, that HE IS GOING TO BREAK THE COVENANT WITH ALL THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL IN THE FUTURE; (g) "So it was broken on that day", the day Jesus announced the woes on Jerusalem, and the poor that knew it was the Word of God were His Apostles and other disciples; (h) How can you miss Jesus saying to the religious leaders beforehand, "if it is agreeable to you give me what you think I deserve", mainly you can not miss the significance of "the thirty pieces of silver" that the false shepherds gave to Jesus by way of Judas for His betrayal; and (i) Jesus and God broke the other staff into two pieces, the one called Bond, representing the bond of brotherhood between Judah and Israel, again the treating of the nation as one large group of God's people in favor of a selected elect {this comes close to be the equivalent of the cessation of the taking of the kingdom by force before the time of Jesus}; and (j) A shepherd will be raised up in the land who will not care for "the cutoff" people. {By the way we have further verification of the probational cutoff of the Jews in Zechariah 13:7-9, in the very middle of the obvious remarks about the Promised Christ as the Shepherd Saviour, as the LORD says "that two-thirds in it {the land} shall be cut off and die"--and how much clearer can you get it that two-thirds of the Jewish people will be cut off from the covenant of God--"but one-third shall be left in it"--here is the remnant of the Jews to be saved, the approximately 100,000 before the cutoff; but it speaks of the persecutions of this select few of "Christians" {Christians, of course is not a word here, the word here is "the one-third that go through the fire in order to be refined (11:9). We must look at this for full clarification!

"And it shall come to pass in all the land," says the LORD, 'That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'" (Zechariah 13:7-9)

How much clearer could the cutoff of the probational covenant be as God says: (a) I reject two-thirds of the people of the land, selecting one third of the people; and (b) that one third of Israel will be "My people" and they will call Me "My God". Now what we will begin to find in the rest of the OT, which leaves only Malachi, is an emphasis on a select few from among the people, written in the "book of remembrance", that really are trying to do what is right with God.

Predictions of the Prophet Messiah to come, the "Shepherd Saviour"

Appropriate that the false shepherds, the religious leaders of the days of Jesus, are dwelt with before getting to "the Shepherd Saviour". The History from Zecha-

riah to Christ, and beyond to Final Day of the LORD and Lord is wrapped up in chapters 12-14: (1) it is initially a jump forward to the end of time with the final battle against Judah and Jerusalem as God comes to their rescue--"It shall be in THAT DAY that I will seek to destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem" (12:9); (2) but before that God pours out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem "the Spirit of grace and supplication" {a prediction of the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great power and breath}, with before that the Crucifixion of Christ as "they will look on Me {another indication that God the Christ is doing a lot of the speaking in this prophecy of Zechariah} whom they pierced" (12:10) **{and obviously the Crucifixion as quoted in John 19:37, lest we miss the significance of the Crucifixion of Christ and the subsequent Coming of the Holy Spirit after His Ascension as given in Zechariah}**; (3) a fountain of the teachings of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit will be opened in that day **{I think by now you know that day to be the days of Christ and the Spirit}**: (a) idols will be cut off from the land; (b) false prophets and unclean spirits will be removed from the land; (c) the Shepherd Saviour will be struck and the sheep will be scattered (13:7); and (d) One-third of the people in the land will be the elect and they will go through the refinement of persecutions; (4) "Behold, the day of the LORD **{here preliminarily it is a more immediate day of the LORD than of the final Day, as it is the day when Titus and Rome come in 70 A.D. To destroy Jerusalem}** is coming" (14:1): (a) in that day God will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem, taking the city with half of the city going into captivity **{we know from Josephus how many of the Jews were marched to Rome with Titus who later became Caesar}**; and (b) it passes quickly into the final Day of the LORD at the end of time in Zechariah 14:3 as "The LORD goes forth to fight against these nations", and you have little doubt this is the end times as we read in Zechariah 14:5b "Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You." {All know from the NT on the Second Coming of Christ that Christ will bring all the saints with Him, not preventing those that are alive and remain but we shall be caught up together with them in the air, so that we shall ever be with the LORD.} How quickly the day of the LORD passes from more immediate judgment of the people under Rome to the distant day of the LORD when Christ comes again! This is the pattern rather than the exception in the OT Writing Prophets. But the first coming of Christ is also closely related to the Second Coming, the kingdom of Christ being established on earth by His presence and by the work of the Holy Spirit, and that kingdom of Christ finalized when He comes again.

Malachi

What we have in Malachi as considered most important by God in the writing of the NT from quotes is (6) Jacob I loved and Esau I hated: Malachi 1:2 and Romans 9:13, obviously when you consider the quote in Romans 9:13 is a defence of election by God, and of Calvinism; and (7) The Voice of One Crying in the wilderness THE TIME IS NOW: Malachi 2:10 and Matthew 11:10 and Mark 1:2, how John the Baptist made

preparation for the Coming Christ, the Prophet Messiah. While there is more about the hope in Christ such as with "healing in His wings", there is also the straight forward recognition, with again words quoted from God Himself, that "yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances and have not kept them" (3:6,7) with still at this late date in Malachi of an appeal to "return to Me, and I will return to you" {the God of over 1500 years of patience is still relentless"; however He recognizes that even in that day of Malachi the response of most of the people in Israel is by pleading ignorance, saying "in what way shall we return" (3:7b), as if the return from captivity by their forefathers in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah was sufficient for a "return". God counter replies: (a) You are cursed with a curse--the curse of God still remains on them, although returned in the land, specifically because they are not supporting the work of the priest and the house of God, they have robbed God of the tithes and offerings (3:9); (b) God will pour out on them immediately the "windows of heaven" if they will bring the tithes and offerings--some of those blessings are mentioned as God will rebuke the devourer that have destroyed the fruits of the land, and yours will be a delightful land that all nations around you shall call blessed (3:12); you have spoke harsh words against God, He says (3:13), saying it is useless to serve God, there is no profit in His ordinances, and that while the proud are called blessed, raising up the wicked, these same wicked doers tempt God and go free from punishment.

A remnant of the remnant got together in 3:16, those "that feared the Lord", spoke to one another {I suppose also in prayer} and God listened and heard them, so that a book of remembrance was written before God. This small number God promises to remember when He does what? Well, the reference is to the great discussion of the Day of God {here in the context we see something much more immediate as a day of judgment with perhaps a little tone of the distant day of the LORD and Lord when the whole earth and the works in it are destroyed by fire, we see that in context because this is a day when Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (4:2) when: (a) all the proud and the wicked will burn like stubble in an oven (4:1); (b) that day will burn them up; which allows a little leeway for the probational covenant for a probational time, which we know came right in there during the time of the Sun of Righteousness, at least announced by Christ in the woes on Jerusalem and initiated three and one-half years after His crucifixion after approximately 100,000 Jews were saved, but with the burning up seeming literal it must allow for the final day of the LORD and Lord. Of course we recognize that the full judgment of burning in the lake of fire and brimstone is not enacted until after the Day of the Lord as Christ comes again and executes judgment with the separation of the sheep from the goats; and although among the sheep would be these names recorded in the book of remembrance, surely the same or much like the book of life written in heaven, this remnant of the remnant, those "who meditate on His name" (3:16), those God says

"are Mine", those God promises to "make His jewels on the day", that day being after the Day of the LORD of course.}

There was obviously the same problem in the Israel of Malachi's day that we have to do where it is difficult to tell in churches the difference between the tares and the wheat, between the sheep and the goat; and although those words from the parables of Jesus are not used in Malachi, we see the same problem in the words of 3:18.

"Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him." (Malachi 3:18)

The difficulty of placing this "then" when the discernment between the real people of God and the less than real people of God--at least a problem that we have not found faced up to, it seems, in the earlier Prophets where there was no adequate development of the concept of a "remnant" and "elect" of God. Based on what follows we would have to say this discernment takes place somewhat during the life of Christ, somewhat in the probation covenant and a probational time for the Jews from after the Crucifixion of Christ until now; and then finally and completely after the great and awesome day of the LORD in final judgment and separation. That final day, "the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD" {and certainly you recognize those words and phrase from Amos, Peter, and others in the Bible so as to know it is the time of the Second Coming and final judgment} comes after Elijah, which we know to be John the Baptist heralds Christ with a revival among the people. It is much like the passing between the immediate and the final events of the "last days" of Joel (Acts 2:16-21) and Peter on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension, where there is the immediate coming of the Holy Spirit democratic and in power over all the earth, binding Satan; there is the immediate and to the end of the last days "whosoever calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved" (2:21); there is the immediate and increasing signs and wonders in heaven and in the earth until the end of the last days (2:19), with blood, fire, and vapor of smoke {something which we see in almost every hurricane, earthquake, or other disaster}; and the most distant right up to immediately before the last of the last days, that is the "great and awesome day of the LORD" (2:20) when the sun, moon, and stars have their lights diminished.

There is little doubt from the beginning in Malachi 1 that there have been some objections among the people about God choosing favorites, the elect of God such as when God chose Jacob over Esau since we knew as they that both were children of Isaac and Jacob--thus God's children the Israel of Malachi's day would reason--and perhaps the foundation of this was a complaint against Malachi as he differentiated between the many people who did not fear God and mediate on God and the few which Malachi recognized as written in the book of remembrance, a discrimination they majority would protest, of the few over the many. God responds through Malachi by saying about the Edom of Esau that if they rebuild, God will continue to

destroy as He has made His decisions for their destruction {and we read about those in the other and earlier Prophets, plus what the Edomites did to deserve it}; and also responds by saying “Where is my honor among the people and among the priests. They offer less than their best, for example the blind, in animal sacrifices of worship, also the lame and sick.

God makes the awesome statement of still no satisfaction with His returned and restored people, long past the rebuilding of the Temple. God “has no pleasure in them” (1:10); God will not accept an offering from their hands (1:10); and God guarantees them His “name will become great among the Gentiles” (1:11), among the nations of the Gentiles with a lot of worship of His name and proper offerings from morning till night (1:11). The pure offering of which Malachi speaks is the offering of self to Christ, we now know, and the incense is true worship in “spirit and in truth”. We know that is what has happened during the Fullness of the Gentiles with the spreading of the gospel to every nation, both on which the US had provided leadership; however as the Fullness of the Gentiles draws to a close, there will be the time of the Falling Away when with an increase in lawlessness, the love of many waxing cold, and an intolerance toward sound doctrine, God again becomes displeased with a majority of His Gentile people. {There is a high degree of probability that most of those among the Gentiles, the US in particular, who called themselves by the name of God, even as God’s people of the OT, do not really make it in keeping the covenant with God because of “an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God”.}