

Digression on the book of Malachi

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. It is difficult to establish the dating of the book but the terminus a quo (starting point) is usually sought sometime in the Ezra-Nehemiah period. Internal evidence points to sacrificial worship, priests and Levites, tithing etc. The priesthood is corrupt and seems to be influenced by foreigners or possibly priestly intermarriage with aliens. The Evidence indicates the Ezra-Nehemiah period. This would make Malachi the last OT prophet with no more prophets occurring until John the Baptist hundreds of years later.

Dating Malachi using language

Davis divides Malachi into two different sources. The following section is reproduced from Dating the Old Testament:¹

A second, older source appears to be present in Mal 3:1-6 and 3:16-4:6, and this source bears a striking resemblance to Isaiah. This source may have been included by Malachi in his own work, or it may have been folded in by the individual who pulled together all of the Minor Prophets into one scroll. We will refer to this source as Malachi-Isaiah. This is the first of several texts outside the book of Isaiah that we believe can ultimately be traced to Isaiah.

Once again, a clue to the author is found in a New Testament book. Mark 1:2-3 says, “As it is written in Isaiah the prophet...,” then quotes from Mal 3:1 followed by Isa 40:3.² Some have suggested that Mark chose to name only the latter of his sources, while others have suggested an error on the part of Mark or a later scribe. It is instructive to compare all the texts using Mal 3:1:

¹ This used to be available as a PDF download: Craig Davis, **Dating the Old Testament**, (RJ Communications, 2007), but as far as I am aware is now only available for purchase in book form. Pages 298-302 including headings and notes have been substantially reproduced. I have taken the liberty to insert the Hebrew from the unpointed MT as my version of the PDF did not reproduce the Hebrew fonts correctly. Any mistakes are therefore my own and not attributable to Davis. A comparison of the Hebrew from the Micah-Isaiah table that Davis produces has been compiled by myself (See **Supplement (2) Analysing the Hebrew of the Micah-Isaiah table**) as a help in the supplementary notes section using screenshots from the Interlinear Scripture Analyzer (ISA basic 3.0₂) available for free from <http://www.scripture4all.org/>

² The Greek Textus Receptus from which the King James Version was translated does not name Isaiah here. The Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition), from which most modern translations are made, puts the reading naming Isaiah in its “A” category, meaning that the committee that produced this Greek New Testament believes the text mentioning Isaiah is certain.

Mark 1:2	Matt 11:10	Luke 7:27	Mal 3:1 (Hebrew MT)	Mal 3:1 (Septuagint)
Behold, I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way	Behold, I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you	Behold, I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you	Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare a way before me	Behold, I send forth my messenger, and he will survey the way before me.
ἴδου ἀποστελλῶ τὸν ἀγγέλῳ μου πρὸ προσώπου σου ὅς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου	ἴδου ἐγὼ ἀποστελλῶ τὸν ἀγγέλῳ μου πρὸ προσώπου σου ὅς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἐμπροσθεν σου	ἴδου ἐγὼ ἀποστελλῶ τὸν ἀγγέλῳ μου πρὸ προσώπου σου ὅς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἐμπροσθεν σου	לפני ופנה דרך מלאכי הנני שלח	ἴδου ἐγὼ ἐξαποστελλῶ τὸν ἀγγέλῳ μου καὶ ἐπιβλεψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου

Mark 1:2, Matt 11:10 and Luke 7:27 agree closely with each other, less with the MT, and still less with the Septuagint. Although the connection is obvious, it is clear that Mark is not quoting from either the Masoretic Text or the Septuagint. Given the fact that the prophet's name and the text both differ from what we have in the Old Testament today, we might consider the possibility that Mark had a different text that connected this passage to Isaiah. Malachi-Isaiah has a Messianic tone matching that of Isaiah, the most Messianic of the prophets. The following table shows some of the topical and linguistic similarities between Malachi and Isaiah.

Phrase or Subject	Malachi	Isaiah
My messenger whom I send (only occurrence in the Old Testament)	3:1	42:19
Clear the way (done by the messenger – Hebrew פנה דרך). This appears also in Isa 62:10. These are the only occurrences of this phrase in the Old Testament.	3:1	40:3
Cleansing fire (using צרף).	3:2	1:25 and 41:7
Concept of the righteous being recorded in a book (using כתב).	3:16	4:3
Evildoers are chaff, burned up	4:1	5:24
Strike the land	4:6	11:4

There is a limited amount of text to use for analysis, yet some connection to Isaiah can be seen. It appears that Joel quotes from Malachi, as Mal 4:5b matches Joel 2:31b, “before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.”

4.2.16.1 Linguistic Analysis

Mal 1:6 (twice) and 1:14 use the pronoun “ani” in the construction “I am a Father,” “I am a Master” and “I am a great King.” In earlier Hebrew, “anoki” would have been preferred in these phrases (see Appendix B, section B.3.7). The absence of “anoki” here is a feature of Late Biblical Hebrew.

On the other hand, the early pronoun “anoki” does appear in 4:5 (Heb 3:23). An earlier word, “pen” (פֶּן), meaning “lest” appears in 4:6 (Heb 3:24). These features hint at a pre-exilic text for the Malachi-Isaiah portion of Malachi.

4.2.16.2 Oldest Texts

There are seven scrolls of Minor Prophets among the Dead Sea Scrolls, two of which (4Q76 and 4Q78) contain portions of Malachi.

4.2.16.3 Conclusion

Malachi was written between 500 and 450 B.C., after the temple had been rebuilt, but before the reforms of Nehemiah. Malachi 3:1-6 and 3:16 – 4:6 likely are drawn from earlier material and quite possibly from Isaiah, allowing a date range of 740-680 B.C. for these passages.

Discussion

One can more or less speak of a scholarly consensus --- everyone accepts that Malachi is post-exilic and therefore “late” and it is placed in the Nehemiah-Ezra time frame. This is supposedly supported by the use of a Persian loanword for **governor** (*peḥâ*) found in Malachi 1:8:

Malachi 1:8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy **governor**; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

David Barker³ notes that, “Several other historical, theological, and philological points have been brought to bear on the dating question. Malachi 1:8 mentions a *peḥâ* (“governor” which some suggest is Nehemiah), a proposed Akkadian loanword (*bēl piḥāti*).

³ David W. Baker, Joel, Obadiah, Malachi, (Harper Collins, 2009), 208

The term does refer to an official in other Old Testament texts, including a functionary from Assyria (2 Kings 18:24), and indicates a governor or delegated ruler during the Persian period (e.g., Ezra 8:36; Neh. 5:14; Jer. 5 1:28; Hag. 1:1). The term, even if borrowed, does not help chronologically, however, since it is used of functionaries from as early as the Old Babylonian period.”⁴ Therefore, the term “governor” does not necessarily point to the Persian period of Nehemiah-Ezra. Both Daniel and Nehemiah lived in Susa during the Babylonian captivity of the 6th century BCE. Susa was an ancient city of the Proto-Elamite, Elamite, First Persian Empire, Seleucid, and **Parthian empires** of Iran. However, Parthia (Persia) was still influential particularly during the priestly Hasmonean dynasty. The Hasmonean King Antigonus, was on the throne of Judea with the military assistance of the Parthians. Louis Ginzberg, describes Parthian influence toward the end of this period as follows;

“The state of affairs in Judea, as well as general conditions prevailing throughout the Roman Empire, was most propitious. The excessive taxation wrung from the people to pay for the extravagances of Antony and Cleopatra had awakened so deep-seated a hatred against Rome that Antigonus had only to show himself to the people to win their allegiance away from Herod and other creatures of the Roman power. He gained the adherence also of the aristocratic class in Jerusalem, such as the "Bene Baba," and probably also assured himself of the hearty cooperation of the leaders of the Pharisees. Moreover, the Parthians invaded Syria in the year 40, and they much preferred to see an anti-Roman ruler on the throne of Palestine. Antigonus, who was genius enough to make use of such an excellent opportunity, promised them largesums of gold, and, according to common report, five hundred female slaves besides, so that they immediately put a troop of five hundred warriors at his disposal. The appearance of these Parthians at the gates of Jerusalem, where daily riots took place between the partizans of Antigonus, who held possession of the Temple fortress, and those of Hyrcanus, or more correctly of Antipater, caused the balance to turn in favor of the former. Hyrcanus and Phasaël in vain endeavored to win over the Parthians. The former was sent a captive to Babylon, after suffering the mutilation of his ears, which rendered him henceforth unfit for the office of high priest. Phasaël beat out his brains against a stone wall. Herod, too weak for open resistance, fled from Jerusalem, and in the year 40 **Antigonus was officially proclaimed king and high priest by the Parthians**. His three years' reign, however, was one continuous struggle. His antagonist, Herod, succeeded in having himself declared king of Judea by Rome”.

A power struggle is depicted between Rome and Parthia (Persia) with Hasmonean priests supported by Persia (about a million Jews still lived in Persia) – therefore it is not at all unusual to find a “Persian loanword” used for a Judean official in Malachi. The dating of Malachi cannot be hung on a single loanword, nor on the circumstantial evidence of priestly corruption, which (as we shall see anon) was not limited to the Nehemiah-Ezra period. In conclusion, in agreement with the scholars, Malachi is post-exilic, **but just how late is it?**

⁴ See *AHW*, 120; Jeremy Black et al, *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*, 2nd (corrected) ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 274.

How late is Malachi?

A close reading of the book may indicate another period altogether. The book is a “revelation” (oracle) of “My messenger” for that is the meaning of Malachi. This leads scholars to speculate that Malachi is a pseudonym (pen name) employed in order to support the motif of “the messenger of the covenant”, which occurs throughout the book.⁵

No scholars (to my knowledge) seem to ask why Malachi begins with the nation of **Edom**.

Malachi 1:2-4 ² "I have loved you," says the LORD. "Yet you say, 'In what way have You loved us?' **Was not Esau Jacob's brother?**" Says the LORD. "Yet Jacob I have loved; ³ **But Esau I have hated**, And laid waste his mountains and his heritage For the jackals of the wilderness." ⁴ **Even though Edom has said**, "We have been impoverished, But we will return and build the desolate places," Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They may build, but I will throw down; They shall be called the Territory of Wickedness, And the people against whom the LORD will have indignation forever.

A prophecy directed at Israel (probably Judah) and the priesthood opens with a comparison followed by a prophetic tirade against Edom? The nation of Edom was destroyed during the time of the Babylonian Empire, before the return from exile and the context indicates this is technical covenant vocabulary in which “love” and “hate” are synonymous with “choose” and “reject” respectively (see Deut 7:8; Jer 31:3; Hos 3:1; 9:15; 11:1), language that goes back to Jacob and Esau. So God compares his “love” of Jacob with his “hate” for Esau and then continues with reprobation against Edom. This does not seem to fit the Ezra-Nehemiah period but it does reflect intertestamental history, where the priestly Hasmonean dynasty was replaced by Edomite kings (e.g. the Herod’s), who even intermarried with priestly families to boost their legitimacy.⁶

⁵ In spite of the scarcity of evidence concerning the authorship of this prophecy, there are good reasons to believe that Malachi is the name of the author. The word mal’āki is comparable to other Hebrew names that end in i, such as Beerī, “my well” (Gen. 26:34; Hos. 1:1) or Ethnī, “my gift” (1 Ch. 6:41), and it is placed where one would expect to find the name of the author. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol.4 (ed G.W. Bromiley) The Septuagint reads “his messenger”—not a proper name. Also, “Malachi” occurs again in Mal 3:1 and it is translated there as “my messenger”.

⁶ See Supplement (1) The descendants of Mattathias (Maccabean dynasty)

This period commenced with **Antipater** the father of **Herod the Great**. Though historians understand that Antipater's family converted to Judaism in the second century BCE, different stories had circulated in the wake of his sons coming to power.⁷

Calmet *et al* says, “[Herods] father Antipater, according to some by nation an Idumean: others say by extraction a Jew, deriving from some of the Jews who returned from Babylon: others maintain that Antipater was a heathen, and guardian of one of Apollo's temples at Ashkelon; and that, having been taken prisoner by some Idumean scouts, he was carried into Idumea, and brought up according to the manners of the Jews; for since the time of John Hyrcanus, the Idumeans had observed the law of Moses. Hardouin formed a system, entirely new, concerning Herod's family, and contradictory to Josephus, &c. as if Herod were of Grecian extraction. Nicholas of Damascus, to make his court to Herod, to whom he was much obliged, derived his descent from the principal of the Jews, who returned from Judea after the captivity of Babylon. Josephus, being a Jewish priest, who lived almost in the time of this prince, his sons and grandsons, should be better informed of this matter: he charges that historian with infidelity in his account. Why should we not refer ourselves to Josephus? Herod was never able to win the hearts of the Jews. Neither the building of the temple, a work of very great charge; nor his infinite expenses, in procuring provision for the people during an extreme famine, could overpower their antipathy; which was founded on three reasons: (1) His not being a Jew, but a stranger, and by descent an Idumean (2) His cruelty, whereof he had given proofs on many occasions (3) His little zeal for the observance of the law of Moses, and his frequent violations of it in matters of a public nature, and of great consequence: e.g., he caused a theatre and amphitheatre to be built at Jerusalem, and appointed games to be celebrated there in honour of Augustus: He placed trophies around about his theatre in honour of the same prince and of his victories: He would have a golden eagle set up over the temple doors: He built a temple to Augustus and other deities, and affected to favour heathens and strangers....”⁸

⁷ Peterson, Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans, p.52-53

⁸ Augustin Calmet, Charles Taylor, Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible: With the Biblical Fragments, p.633

Herod the Great was known for his many building projects (including reconstruction of the Jewish temple)⁹ --- **“they may build, but I will throw down”** (Mal 3.4). During the Maccabean wars, the Edomites were subjugated by the Jews and Hyrcanus forced them to convert to Judaism. Through it all, the Edomites maintained much of their old hatred for the Jews. When Greek became the common language, the Edomites were called Idumaeans. With the rise of the Roman Empire, an Idumaeen whose father had converted to Judaism was named king of Judea.

Antipater the father of Herod played off the two brothers (Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II) from the priestly Hasmonean (Maccabee) dynasty against each other in order to reach the object of his ambition, the control of Judea. The diplomacy and artful politics of Antipater, as well as his insinuation into the Hasmonean court, paved the way for the rise of his son Herod the Great, who used this position to marry the Hasmonean princess Mariamne, endear himself to Rome and become king of Judea under Roman influence.¹⁰ Marty Solomon¹¹ sums up the ensuing history as follows:

“Josephus tells us that not long after the Maccabean revolt, the current leadership under the Hasmoneans became as Hellenistic as the Greeks. When this self-serving worldview came in contact with power, the situation was ripe for corruption. The Hasmoneans ruled for just over a century when they looked up to see the Roman Empire dominating the horizon. They knew that there would be no standing against this new world rule and began to position themselves politically for survival. The system of tithes and offerings had served this ruling elite quite well. Now that there were millions of Jews living in the land, and thousands of priests, the system that was built for a much smaller Israel wandering through the desert was now producing quite a bit of wealth for those in charge. The arrival of Rome threatened their very lifestyle.

⁹ Herod the Great is known as the greatest builder in Jewish history. Amongst other projects Herod began construction on Caesarea Maritima and its harbor. 23 BCE – Herod built a palace in Jerusalem and the fortress Herodion (Herodium) in Judea and of course began reconstruction of the Jewish temple. There are many more projects that can be mentioned in these areas and throughout the land, settlements and strongholds, many of which bore names honoring the emperor or members of Herod’s own family, such as Antipatris (on the road from Jerusalem to Caesarea), Cypros (at Jericho), and Phasaelis (west of the Jordan). Herod also built outside of Israel see --- http://www.bible-history.com/herod_the_great/HERODHis_Buildings.htm

¹⁰ Antipater the Idumaeen. (2017, February 6). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 08:08, April 9, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Antipater_the_Idumaeen&oldid=763963955

¹¹ Marty Solomon’s blog: The silent years: Sadducees/Herodians [accessed April 2017] <http://makingtalmidim.blogspot.com.au/2014/09/the-silent-years-sadduceesherodians.html>

And so the Hasmonean family took their daughter and married her to a neighbouring ruler, the man we know as Herod the Great. Herod was the man who inherited from his father the Nabatean/Idumean kingdom that we spoke about in the book of Obadiah. This group of traders had become incredibly wealthy and powerful; to this day, scholars are baffled by the social and economic accomplishments of this nomadic group of people who began to build cities in the eastern desert.

According to some estimates, Herod was the richest man ever to live (including through today). According to history, his income sat at well over a hundred times his country's GDP. If this is even remotely true, Herod could have bought the Roman Empire a few times over. This gave Herod incredible clout in a political conversation. Rome, however, had all of the power and might, so Herod feared for his safety. As long as the two agreed to play nice, the relationship would be incredibly beneficial for both parties. Herod would enjoy great regional power and immeasurable wealth; Rome would have a leader with enough influence to rule a very difficult and tumultuous region.

And so the Hasmoneans arranged for this brilliant political situation and positioned themselves to enjoy a dynasty under Roman rule. One of Herod's first acts would be to find a new high priest for the Jewish Temple system. He held the office up for bid to the Hasmoneans. The Hasmonean leadership was made up of seven families who were directly descended from Zadok, the high priest from the days of Solomon. These descendants were called Zadoki or Zadokim, which we translate as "Sadducee." While the term Sadducee originally referred to the direct descendants of Zadok, it eventually became used of the priesthood to describe any descendant of Aaron. The term became used more to speak of a "party," rather than a descent. However, these seven families will be spoken of in Scripture as the "chief priests." These seven families, or chief priests, were offered the high priesthood by Herod to the highest bidder. (Please understand, this was a total corruption of the system.) Amongst these seven families, the house of Ananus (we often translate as Annas) bought the high priesthood and his house would hold it until the destruction of Jerusalem. The corruption was well known and grew to such an extent that the best way to understand the chief priests would be to see them as a mafia. Here are some details we know from history (mostly from Josephus):

- The chief priests only paid the other priests for the two weeks they worked each year, keeping the remaining tithes for themselves.
- The chief priests owned the system of money-changers and merchants who sold on the Temple Mount; they were called “the booths of Ananus” and they were built off of a complete ownership of the economic system AND the regulations that oversaw the system.
- The chief priests had their own Temple Guard, who were notorious for carrying out behind-the-scenes executions of their enemies.
- The chief priests had their own “Sanhedrin,” who met in the private home of the High Priest and functioned outside the formal Sanhedrin, who were made up of both Pharisees and Sadducees.

And we need to clear up some terms, so that we understand the writings of the gospels:

- The “chief priests” are the leading families of the priesthood, descended from Zadok, who function as a mafia.
- The High Priest is their leader and continues to function as the leader described in the Books of Moses, although much of the public understands the system to be completely corrupt and no longer bearing any resemblance to the Levitical priesthood. The Mishnah is brutal in its description of the priesthood under Herod and the corruption of God’s Levitical standard.
- “Sadducee” is a term that refers to a party (think Republican/Democrat) and is any member of the serving priesthood who sees themselves as a part of the priestly system. While they may or may not share directly in the corruption of the chief priests, they are giving their passive nod to the system they oversee.

All of those mentioned above would be priestly descendants of Aaron. However, there would also be a portion of the general public that would approve of the Hellenistic lifestyle. They would rejoice in the world that the rule of Herod has ushered in. While they certainly would not rejoice in the corruption of the Temple, they turn a blind eye to it and continue to carry on with business as usual. This group of non-priests who share the same worldview are called “Herodians”.

Will a man Rob God?

Malachi 3:8-9 ⁸ Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. ⁹ Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

Corrupt priestly practices were actually “robbing God” well might Jesus reprimand them in John 2:16; “make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise” (den of thieves). Moreover, instead of giving the “first tithe” to the Levites it was given instead to the priests of Aaron’s lineage, after Ezra had fined the Levites for not returning in full force to the Land of Israel. By not being able to give the first tithe unto the Levites, as originally commanded by God, this made the avowal of Deuteronomy 26:12–15 null and void.¹² John Hyrcanus the High Priest is remembered in rabbinic literature as cleaning up many of these practices including the sacrifice of animals injured (by stunning) during the process (therefore blemished). Nevertheless, despite cosmetic changes the priesthood had become essentially corrupt.

Malachi 3:10 ¹⁰ Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

Famine was the consequence of neglecting tithes but probably also due to a sabbatical year, Mary Smallwood notes that, “There is no reason to doubt that the tradition that the city fell in 37 on the anniversary of its fall in 63 is substantially correct, even if the Jewish love of anniversaries (cf. the five calamities on 9 Ab: above. p. 459) eventually turned an approximate coincidence of date into an exact one. Secondly, Josephus says that the besieged **suffered from famine** because it was a sabbatical year—AJ xiv, 475; cf. xv, 7. This appears to mean that the year October 38/7 was sabbatical. But food shortages consequent on a sabbatical year will normally have been felt, not in the actual year, when stocks from the previous harvest were available, but in the following year”.¹³ Josephus dates the fall of Jerusalem to Pompey in 63 BCE and the fall to Herod in 37 BCE as both occurring on the eve of the Day of Atonement and the same feast features in the trumpet section of Revelation (repeat patterns). Ironically, Herod (not God) subsequently provided famine relief (when needed) out of his own vast funds, after all, the temple itself had become a lucrative enterprise drawing funds from the Diaspora and the priesthood was for sale.

¹² Jerusalem Talmud, Sotah 5:5, Maimonides' Mishnah Commentary (Ma'aser Sheni 5:15), vol. 1, Mossad Harav Kook: Jerusalem 1963, p. 233

¹³ E Mary Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian: a Study in Political Relations* (BRILL, 1981) Appendix D: The precise dates of the fall of Jerusalem in 63 and 37 BC, p., 566-567

Psalm of Solomon 17 and the Edomite dynasty

The Pseudigraphic Psalm of Solomon 17¹⁴ comes from this same period, Kenneth R. Atkinson analyses this pseudo psalm as follows: “The writer then condemns those who have ‘despoiled the throne of David’ (Ps. Sol. 17.5-6) who had also forcibly seized the government and established an unlawful monarchy (Ps. Sol. 17.5-6). This rather transparent historical allusion clearly refers to the Hasmonean dynasty, who ruled as kings although they were not of the Davidic line. Because of their sins, God permitted a ‘man foreign to our race’ (Ps. Sol. 17.7) to conquer Jerusalem and exterminate this unlawful Hasmonean royal family (Ps. Sol. 17.7-10). Although the psalmist initially rejoices at this event (Ps. Sol. 17.10), the situation quickly becomes worse as this ‘lawless’ man (Ps. Sol. 17.11), after removing the Hasmoneans from power proceeds to oppress the city’s population and forces the author’s community to flee Jerusalem (Ps. Sol. 17.11-17). The psalmist reflects upon Jerusalem’s present situation and concludes that the entire population, from the leader to the common people, are immoral (Ps. Sol. 17. 18-20). With this oppression unbearable, the author feels that there is no hope unless God intervenes in human affairs and sends the lawful ruler, the ‘Son of David’ (Ps. Sol. 17.21) to purge Jerusalem of its Gentile and Jewish sinners (Ps.Sol. 17.21-46). This anticipated king is not an ordinary Davidic descendant, for the psalmist unambiguously proclaims that he will be none other than the ‘Lord’s Messiah’ (Ps. Sol. 17.32). Psalm of Solomon 17’s author portrays this Davidic Messiah as a righteous counterpart to the ‘man that is foreign to our race’ (Ps. Sol.17.7), who had devastated Jerusalem and persecuted the psalmist’s community....Psalm of Solomon 17 reflects the tumultuous conditions that accompanied Herod the Great’s rise to power in 37 BCE when, with the assistance of the Roman general Sosius, he successfully attacked Jerusalem to seize the throne Herod, the ‘man alien to our race’ (Ps. Sol. 17.7)”....¹⁵

¹⁴ See Supplement (3) Psalm of Solomon 17

¹⁵ Kenneth R. Atkinson, ON THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MILITANT DAVIDIC MESSIANISM AT QUMRAN:NEW LIGHT FROM PSALM OF SOLOMON 17 (p.107-108) in Craig A. Evans,The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2000);106-123.

Second Elijah and the adultery of Herod

Malachi 2:15-16 ¹⁵ And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. ¹⁶ For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

The Herod dynasty was known for adultery and violent intrigue divorce, murder of spouses and even children. God would become a swift witness against the adulterers (Malachi 3.5). This was fulfilled in the witness of John the Baptist; “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD” (Malachi 4.5). “For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodia’s sake, his brother Philip’s wife. For John said unto him, it is not lawful for thee to have her” (Matt 14.3-4). The priests, who were meant to be the messengers of the Lord of hosts (Malachi 2.7) had failed, they lived in Jerusalem with their rich garments and were bought and paid for by Herod, but God had sent his own forerunner in the spirit of Elijah.

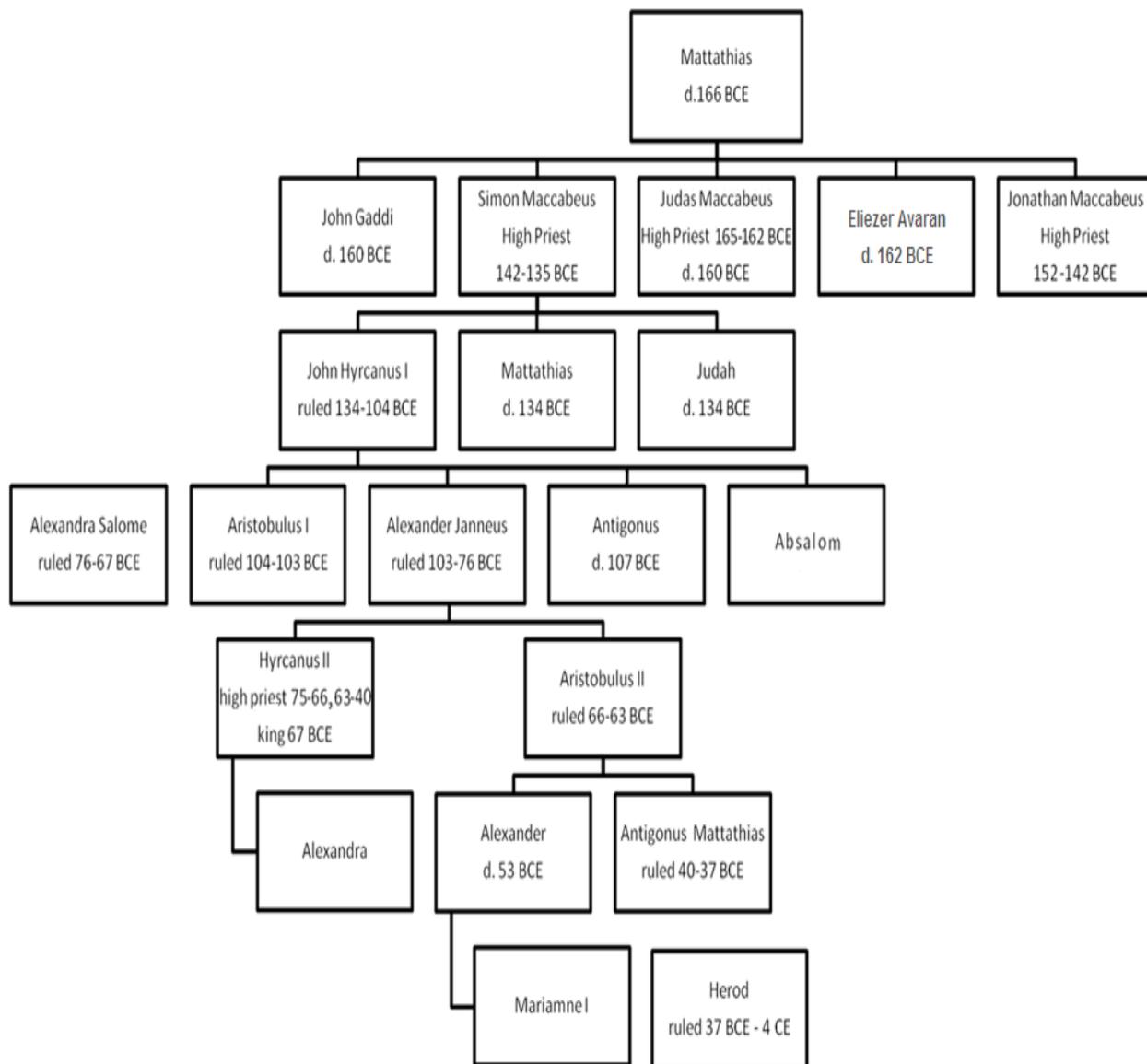
Conclusion

The book of Malachi can probably be dated sometime in the reign of Antipater (died 36/37 BCE) anticipating the rise to power of the **Edomite Kings**, with Herod the Great appearing about 33 years before the birth of John the Baptist. The suggested dating range is therefore 100-30 CE. It is a prophetic oracle condemning the corrupt priesthood of that time and looking forward to the messenger of the covenant, the forerunner - - John the Baptist- - second Elijah.

Supplementary information see Below

Supplementary information

(1) The descendants of Mattathias (Maccabean dynasty)¹⁶



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(2) Analysing the Hebrew of the Micah-Isaiah table (see Davis)

Malachi 3.1	מִלְאָכִי mlak-i	שְׁלַח shich
	messenger-of-me sending	
Isaiah 42.19	אֲשַׁלַּח ashlich	כְּמִלְאָכִי k·mlak-i
	I-am-sending as-messenger-of-me	
Malachi 3.1	דְּרֶךְ - drk -	וּפְנֵיהָ u-phne
	way and-he- ^m surfaces	
Isaiah 40.3	דְּרֶךְ drk	פְּנֵי phnu
	way-of ^m surface-you ⁽⁶⁾ !	
Isaiah 62.10	דְּרֶךְ drk	פְּנֵי phnu
	way-of ^m surface-you ⁽⁶⁾ !	
Malachi 3.2	מְצַרֵּף mtzrph	
	one- ^m refining	
Isaiah 1.25	וְאֶצְרֵף u-atzrph	
	and-I-shall-refine	
Isaiah 41.7	אֶת־צִרְף tzrph - ath	
	one-refining	
Malachi 3.16	וַיִּכְתֹּב u-ikthb	
	and-he-is-being-written	
Isaiah 4.3	הַקְּתוּב e-kthub	
	the-one-being-written	
Malachi 4.1	קֵשׁ qsh	וְלֵהִט u-let
	and-he- ^m sets-afire straw	
Isaiah 5.25	קֵשׁ qsh	לְשׁוֹן Ishun
	tongue-of straw	
Malachi 4.6	אֶת־הָאָרֶץ e-artz - ath	וְהִכִּיתִי u-ekithi
	the-earth » and-I- ^s smite	
Isaiah 11.4	אָרֶץ - artz -	וְהִקָּה u-eke
	earth and-he- ^s smites	

(3) Psalm of Solomon 17¹⁷

A Psalm Of Solomon. With Song. Of the King.

- 1 O Lord, Thou art our King for ever and ever,
For in Thee, O God, doth our soul glory.
- 2 How long are the days of man's life upon the earth
As are his days, so is the hope (set) upon him.
- 3 But we hope in God, our deliverer;
For the might of our God is for ever with mercy,
- 4 And the kingdom of our God is for ever over the nations in judgment.
- 5 (4) Thou, O Lord, didst choose David (to be) king over Israel,
And swardst to him touching his seed that never should his kingdom fail before Thee.
- 6 (5) But, for our sins, sinners rose up against us;
They assailed us and thrust us out;
What Thou hadst not promised to them, they took away (from us) with violence.
- 7 They in no wise glorified Thy honorable name;
- (6) They set a (worldly) monarchy in place of (that which was) their excellency;
- 8 They laid waste the throne of David in tumultuous arrogance.
- (7) But Thou, O God, didst cast them down and remove their seed from the earth,
- 9 In that there rose up against them a man that was alien to our race.
- 10 (8) According to their sins didst Thou recompense them, O God;
So that it befell them according to their deeds.
- 11 (9) God showed them no pity;
He sought out their seed and let not one of them go free.
- 12 (10) Faithful is the Lord in all His judgments Which He doeth upon the earth.
- 13 (11) The lawless one laid waste our land so that none inhabited it,
They destroyed young and old and their children together.
- 14 (12) In the heat of His anger He sent them away even unto the west,
And (He exposed) the rulers of the land unsparingly to derision.
- 15 (13) Being an alien the enemy acted proudly,
And his heart was alien from our God.
- 16 (14) And all things [whatsoever he did in] Jerusalem,
As also the nations [in the cities to their gods.]
- 17 (15) And the children of the covenant in the midst of the mingled peoples
[surpassed them in evil.]
There was not among them one that wrought in
the midst of Jerusalem mercy and truth.
- 18 (16) They that loved the synagogues of the pious fled from them,
As sparrows that fly from their nest.
- 19 (17) They wandered in deserts that their lives might be saved from harm,
And precious in the eyes of them that lived abroad was any that escaped alive from them.

¹⁷ One of the Pseudepigrapha, the Psalms of Solomon is a group of eighteen psalms (religious songs or poems) that are not part of any scriptural canon (they are, however, found in copies of the Peshitta and the Septuagint). The 17th of the 18 psalms is similar to Psalm 72 which has traditionally been attributed to Solomon, and hence may be the reason that the Psalms of Solomon have their name. An alternate theory is that the psalms were so highly regarded that Solomon's name was attached to them to keep them from being ignored or forgotten. Psalms of Solomon. (2017, January 29). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 09:48, April 10, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Psalms_of_Solomon&oldid=762592739

- 20 (18) Over the whole earth were they scattered by lawless (men).
- 21 (19) For the heavens withheld the rain from dropping upon the earth, Springs were stopped (that sprang) perennial(ly) out of the deeps, (that ran down) from lofty mountains. For there was none among them that wrought righteousness and justice;
- (20) From the chief of them to the least (of them) all were sinful;
- 22 The king was a transgressor, and the judge disobedient, and the people sinful.
- 23 (21) Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the son of David,
At the time in the which Thou seest, O Go that he may reign over Israel Thy servant
- 24 (22) And gird him with strength, that he may shatter unrighteous rulers,
- 25 And that he may purge Jerusalem from nations that trample (her) down to destruction.
- (23) Wisely, righteously 26 he shall thrust out sinners from (the) inheritance,
He shall destroy the pride of the sinner as a potter's vessel.
- (24) With a rod of iron he shall break in pieces all their substance,
- 21 He shall destroy the godless nations with the word of his mouth;
- (25) At his rebuke nations shall flee before him,
And he shall reprove sinners for the thoughts of their heart.
- 28 (26) And he shall gather together a holy people, whom he shall lead in righteousness,
And he shall judge the tribes of the people that has been sanctified by the Lord his God.
- 29 (21) And he shall not suffer unrighteousness to lodge any more in their midst,
Nor shall there dwell with them any man that knoweth wickedness,
- 30 For he shall know them, that they are all sons of their God.
- (28) And he shall divide them according to their tribes upon the land,
- 31 And neither sojourner nor alien shall sojourn with them any more.
- (29) He shall judge peoples and nations in the wisdom of his righteousness. Selah.
- 32 (30) And he shall have the heathen nations to serve him under his yoke;
And he shall glorify the Lord in a place to be seen of () all the earth;
- 33 And he shall purge Jerusalem, making it holy as of old:
- 34 (31) So that nations shall come from the ends of the earth to see his glory,
Bringing as gifts her sons who had fainted,
- 35 And to see the glory of the Lord, wherewith God hath glorified her.
- (32) And he (shall be) a righteous king, taught of God, over them,
- 36 And there shall be no unrighteousness in his days in their midst,
For all shall be holy and their king the anointed of the Lord.
- 37 (33) For he shall not put his trust in horse and rider and bow,
Nor shall he multiply for himself gold and silver for war,
Nor shall he gather confidence from () a multitude () for the day of battle.
- 38 (34) The Lord Himself is his king, the hope of him
that is mighty through (his) hope in God.
<> All nations (shall be) in fear before him,
- 39 (35) For he will smite the earth with the word of his mouth for ever.
- 40 He will bless the people of the Lord with wisdom and gladness,
- 41 (36) And he himself (will be) pure from sin, so that he may rule a great people.
He will rebuke rulers, and remove sinners by the might of his word;
- 42 (37) And (relying) upon his God, throughout his days he will not stumble;
For God will make him mighty by means of (His) holy spirit,
And wise by means of the spirit of understanding, with strength and righteousness.
- 43 (38) And the blessing of the Lord (will be) with him: he will be strong and stumble not;
- 44 (39) His hope (will be) in the Lord: who then can prevail against him
- (40) (He will be) mighty in his works, and strong in the fear of God,
- 45 (He will be) shepherding the flock of the Lord faithfully and righteously,

And will suffer none among them to stumble in their pasture.

46 (41) He will lead them all aright,

And there will be no pride among them that any among them should be oppressed.

47 (42) This (will be) the majesty of the king of Israel whom God knoweth;

He will raise him up over the house of Israel to correct him.

48 (43) His words (shall be) more refined than costly gold, the choicest;

In the assemblies he will judge the peoples, the tribes of the sanctified.

49 His words (shall be) like the words of the holy ones in the midst of sanctified peoples.

50 Blessed be they that shall be in those days,

In that they shall see the good fortune of Israel which God
shall bring to pass in the gathering together of the tribes.

51 May the Lord hasten His mercy upon Israel!

May He deliver us from the uncleanness of unholy enemies!

The Lord Himself is our king for ever and ever.

Translated from Greek and Syriac manuscripts by G. Buchanan Gray in R. H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913) 2: 631-652.

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