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May 5, 1961Report on Rabbinical Thesis of William J. Gordon  
Entitled  
"Aspects of the Book of Malachi in Rabbinical Exegesis"

This thesis consists of 63 pages of text, 6 pages of Notes, and one page of Bibliography. The author first discusses the Book of Malachi as it is seen by modern scientific exegetes. This is done in order to determine the possible peshat of this biblical book, and thus to provide a yardstick with which to measure the Rabbinic contribution in the field of derash.

The second chapter examines a large number of passages from the Talmud and the Midrash in which reference is made to the Prophet himself, or in which verses of his book are quoted in a variety of contexts. Mr. Gordon finds that the Rabbis did not approach this book as a unit, but rather sought in its verses proof texts for issues which arose in the daily life of the people. This chapter is evidence of diligent research, but the author has not applied himself sufficiently to the exposition of such rabbinic passages as he has assembled.

The third chapter, after giving brief biographies of the major exegetes found in the Mikraoth Gedoloth, summarizes what they had to say by way of explaining some of the crucial, and some of the more difficult, verses of the Book of Malachi.

A brief summary, in a homiletical vein, points out some of the leading ideas of Malachi as they have lived on in the Rabbinic Tradition.

Though far from being an exhaustive treatment of this subject, Mr. Gordon's thesis is evidence of the author's having familiarized himself with the sources, and of the learning experience involved in this.

I, therefore, recommend to the Faculty of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion the acceptance of Mr. Gordon's thesis in partial fulfillment of requirements for the M.A.H.L. degree and Rabbinic Ordination.

Jakob J. Petuchowski  
Referee

ASPECTS OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI  
IN RABBINICAL EXEGESIS

by

WILLIAM J. GORDON

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-  
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DIGEST

A book can be read from more than one approach. The books of the Bible, the "constitution" of the world, have been read from many sides. In this paper I have pointed out three of these approaches to the Book of Malachi. The view of the modern scholarship, who have read it as a literary document. The rabbis who used it in providing proofs for man's behavior in daily life; and the view of the medieval Jewish commentators, the Jewish exegetes who include in their commentaries the views of the rabbis.

The purport of the prophet's message was of greater importance to the rabbis than who wrote the book. They found in these three short chapters evidence for moral conduct. They found in this book answers concerning the divorce laws by which man should govern himself.

These lessons they taught their people and these lessons they handed down to us.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter One - The Modern View of the Book of Malachi .....	1
Chapter Two - The Rabbis and the Book of Malachi .....	11
Chapter Three - Malachi According to the Medieval Jewish Commentators ...	41
Summary .....	62
Footnotes:	
Chapter One .....	64
Chapter Two .....	65a
Chapter Three .....	70
Bibliography .....	71

## CHAPTER I

### THE MODERN VIEW OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI

In order to better appreciate the Rabbinic Commentaries on the book of Malachi for what they are we begin with the modern view as set forth by most modern scholars.

When after the fall of Babylon a company of Jewish exiles returned to Judah, nothing but disappointment awaited them. None of the glorious events predicted by Deutero-Isaiah had come true on their homeward march. And in Judah itself a weary struggle for existence resulted. Few in number and poor in means, they found it hard to cope with the difficulties. Drought and failure of the crops aggravated their distress, till finally, disillusioned and disappointed, they were in danger of losing their faith in Yahweh. He had not returned to them, He was still angry with them; there was no hope.<sup>1</sup>

Upon such a scene arrived Haggai and then Zechariah, the first of the post-exilic prophets. Under their guidance the Temple was rebuilt and rededicated.

Following the dedication of the temple the people had been zealous in the performance of their cultic duties. The maintenance of the temple and its cult was expensive, however, and the people were poor, no king or government paid for the cost of the temple and its clergy.<sup>2</sup> For religious purity and devotion the growing custom of intermarriage with foreigners constituted another serious problem. The purity of Jewish

2.

blood was vitiated, and the devotion to Yahweh undermined.<sup>3</sup> It is no wonder that many began to doubt God's love and justice, and ask whether religion was after all worth while.

Such were the conditions that faced the last of the post-exilic and the last of the prophets, Malachi.

Malachi arose about 460 and argued with the people, the theme of his prophecy is stated clearly in the opening section of the book.<sup>4</sup> Yahweh still loves Israel, notwithstanding the fact that appearances seem to tell against a belief in such love. The second and main section points out in detail some of the obstacles that stand in the way of the full and free exercise of Yahweh's love toward his people. These obstacles are found in the failure of the people in general and the priests in particular to manifest that respect and reverence toward Yahweh that are due from a people to its God.<sup>5</sup> And again in the fact that native Jewish wives have been divorced in order that the way might be cleared for new marriages with foreign women -- a proceeding exhibiting both inhumanity and apostasy.<sup>6</sup> And in the general materialism and faithlessness of the times, which call in question the value of faith and righteousness and will make necessary the coming of a day of judgment.<sup>7</sup> And finally in the failure to render to Yahweh generously and willingly the tithes and offerings that are his due.<sup>8</sup> The last section<sup>9</sup>

takes up again the note with which the prophecy opens, and it assures the pious that their labours have not been in vain; for in the day of Yahweh which is near at hand Israel's saints will experience the protection of Yahweh's fatherly love,<sup>11</sup> whereas the wicked will perish.

The essential unity of the book of Malachi has never been called in question. Editorial additions are few and slight. The only passages that have been attacked as not belonging to the original prophecy are 2:7, 11, 12 and 3:22-24.<sup>12</sup>

The book of Malachi was originally anonymous and bore the same title as the two books Zechariah 9-11 and 12-14: "An Oracle."<sup>13</sup>

The style of the book is clear and simple. It is at the same time direct and forceful. In distinction from most of the prophetic books, Malachi must be classified as<sup>14</sup> prose.

Like the book of Haggai, the book of Malachi is of slight religious and literary importance, but an invaluable historical source for the obscure history of the Jews in the Persian period before Nehemiah.<sup>15</sup> Malachi furnishes no statement regarding the time of its origin. Nor does external testimony aid much in determining its date. The citation from 3:24 which occurs in Ben Sira 48:10 does, indeed, put practically out of the question any Maccabean date proposed

<sup>16</sup>  
by some.

The contents of the book help us somewhat in determining the time in which it was written. The reference to Edom in 1:2-4 might present a clue. Edom has received some telling blow which has left her prostrate. Israel's hatred of Edom is thereby gratified. This hatred characterized Israel continuously from the time of the fall of Jerusalem.<sup>17</sup> It is quite possible that the overthrowing of Edom by the Nabataeans was the disaster to which our prophet refers. If so, the date of Malachi must fall somewhere between 586 B.C.<sup>18</sup> and 312 B.C.

We can fix the date more exact than this. Judah we are told is ruled by a governor<sup>19</sup> and in the second Temple (completed in 516) the priests have been performing ritual ceremonies for a number of years,<sup>20</sup> and are wearied by them.<sup>21</sup> Some of the reforms made by Nehemiah in 432 are still conspicuous in the time of Malachi, who knows nothing of Nehemiah's reforms and no knowledge of the Priestly Code. He does however mention the Deuteronomic Code; his contempt for the offering of blemished victims<sup>22</sup> rests on Deuteronomy 15:21; and 17:1; his demand for the full payment of "tithe and heave offering (terumah)"<sup>23</sup> corresponds to the law of Deuteronomy 14:22-29; the priests are called "sons of Levi"<sup>24</sup> as in Deuteronomy 21:5, where Levite and priest are synonymous terms, and not "sons of Zadok" (as in Ezekiel) or "sons of

Aaron" (as in Priestly Code).<sup>25</sup>

The book of Malachi then is an invaluable historical source for the obscure history of the Jews in the Persian period before Nehemiah. The millenium promised by Haggai once the temple was rebuilt had still not arrived. The situation was desperate for the community in Jerusalem. About 480, when a plague of locusts "the devourer" (Malachi 3:11), and a blight in vineyards caused great economic distress, the unknown prophet traditionally called Malachi presented the indictment of the Lord against His people.<sup>26</sup>

Like Haggai, Malachi paints a sordid picture of the economic and spiritual misery of the Jewish community of his day, and believes that the cure lies both in correcting ritual shortcomings and in hoping for the miraculous intervention of the deity which is to follow. Their attitude is contrary to that of Amos who spoke in a time of prosperity. The optimism of the people in the time of Amos is in sharp contrast with the pessimism of the post-exilic community.

The precise point at which the writer of Malachi appeared still eludes us. The one conclusion we can make; Malachi set the scene for Nehemiah and the conditions under which and amid which he worked. For the abuses attacked by Malachi are exactly those against which the reforms of Nehemiah were directed. The priesthood had lost all zest in the performance of sacred ceremonies and all reverence for the

Lord (1:7-9, 12f). The temple-services and offerings had fallen into disrepute (1:7). The people, suffering from economic distress, cheated in the payment of vows (1:14) and of tithes due the temple (3:8). The feeling existed that godliness was not profitable for all things and that the service of Yahweh was a one-sided contract, in accordance with which Israel gave everything and received nothing (2:17; 3:7-10, 14; cf. Nehemiah 10:32-39; 13:10-13). In addition to these wrong doings, the Jews had descended from spiritual heights by having entered into new marriages with non-Jewish women belonging to the influential families of the vicinity. (2:10-16, cf. Ezra 9-10; Neh. 10:28-30; 13:23-31). Even the few words devoted by Malachi to the social wrongs of the times (3:5) find their justification in the conditions recorded in Nehemiah's memoirs (Neh. 5:1-13).<sup>27</sup>

Although some place Malachi before Ezra, others, contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, still others place it during Nehemiah's absence at the Persian court. It is difficult to regard Malachi as coming from any time when Nehemiah was actually in Jerusalem; because 1:8 implies the presence of a governor who was accustomed to receive gifts from the citizens, while Nehemiah distinctly says that he did not avail himself of this privilege (Neh. 5:15-18). On the whole, it is best to interpret the author of Malachi as one who prepared the way for the reforms of Nehemiah.<sup>28</sup>



As stated, the book of Malachi is an anonymous writing. The name owes its origin to 3:1. As it stands it can only mean "my messenger." It might be an abbreviated form of Malachiah (cf 2K 18:12 and 2 Chr 29:1).<sup>29</sup> As the book is anonymous nothing can be known of the author beyond what the book itself may reveal as to his character and temperament. Jerome and the Targum tell us that the Jews of his day identified "Malachi" with Ezra. Others have identified the author as Zerubbabel and Nehemiah. Pseudo Epiphanius declares Malachi was a man of Sopha in Zebulun and was to have been characterized by an angelic form and appearance. Not content with this, tradition has made him a Levite and a member of the "Great Synagogue" and has declared him to have died while still young.<sup>30</sup>

From the contents of his prophecy one would call him a patriotic Jew, loving his country and his people passionately and hating the enemies of Israel fervently. When confronted by the people, how does God love us, (1:2) and the justice (2:17) of the Lord, he can think of no more convincing proof of Yahweh's love for Israel than the fact that Edom has recently been stricken down in accordance with Yahweh's will. Malachi remains loyal to the old ways and the ancestral religion when others give up in despair and would exchange old faiths for new. He is a man ethically and spiritually minded in a high degree. He does not regard ritual as an end

in itself, but as the outer and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, the expression of faith in and devotion toward Yahweh. Its neglect indicates a lack of true religion.<sup>31</sup>

The task of this unknown prophet was to rekindle the fires of faith in the hearts of a discouraged people. The hopes centered in Zerubbabel were dissipated and shattered. The glowing pictures of Haggai and Zechariah were not realized. The first zeal for the new temple rapidly cooled. Israel was apparently as far from exaltation to influence and power now as she had ever been. In the midst of such conditions and amid such sentiments, the writer of Malachi prepared his apology in behalf of Yahweh. He must accomplish two things at least, furnish a satisfactory explanation of the delay in the fulfillment of Israel's expectations and re-establish confidence in Yahweh and in the speedy coming of his Messiah. He attempts to achieve the first by transferring the responsibility for the delay from Yahweh to Israel herself. Just as Haggai and Zechariah had insisted upon the rebuilding of the temple as the only way to the favor of Yahweh, so our prophet demands certain definite and tangible action as a prerequisite to the coming of the desired good. The old prophetic protest against social injustice sounds forth again in 3:5, showing that the ethical interests so characteristic of earlier prophecy lay near to the heart of this prophet also. A special phase of this protest is the denunciation

of the common practice in accordance with which Jewish husbands divorce their Jewish wives and take wives from the surrounding non-Jewish families in their place. The prophet keenly represented the cruelty involved in this practice. He characterized the procedure as treachery on the part of the offender toward his own people. But, more than this, it is treachery to Yahweh. It brings into the Jewish family those who have no interest in Yahweh. It involves the birth of children, who will be under the influence of mothers who do not serve Yahweh. If the worship of Yahweh is to continue in Israel, or the favour of Yahweh to be poured out upon Israel, the intermarriage of Jews and non-Jews must cease.<sup>32</sup>

The prophet's demands involve a complete change of heart and attitude on Israel's part. This is the indispensable condition for the coming of the Messianic age. In keeping with the trend of post-exilic thought, he sets his whole mind upon the coming of the Messiah and his kingdom. This kingdom, needs not the assistance of any earthly power to establish itself in its rightful place. Yahweh himself will bring it into its own. He conceives of piety as entitled to its material rewards. He is sure that, if those rewards are not bestowed in the existing dispensation, they will be forthcoming in full measure in the Messianic age. The thought that piety is its own reward, that God is his own best gift, finds no expression from him. But, at a time

when faith was wavering, he met his contemporaries on their own ground, and thrilled their hearts with the assurance that the dawn of the Golden Age was at hand. He also made this mighty eschatological hope operative in the betterment of the moral and religious conditions of his own day.<sup>33</sup>



## CHAPTER II

### THE RABBIS AND THE BOOK OF MALACHI

## CHAPTER II

Israel has been called the people of the book. It may as well have been called the people of Scripture exegesis. Exegesis is an attempt to interpret the bible in accordance with the daily needs of the people. Through exegesis the rabbis attempted to develop religious edification, moral instructions and a pertinent religious existence for their time.<sup>1</sup>

In this light we turn to the rabbis' use of the Book of Malachi. They approached it not as a complete unit, but rather sought in its verses proof texts for issues which arose in the daily life of the people. They discussed the name of the book and attempted to set forth a conclusion concerning who the author might have been. Who was the individual who carried the "burden of the word of the Lord to Israel?" In answer to this we find in the Talmud<sup>2</sup>:

"Malachi is the same as Mordecai. Why was he called Malachi? Because he was next to the king.<sup>3</sup> The following was cited in objection to this: 'Baruch, the son of Neriah and Serayah, the son of Mahseyah and Daniel and Mordecai, Bilshan, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi all prophesied in the second year of Darius! This is a refutation.'<sup>4</sup>

The passage goes on:

"It has been taught": R. Joshua b. Korha said:

"Malachi is the same as Ezra," and the Sages say, "that Malachi was his proper name." R. Nahman said: "There is good ground for accepting the view that Malachi was the same as Ezra. For it is written in the prophecy of Malachi, 'Judah hath dealt treacherously and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loveth, and hath married the daughter of a strange God.'"<sup>5</sup> And who was it (Mal. 2:11) that put away the strange women? Ezra, as it is written, "And Shechaniah, the son of Jekiel, one of the sons of Elam answered and said unto Ezra: 'We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women.'" (Ezra 10:2).

One other reference is made concerning Malachi and Ezra; this in the Targum, the Aramaic translation of the Bible. A word first about the Targum from the Talmud itself. The Targum of the Prophets was composed by Jonathan ben Uzziel under the guidance of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.<sup>6</sup> In the Targum we find ..... Malachi who was Ezra.<sup>7</sup>

In the Midrash Pesikta Rabati<sup>8</sup> a selection characterizes the personality of the prophet Malachi. In commenting on Isaiah 40:1 "Comfort Ye ....." "the prophets are classified chastisers or comforters of the people." Malachi is placed

among those who came to comfort:

"I brought Malachi to comfort: He said to them, 'and all the nations shall call you happy; for you shall be a delightful land says the Lord of hosts.'" (Mal. 3:12).

This then the prophet and his personality as noticed in rabbinical literature.

The rabbis, as mentioned, used the book of Malachi as a proof text for the rules of conduct and teachings in the life of the people. These subjects we shall discuss in the light of the Talmudical or Midrashic texts in which the verses of Malachi appear.

#### God:

(Mal. 1:11) God is known throughout the world<sup>9</sup>: "From Tyre to Carthage the nations know Israel and their Father who is in heaven, but from Tyre westwards and from Carthage eastwards the nations know neither Israel nor their Father who is in heaven." R. Simi b. Hiyva raised the following objection: "Is it not written: For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name is great among the nations and in every place offerings are burnt and presented unto My name even pure oblations."

(Mal. 1:11). He replied, You, Shiml  
They call him God of the Gods. But they  
do not worship him. (Rab expresses sur-  
prise at his student for asking such an  
obvious question.)

(Mal. 3:16) In Lamentations Rabbah the following is found con-  
cerning the Lord God and the God of Antiochus.<sup>10</sup>

"Has your God ears?" asks Antiochus. The  
seventh son answers, "In connection with  
your gods it is written 'They have ears,  
but they hear not,' (Psalm 115:6), but in  
connection with our God it is written, 'And  
the Lord hearkened, and heard.'" (Mal. 3:16).

(Mal. 3:16) And again in Mekilta we find this example:

The Lord appeared at the sea as a mighty  
hero; a contrast is made then between the  
Lord and a mighty hero.<sup>11</sup>

"There may be a hero in a country, but the  
strength which he has at the age of forty  
is not like that which he has at sixty, the  
same at seventy but, as he goes on, his  
strength becomes diminished. He by whose  
word the world came into being, however, is  
not so, it is written, but, 'I the Lord change  
not.'" (Mal. 3:6).

(Mal. 1:6) Concerning "Hew Thee two tables of stone," (Ex. 34:1)  
the following is said:

"When you are in trouble then you call me  
Father, as it is written, 'But now, oh Lord,  
Thou art our Father; we are the clay and  
Thou our potter.'" (Isaiah 64:7).

The explanation of this verse, as it is written:  
"A son honors his father," (Mal. 1:6). The son  
refers to Esau who greatly honored Isaac. "And  
a servant his master" (1b). This applies to  
Nebuzaradan who was called a servant (2 Kings 25:8).  
But says the Lord, "the idol you call father; but  
you have not honored me as a father, neither were  
you afraid of me as a master," as it says, "If  
then I be a father, where is my honor, etc.?"  
(Mal. 1:6).<sup>12</sup>

(Mal. 1:2) Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish said: "The Holy One blessed  
be He expressed His love for Israel with three  
words of passion: clinging, longing, delight."  
Rabba bar Elisha added two more such words, love  
and comforting speech. Love as it says: "I have  
loved you says the Lord," (Mal. 1:2).<sup>13</sup>

(Mal. 1:2) There is "A time to love," (Eccl. 3:8), for it is  
written I have loved you," (Mal. 1:2).

(Mal. 1:2) "For love is as strong as death," (S.S. 8:6) As  
strong as death is the love wherewith the Holy One  
Blessed be He loves you as it is written, "I have

loved you," (Mal. 1:2). "Many waters cannot quench love," (S.S. 8:7) This too refers to God's love for Israel.<sup>15</sup>

(Mal. 3:12) When Solomon wished to know the reward of men who fear God and who trust in Him, men to whom Scripture says: "You shall be a delightful land," (Mal. 3:12); The Holy One Blessed be He quoted to Solomon that which was written: "Oh how abundant is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, etc." (Psalm 31:20).<sup>16</sup>

#### Israel

"One generation passes away and another generation comes, And the earth abides forever." (Eccl. 1:4). This verse refers to Israel and the nations. For in Judges (18:30) "Can then, the land go into captivity or be moved."<sup>17</sup> This is Israel as it is said, "And all nations shall call you happy; for you shall be a delightful land." (Mal. 3:12).<sup>18</sup> Concerning "My dove, my undefiled," (S.S. 5:2). This is the community of Israel, as it says, "And who is like Thy people, like Israel etc." (2 Sam 7:23); and the Midrash concludes "Beside her there is no child to her that bore her. The daughters saw her and called her happy," as it says "All

nations shall call you happy: for you shall be a delightful land." (Mal. 3:12).<sup>19</sup>

(Mal. 3:12) To Exodus 1:1 "Now these are the names of the sons of Israel." These are mentioned here on account of the pending redemption of Israel. Each son of Jacob is named and a proof text for each name corresponding to the pending redemption. Asher because all those who heard of their redemption and greatness praised them as it is written: "And all nations shall call you happy (ishru) for you shall be a delightful land. (Mal. 3:12).

#### Torah:

Many references are to be found regarding the Torah as the law of Moses as called in Malachi 3:22. "Remember you the Law of Moses my servant." To Exodus 1:20 we find this example. "And God dealt well": This is what is written "And unto man he said 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.' (Job 28:28). What is the reward of fear? Torah. Because Jochebed feared the Lord there issued from her Moses, of whom it is written, "that he was a goodly child" (Ex. 2:2). Moreover, the Torah which is termed a "goodly doctrine" (Prov. 4:2), was also given through him and is called by his name, as it is said: "Remember you the Law of Moses my servant" (Mal. 3:22).<sup>21</sup>

Ecc1. 9:14-15. This verse the rabbis connect with Moses and Sinai. The Holy/Blessed be He said, "No one remembered that poor man," (Ecc1. 9:15), but I will cause him to be remembered; as it is said "Remember you the law of Moses." (Mal. 3:22).<sup>22</sup>

The Torah is called the Law of Moses for he stayed upon the Mount forty days to receive and study it.<sup>23</sup>

(Mal 3:22) We read in the book of Esther.

"And when inquisition was made of the matter, and it was found to be so, ..... and it was written in the book of the Chronicles before the king." The rabbis comment: If a record in a book of a human being can have such an effect (that is to bring about the deliverance of the Jews when it was read to Ahasuerus) how much more so a record in the book of the Holy One Blessed be He, of which it is written, "Then they that feared the Lord, .... And a book of remembrance was written before Him."<sup>24</sup> (Mal. 3:22)

#### Covenant:

(Mal 2:2) The Covenant, as expressed in the few midrashic selections involving the book of Malachi, is the rite of circumcision,<sup>25</sup> begun with Abraham in Genesis. The covenant of life and peace was with Abraham,<sup>26</sup> Jacob<sup>27</sup> and even Aaron we find was praised by the omnipresent for naught so much as for peace, for it says: "My covenant

of life and peace was with him," (Mal. 2:5).<sup>28</sup>

(Mal. 2:5) Another selection poses the question: "Through what merit did Aaron enter the Holy of Holies?" This question in connection with, "And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hollow them," (Ex. 29:1).<sup>29</sup> The merit of circumcision entered with him, as it says, "Herewith shall Aaron come into the holy place": (Lev. 16:3) "This," having the same connotation as in the verse, "this is my covenant," (Gen. 17:10) and likewise it says, "My covenant was with him," (Mal. 2:5).<sup>30</sup>

(Mal. 2:5) Why did the priest officiate in eight garments? It could only be an allusion to circumcision which takes place at eight days from birth. Hence it is written, "My covenant was with him of life and peace." (Mal. 2:5).<sup>31</sup>

2:5 The privilege of partaking of the meal offering Aaron passed on to his descendants, both fit and unfit, as it is said, "My covenant was with him, of life" (Mal. 2:5) and "peace" (ib) for he ensured peace in Israel.<sup>32</sup> "And I gave them (life and peace) to him for the fear wherewith he feared Me" (ib), since Aaron took upon himself the injunctions of the Torah in awe, in fear, in trembling and quaking. Why does Scripture say (in addition), "And before My name he was dismayed (ib)?" For when he was anointed he

trembled and recoiled. Whereupon the Holy Spirit answered, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like precious oil ..... the beard, even Aaron's beard, etc." (Psalm 133:1ff).

- (Mal 2:6) The midrash continues with its exposition of Malachi 2:6. "The law of Truth was in his mouth, etc." in that he neither declared the permitted forbidden nor the forbidden permitted. Since he did not entertain misgivings about the ways of the all-present, even as Abraham had not entertained misgivings. This the exposition of, "He walked with me in peace and uprightness," (Mal. 2:6), "And he did turn many away from iniquity" (Mal. 2:6), in that he made transgressors turn to the study of the Torah. And thus it says, "Sincerely do they love thee" (S.S. 1:4).
- (Mal 2:7) What is the conclusion - "For the priests' lips keep knowledge so that they seek the law at his mouth," (Mal. 2:7).<sup>33</sup>
- (Mal 2:7) The priestly family was also the "messenger of the Lord of hosts," (Mal. 2:7). Meaning here that the priest is not only messenger but angel and the proof is the use of Mal. 2:7 for as the rabbis point out the Hebrew for angel and messenger is the same.<sup>34</sup>

#### Esau:

In keeping with their purpose, not of expounding the

- Bible in order to investigate its actual meaning, but in order to find religious edification, moral instruction and sustenance for the thoughts, and feelings of the present, those references in Scripture to Esau and Edom are referred to Rome, or as we notice in Esther Rabbah, Chapter 7: to the arch enemy of Israel in the Persian period Haman, a descendant say the Rabbis of Esau. "After these things did King Ahasuerus promote Haman, the son of Hammedatha," (Esther 3:1). An explanation of "After these things": Some mental calculation took place. Who calculated? R. Judah said: "Haman calculated." He thought to himself. "If Esther is a Jewess, she is my kinswoman from my ancestor, Esau as it says, "Was not Esau, Jacob's brother?" (Mal. 1:2).<sup>35</sup>
- (Mal 1:3) And we find other references to the wicked Esau who becomes in rabbinic literature the ancestor of Israel's persecutors, e.g., Rome. To Numbers 33:1 "These are the stages," the question is raised, Why were all these stages privileged to be recorded in the Torah? In return for their having received Israel, the Holy One Blessed be He will in the future give them their reward, as it is written, "The wilderness and the parched land shall be glad, etc." (Isaiah 35:1ff). Now if the wilderness will thus be rewarded for having received Israel is it not certain that one who receives



scholars into his house will be rewarded all the more? You find that the wilderness is destined to become an inhabited territory while the inhabited territory is destined to become a wilderness. Whence, the inference that inhabited territory is destined to become wilderness. From the text which says, "But Esau I hated, and made his mountains a desolation," (Mal. 1:3).<sup>36</sup>

(Mal 1:3) This reference to Esau is found in another context. When Moses went up to heaven, and the children of Israel meantime provoked God's displeasure, five angels of punishment, Af (anger), Kegef (wrath), Hemah (hot displeasure), Hasmed (annihilation), and maspit (destruction) confronted Moses. .... In dread of these angels Moses held up the merit of the patriarchs before God and said: "Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob....etc. (Ex. 32:12-13). But the Holy One Blessed be He replied: "The patriarchs. What is my obligation to them? On the contrary, they are under obligation to me. Abraham .....Isaac is under obligation to me because he loved the son who hated me. As is said, "Now Isaac loved Esau ....." (Gen. 25:28), of whom I said "But Esau I hated," (Mal. 1:3).<sup>37</sup>

When Aaron and his brothers are commanded to bless the children of Israel (Num. 6:23) the following discussion ensues:

(Mal 3:14, 15) Our verse (Num. 6:23) bears on what is written, "Envy thou not the man of violence, and choose none of his ways." (Prov. 3:31). The man of violence refers to Esau. The use of the word man in Proverbs 3:31 and the use of the word man in Genesis 25:27 meaning violence as read in Obadiah 1:10, and "envy thou not," because Israel will in the future be persecuted by Edom, as Malachi asserts, "You have said: It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept this charge, etc.?" (Mal. 3:14); "and now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are built up yea, they try God and are delivered." (1b 15). Accordingly, the Holy Spirit, speaking through Solomon, said, 'Envy thou not.' .Envy not the peace enjoyed by wicked Esau.

(Mal 3:18) ..... For look at the ultimate ...."Then shall you again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves him not." (Mal 3:18). For the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked (Prov. 3:33) this applies also to Esau; as you read, "Whereas Edom says: "We are beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places," thus says the Lord of Hosts, "They shall



- (Mal 1:5) build, but I will throw down, etc." (Mal. 1:4). But He blesses the habitation of the righteous (Prov. loc. cit) that is of Israel, about whom it is written, "Thy people also shall be all righteous," (Isaiah 60:21). "And your eyes shall see and you shall say:
- (Mal 3:15) The Lord is great beyond the border of Israel." (Mal 1:5). And the analogy continues: "If it concerns scorners, He scorns them." (Prov. 3:34). Scorners applies to Edom (Prov. 21:24) "And they are called proud," (Mal. 3:15). But how do we know it refers to the Edomites, because it is written, "they that work wickedness are built up," (Mal. 3:15). This refers to Edom because "And they shall be called the border of wickedness (Mal. 1:4).<sup>38</sup>

#### Elijah:

- (Mal 3:1) The reference to an angel in Exodus 23:20 is clarified in Exodus Rabbah 32:9. This angel when he will reveal himself, salvation will come to Israel, as it says, "Behold I send My messenger, and he shall clear the way before Me," (Mal. 3:1). This angel, he will be the herald announcing the coming of the Lord and of the time salvation.<sup>39</sup> In another reference we find Elijah is designated as this precursor of the coming of the Lord and salvation.<sup>40</sup> The proof text here Mal. 3:23. He is referred to in connection with the Messiah in another conte xt we have discussed, namely, the Book

of Remembrance. Who will record the acts of man in this ledger? Elijah and the Messiah and the Holy One Blessed be He subscribe their seal to the deeds of man, as it says. "Then they that feared the Lord spoke with one another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a Book of Remembrance was written before

(Mal 3:16) ~~him~~ <sup>41</sup> (Mal. 3:16).

- (Mal 3:23ff) And when Elijah comes, what will be his mission, why will he come? Elijah will come to declare clean or unclean, to accept or reject. He will come to reconcile disputes. The Sages say: He will ~~come~~ neither to accept nor to reject but to make peace in the world as it says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet ..... and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, etc." (Mal. 3:23ff).<sup>42</sup> The resurrection will be the result of his coming.<sup>43</sup>

#### Divorce - Inter-marriage

- (Mal 2:10-17) Malachi speaks quite strongly concerning divorce and intermarriage as abominations to the Lord. (Mal. 2: 10-17). The rabbis use these verses in their discussions of divorce and intermarriage. One passage is noteworthy in that they compare Israel and the nations and attitudes toward divorce. In commenting on (Genesis 2:24) "And shall cleave unto his wife," They have this to say. When the verse says "and shall cleave unto his wife" (ib) this refers to the

question, How do we know that a Gentile has no divorce. For throughout the book of Malachi, "The Lord of hosts is used," whereas here in reference to divorce we have the God of Israel, as it says, "for I hate putting away (i.e. divorce) says the Lord, the God of Israel." (Mal. 2:16). It is as though one might say, His name has no bearing on divorce save in the case of Israel alone. R. Hanan said: "When Nehemiah came up from the land of Exile (to Eretz Israel, he found that) the women's faces had been blackened by the sun, so that their husbands had gone and married strange (i.e. heathen) wives, while these would go round the altar weeping. Thus Malachi says, "And this you do a second time" (ib 2:13) you actually repeat (the sins committed at Shittim) "And Israel abode in Shittim and the people began to commit harlotting with the daughters of Moab." (Num. 25:1). "You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with sighing," (Mal. 2:13). The Holy One Blessed be He said, "Who will accept weeping and sighing from them. Who will pay heed to the husband's tears, when they petition Me seeing that they cause their own wives to weep?" Or it may refer to the second half of the verse, "Insomuch that he regards not offering anymore" (Mal. 2:13). Who

would accept offerings from them when they are responsible for their own wives' tears? Having robbed her, oppressed her and deprived her of her beauty, you cast her away.<sup>44</sup>

(Mal 2:16) In another passage we find this comment:

"For a hateful one put away," (Mal. 2:16). This means that, if you hate her you should put her away. R. Johanan says it means, "He that sends his wife away is hated." There is really no conflict between the two, since one speaks of the first divorce and the other of the second, as R. Eleazar said: "If a man divorces his first wife, even the altar sheds tears," as it says, "And this further you do, you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, (Mal. 2:13ff).<sup>45</sup>

(Mal 2:10-17) This section of Chapter 2, Malachi preached as part of a campaign against the sexual moralities of his contemporaries. Sexual immorality being a profanation of the covenant. The homily states: "This also you do, you profane God's altar with the tears of your wives. This is also as you did in the days of Moses." The people reply to the Prophet's accusation. And he answers them "Why does God distinguish between us?" His reply, "I don't deny God is the spirit of all flesh and that he created them too. But what is it that the Lord wants of you." (Mal 2:15)

"Zera' Elohim" (Godly seed), and non-Jewish women cannot bear Godly seed. The Sifra wants to indicate the problems which existed in legislating sexual morality. The people answer, "Let such a man who does this be cut off, may he not have seed who will be mentally alert." (Mal. 2:12). "And if he be a priest may he not have an offspring to continue offering the sacrifices to the Lord."<sup>46</sup>

(Mal 3:3) R. Hama b. Hanina said: "When the Holy One Blessed be He purifies the tribes He will first purify the tribe of Levi," for it is said, "And he shall purify the sons of Levi," (Mal. 3:3). R. Joshua said, "money purifies mamzerim," for it is said: "And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," (Mal. 3:3). What is meant by, "And they shall offer unto the Lord offerings in righteousness," (Mal. 3:3)? Said R. Isaacs: "The Holy One Blessed be He showed charity to Israel, in that a family once mixed up remains so."<sup>47</sup> The thought here being, that by means of their wealth the non-Jew intermarries with Israel and having thus mingled, they will not be separated in the future. Those who married by means of their silver the Lord will purify by retaining them in Israel, and finally, the Hebrew term zedakah denotes both righteousness and charity. So that no attempt is made to separate

a family once mixed with illegitimate elements.

2:11

A daughter must be treated in a proper manner. By selling her to one who does not marry her means the father has dealt treacherously, as it says, "Judah hath dealt treacherously," (Mal. 2:11). Therefore, such a one may not keep her. Bebagdo being derived from Beged, a garment. By placing his garment upon her he marries her.<sup>48</sup>

#### Sin:

Concerning the subject of sin the following passages are cited with reference to Malachi. If the court issued a law and only a minority of the congregation followed it, then what? The principal is as follows: A majority is like the whole. Now since it states, "And if the whole congregation of Israel shall err," (Lev. 4:13), the "whole" in this context means the entire court. Even though a sin was committed due to the courts' decision and all the members of the court did not agree, the majority is like the whole. However, we come to another principle, no law may be imposed upon the public unless a majority of the people can endure it, as it says: "You are cursed with the curse, yet you rob me, even this whole nation" (Mal. 3:9). Therefore, sin as a whole is used here to inform us that as long as all are present the decision of the majority, even though some differ, is valid.<sup>49</sup>

Now what happens to sinners. The wrongdoers of Israel and the Gentiles who sin with their body go down to Gehinnom

and are punished there for twelve months. After twelve months their body is consumed and their soul is burnt and the wind scatters them under the soles of the feet of the righteous. As it says, "And you shall tread down the wicked," (Mal. 3:21ff).<sup>50</sup>

"Can anyone hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" (Jer. 23:24). The answer is obviously no, "for I shall be a speedy witness to expose you in the world"; as you read, "And I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, etc." (Mal. 3:5).<sup>51</sup>

And again it says concerning the sinner, "I the Lord will comfort and forgive them."<sup>52</sup>

#### Sacrifice:

(Mal 3:8) The people well know that they must sacrifice to the Lord. At times they forgot and at times did not bring the correct kind of sacrifice. The rabbis call the people's attention to, "present it to your governor. Will he be pleased with you," (Mal. 1:8). "If your governor will not accept you or your sacrifice why should I," said the Lord.<sup>53</sup>

Now when the tithes were neglected by Israel they were reminded of Malachi's rebuke: "Will a man rob God? ..... But you say: Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and heave offerings," (Mal. 3:8), for you have neglected to bring them.<sup>54</sup>

(Mal 3:10)

What is the punishment for neglecting the tithes? Rain does not descend on account of the transgression of five things. Among them are the transgression of those who do not give their tithes in accordance with the regulations. How do we know? From the text: "Bring you the whole tithe into the storehouse...and try me...if I will not open the windows of heaven, etc.," (Mal. 3:10).<sup>55</sup>

Then what is the meaning of "Bring you the whole tithe into the store house....and try me...if I will not...pour you out a blessing ad belidat?" (Mal. 3:10). That is until your lips shall wear away from saying, "it is sufficient for us."<sup>56</sup>

And what in the verse is the meaning of "and try me now with this." That is, "Aaron shall come into the holy place, with a young Bullock, etc." (Lev. 16:3).<sup>57</sup>

(Mal 1:13)

"How do we know," Ulla said, "that renunciation does not transfer ownership?" Because it is said: "And you brought that which was"...Mal. 1:13...That which was misappropriated, is thus compared to the lame, just as the lame has no remedy at all to render it qualified for the altar, so also that which was misappropriated has no remedy at all, no matter before or after renunciation.<sup>58</sup>

(Mal 1:13)

In discussing the Lulav: A stolen or withered

Palm branch is invalid (on the first day) why is it invalid on the second day? R. Johanan answered in the name of R. Simeon b. Yohar, "because it would be a precept fulfilled through a transgression," as it is said, "And you have brought that which is stolen, and the lame, and the sick." (Mal. 1:13). Fulfilling a precept through a transgression is forbidden.<sup>59</sup>

(Mal 1:11) When Malachi speaks of pure oblations (1:11) what is meant by him? R. Hana makes two assertions. "All the exiles will be gathered in only through the merit of the study of Mishnah, and when Malachi mentions pure oblations, this refers to the Mishnah." Since no oblations or other sacrifices were offered in Babylonia where the Jews were in exile during the days of Malachi, Mishnah must be meant by pure oblations.<sup>60</sup>

(Mal 1:11) Another interpretation of this verse. One who offers fine flour for a meal offering (Lev. 6:13) is accounted as if he were offering a sacrifice from one end of the world to the other. As it is said, "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name is great among the nations; and in every place offerings are presented unto My name even a pure meal-offering," (Mal. 1:11).<sup>61</sup>

(Mal 3:4) "Locks black like a raven," (Song of Songs 5:11). This verse is referred to in those texts of the Torah which seem on the surface to be too repulsive and black

to be recited in public, but the Holy One Blessed be He says, "They are pleasing (Areboth) to Me" and then compare "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant (we-Arebah) unto the Lord," (Mal. 3:4).<sup>62</sup>

(Mal 3:4)

He who offers a sacrifice unto the Lord, in this world does not offer it in vain, "but if he offers, and it pleases Me," says the Lord, "Then in the world to come he will also be privileged to make an offering and I shall accept it, and it will give Me pleasure, as may be inferred from the text, Then (that is in the time to come) shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord," (Mal. 3:4).<sup>63</sup>

#### The Day of the Lord:

A description of the day of the great judgment, for it says, "Behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace," (Mal. 3:19) and what follows: "But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise," (3:20). What is alluded to in the words the sun of righteousness and healing? The righteousness which one does for the poor will stand up and shine for you on the day of great judgment and give healing.<sup>64</sup>

(Mal 3:19  
3:17)

Why did God have the Israelites smear the blood on their doorposts? To distinguish those to be killed and those to be saved. God said to the people, "And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance." (Ex. 12:24). "As I have done to you now, so will I do for



you in the time to come," as it is said: "For, behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace, etc." (Mal. 3:19), "but as for you, and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son," (ib 3:17).<sup>65</sup>

(Mal 3:19  
3:20)

In the hereafter the Holy One Blessed be He will strip the sun of its sheath and uncover it and cause it to consume the wicked; as it is said, "For behold, the day cometh, ..... and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble, etc." (Mal. 3:19).<sup>66</sup>

(Mal 3:19)

Israel is called, "My son, My firstborn," why? Because it is written: "But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated by giving him a double portion, etc." (Deut. 21:17) similarly Israel are heirs to two worlds - this and the world to come. Therefore did God give Israel the moon to reckon by it, whereas the idolaters reckon according to the sun. This implies that as the sun only rules by day, so their rule will only be in this world, and just as the sun is of fire, so they will be punished with it as it says: "For behold, the day cometh, etc." (Mal. 3:19). "This month shall be unto you," (Ex. 12:2), refers then to the lunar month.<sup>67</sup>

(Mal 3:19)

For whom was the world created? Israel says to the nations of the world, "Wait till the day of the Holy One Blessed be He comes, and we shall see for whose

sake the world was created," and so it is written, "For behold, the day comes it burns as a furnace, etc." (Mal. 3:19).<sup>68</sup>

(Mal 3:20)

"But unto you who fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings" (Mal. 3:20). This refers to those who fear to utter the Divine name in vain.<sup>69</sup> "The sun of righteousness with healing in its wings," said Abaye. This proves that the notes dancing in the sun's rays have healing power. Now, he differs from R. Simeon b. Lakish who said: "There is no Gehinnom in the world to come, but the Holy One Blessed be He will draw forth the sun from its sheath: the righteous shall be healed and the wicked shall be judged and punished thereby." As it is written, "But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings," (Mal. 3:20). "Moreover they shall be rejuvenated by it," as it is written, "And you shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall," (Mal. 3:20). "But the wicked shall be punished thereby," as it is written, "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, etc." (Mal. 3:19).<sup>70</sup>

(Mal 3:2)

On the day of Judgment can any man say, "I am pure from my sin?" No man will be able to stand firm as it says, "The Lord...will suddenly come to His

Temple....," (Mal. 3:1). "But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appears," (Mal. 3:2).<sup>71</sup>

(Mal 3:18) When the world to come arrives which is called morning then we shall know in whom He delights; "Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, etc." (Mal. 3:18).<sup>72</sup>

The Righteous and their Reward:

(Mal 3:17) "Then shall they be mine," saith the Lord of Hosts, "in the day that I do make, even mine own treasure." When God said, "Then you shall be mine own treasure" (Ex. 19:5) he referred to the people when they returned to the land. When they return to the land then God will make them His own treasure.<sup>73</sup>

(Mal 3:20) As a reward for honoring father and mother what is promised, a lengthening of your days. And for fearing the Lord God (Deut. 6:13) what is promised, "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings" (Mal. 3:20).<sup>74</sup>

(Mal. 3:20) "Go your way, eat your bread with joy," (Eccl. 9:7), Abba Tehnah the pious, for allowing the good inclination to master the evil inclination, the Holy One Blessed be He caused the sun to shine, as it is written, "But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise," (Mal. 3:20). Therefore to the

righteous the Bath Kol says "Go your way, eat your bread with joy."<sup>75</sup>

The Holy Spirit<sup>76</sup>

Many definitions have been given for the meaning of the term ruah hakkodesh. In rabbinic literature, Abelson distinguishes three different senses in which the term is used.

1. The divine emanation which inspired the recognized prophets of the Old Testament and the writing of all books of the canon.

2. It inspired with a sort of prophetic sense several miscellaneous characters in the Old Testament and after the close of the canon.

3. It is the divine endowment, akin to prophecy, which anyone may attain, provided he lives the life which leads up to this high state of moral, religious and intellectual perfection.<sup>77</sup>

The rabbis then in speaking of the cessation of the ruah hakkodesh spoke of that manifestation of the Holy Spirit linked with a definite historical epoch. In the Talmud we find: "With the death of the last prophets Haggai Zachariah and Malchi, the Holy Spirit departed from Israel."<sup>78</sup>

Gehenna:

(Mal 3:19) Gehenna will still exist in the time to come, for it is said, "Behold the day cometh....it burns as a furnace, etc." (Mal. 3:19).<sup>79</sup>



(Mal 3:19) When was this Gehenna created? Before the Garden of Eden the Gehenna was created, the Gehenna having been created on the second day, and the Garden of Eden not till the third. And the flaming sword (refers to Gehenna, so designated) in accordance with, "Behold the day comes, it burns as a furnace," (Mal. 3:19).<sup>80</sup>

(Mal. 3:19) How will the righteous be rewarded and the wicked punished in the world to come?

R. Yannai and R. Simeon ben LaMish say: "Though Gehenna will not exist in the age to come, the sun will consume them that do evil," as it is said, "For behold, the day cometh," (Mal. 3:19).

(Mal 3:19) You will find that the sun is kept within a sheath, that the sheath is set within a sphere, that under the sphere moves a pool of water which comes from above the firmament, and that although God temps the heat of the sun with the water from above the firmament "Nothing is hid from the heat thereof" (Psalm 19:7). Now on the day of judgment what will the Holy One Blessed be He do? He will cause the sun to come forth and will punish with it them that did evil, "For behold, the day cometh." (Mal. 3:19).<sup>81</sup>

But for the righteous the sun will come forth for them to benefit of it.<sup>82</sup>

# The Meaning of Certain Words:

(Mal 1:13) Who is called a robber (Gazlan)? One who robs openly as in the verse, "And the men of Shechem set liars in wait for him...and they robbed all that came, etc.," (Judges 9:25). As the way is public so does a gazlan act openly. Or as it is said "And you have brought that which was taken by violence, and the lame and the sick, etc." (Mal. 1:13). As the lame suffers from an open defect, so the gazlan acts openly.<sup>83</sup>

(Mal 3:8) "Will a man rob לֹדֵן God לֹדֵן synonym-  
ous with לֹדֵן.<sup>84</sup>

(Mal 3:16) "Then when they that feared the Lord submitted (Nidberu) the one to the other the Lord hearkened," (Mal. 3:16). When sages in seats of authority submit to one another's words - here Nidberu comes from the same stem as Yadber in the verse "He subdueth (Yadber) peoples under us" (Psalm 47:4) - the Holy One Blessed be He, gives heed to their words, as it is said, "Then when they that feared the Lord, etc." (Mal. 3:16).<sup>85</sup>

(Mal 3:16) When two sit and words of Torah pass between them, the Shechinah abides among them, as it is said, "Then they that feared the Lord spoke one with another and the Lord hearkened and heard," (Mal. 3:16).<sup>86</sup>

(Mal 2:3) Three days after death a man's stomach bursts and gives back its contents to the mouth saying, "Take what

you stole and robbed with violence and placed in me!"  
 This thought derived from, "I will spread dung upon  
 your faces even the dung of your sacrifices," (Mal.  
 2:3).<sup>87</sup>

In these areas the rabbis considered the verses  
 of the book of Malachi. Proof texts for the issues  
 which arise in a man's life and how he must face these  
 issues.

### CHAPTER III

#### MALACHI ACCORDING TO THE MEDIEVAL JEWISH COMMENTATORS

Thus far we have presented the "Modern" point of view, the treatment of the rabbis and their use of the verses in the Book of Malachi; and now we will present some aspects of the medieval Jewish commentators and their views.

These men represent what we would call the interpretation of the Synagogal Book of Malachi.<sup>1</sup> Among them we find the following:

Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra: A scholar and writer. He was born 1092-1093 and died January 28, 1167.<sup>2</sup> He was from Toledo and afterward settled in Cordova. His life was divided into two periods through his emigration from Spain. In the first period, which lasted almost to the year 1140, he won acclaim as poet and thinker. Moses Ibn Ezra, an intimate friend, extols him as a religious philosopher (mutakallim). Abraham Ibn Daud calls him the last of the great men who formed the pride of Spanish Judaism and who "strengthened the hands of Israel with songs and with words of comfort." In the first period of his life, he was chiefly occupied with poetry. He likes to call himself "the poet" (ha-shar - see his introduction to Pentateuch Commentary) or "father of poems" (and of the versified calendar regulations).

The most prominent scholars among the Jews of Spain were Ibn Ezra's personal friends; men like Joseph Ibn Zaddik and Judah ha Levi. He also associated and debated with the

representatives of Karaism, this, evidenced by many passages in his commentary on the Bible.

In the second half of his life one must imagine him a lonely man, who led the unsettled life of a wanderer. In 1140 he settled for a time in Rome. In his introduction to the Kohelet commentary, he says: "He departed from his native place, which is in Spain, and came to Rome."

A whole series of works on Bible exegesis and grammar was the fruit of his stay in Italy. In France, city of Dreux he completed several exegetical works including the beginnings of a new commentary on the Pentateuch. In 1158 in London he wrote his religio-philosophic work Yesod Mora.

In 1160 he returned a second time to Provence and at Narbonne he translated an astronomical work from the Arabic. In Rome, where he is said to have died, he began his Safah Berurah, a grammatical work. In the introduction to this work he expresses the hope that "it will be a legacy of Abraham, the son of Meir, and will preserve his memory from generation to generation."

He is the only example of a wandering scholar who developed an unusually rich literary activity in his roaming existence under the stress of circumstances, and who wrote works of lasting importance.

His literary works include commentaries, grammars, smaller exegetical works, Iggeret Shabbat, for example,

religious philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, Pseudopigraphic, and poetical works.<sup>3</sup>

David Kimhi (Redak, surnamed Maistre Petit): A French grammarian. He was born in Narbonne 1160 and died there 1235; the youngest son of Joseph Kimhi, and brother of Moses Kimhi.

His most important work is his Miklol which was done in two parts: the first, containing a comprehensive exposition of Hebrew grammar; the second, a dictionary of the Bible. In his work he demonstrates his possession of the power of systematization and of popular exposition. He excerpted from his predecessors copiously and circumspectly, and arranged his material with such comprehensiveness, clearness and lucidity of exposition that, while he popularized the opinions of his illustrious forerunners, he at the same time made their works superfluous and helped to sink them into an oblivion from which they were not rescued until the nineteenth century.

Kimhi wrote commentaries on Genesis, the Prophets, the Psalms and Chronicles. In the introduction to his commentary on the Prophets he explains the duty of expounding the Bible from a religious standpoint. In a general way he adheres to the literal meaning of Scripture, and his exegesis is based on grammar and rationality. At times, however, he introduces into his explanations philosophy, and some Biblical narratives, and following Maimonides, explains them as visions.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph b. Isaac Kimhi (Ri Kam; surnamed Maistre Petit): A grammarian, exegete, poet and translator. He was born in southern Spain about 1105 and died about 1170.

He lived in poor circumstances, and in addition to his literary labors he was active as a teacher.

Abraham Ibn Ezra, who visited Narbonne in 1160, must have met Joseph, who left his native Spain and settled in Narbonne Provence. Joseph followed Ibn Ezra in some particulars, for example, in the use of ןק for the Paradigm of the verb. Ibn Ezra, on the other hand, quotes Kimhi in his commentaries on the Bible. Both men worked to popularize Judaeo Arabic science. Although Ibn Ezra's work is superior, Kimhi was actually the first successful transplanter of Judaeo Arabic science.

Another contemporary was R. Jacob ben Meir surnamed "Rabenu Tam."

Kimhi, a grammarian and lexicographer, in his etymological explanations seeks for analogies in Bible, Talmud, Targum and Arabic. In cases where such analogies are wanting or unsatisfactory he is guided by the principle, "The unknown must be deduced from the known."

His method throughout his exegetical works is mostly that of the peshat, i.e., literal interpretation. He frequently follows the Spanish school. He pays a great deal of attention to the context, a point usually neglected by Haggadists.

His explanations are short and terse.

He tried his hand at poetry. His liturgical poems are indeed distinguished by brevity of form and elegance of language.<sup>5</sup>

Yechiel (Jehiel) Hillel ben David Altschul: Was Rabbi at Jamorow (Galicia) toward the middle of the seventeenth century. He completed the commentary on the Prophets and the Hagio-grapha which his father had begun, dividing it into two parts: (1) Mezudat Zion (The Fortress of Zion), a lexicological glossary; and (2) Mezudat David (The Fortress of David), a commentary on the Biblical Text.<sup>6</sup>

Rashi (Solomon bar Isaac): A French commentator on Bible and Talmud. He was born at Troyes in 1040 and died there July 13, 1105. According to tradition, Rashi's father carried his religious zeal so far that he cast into the sea a gem that was much coveted by Christians, whereupon he heard a mysterious voice which foretold him the birth of a noble son. Rashi's first teacher was Jacob b. Hakar. Upon his death Rashi studied with Isaac ben Eliezer ha-Levi.

Because of its importance his great work, the commentary on the Bible was translated into Latin.

His attainments appear all the more remarkable when it is remembered that he confined himself to Jewish fields of learning. He knew only French and a few words of German, no secular science, save something of the practical arts. But

in Biblical and rabbinical literature his learning was both extensive and reliable, and his numerous quotations show that he was familiar with nearly all the Hebrew and Aramaic works of his predecessors.

His Biblical commentaries are based on the Targumim and the Masorah which he follows closely. The two principal sources from which Rashi derived his exegesis were the Talmudic midrashic literature and the hermeneutic processes which it employs - the peshat and the derash.<sup>7</sup>

As we have noticed thus far certain verses stand out as key verses in the book of Malachi. We will treat these verses in accordance with the interpretations of the synagogue.

1:1 The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. The difficulty as aforementioned is the name of the prophet who is "carrying God's word to Israel" and the purport of his message. Two ideas are brought out by the commentators. His name was Malachi. (Ibn Ezra, introduction). He had his message which he was to carry to the people for many days. (Rashi). And Rashi also mentions that in a baraita in the Mekiltah we read "that all the prophets stood on Mount Sinai and there their prophecy was handed over to them." The Talmudic passages connecting him with Ezra are cited, but are not accepted.

1:2- I have loved you, says the Lord. Yet you say: Wherein have

you loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord; yet I loved Jacob.

How did God's love manifest itself? He gave Jacob's children a most desirable land. So desirable in fact that every nation wanted it. (Rashi). And you Israel, what did you do when you returned to the land which I swore to your fathers to give to their children? You continued in your wicked ways. Esau too received an inheritance, merited by the glory of his father and because of his wickedness a desolation was made of his mountains. (Ibn Ezra) This love you have for us, O Lord, is it because we have merited it or because of the glory of the patriarchs and matriarchs? Even though Jacob and Esau had the same parents, because of Esau's idolatrous ways I loved Jacob. (Metzudoth David) Does this not prove that my love for you Israel is because of yourself.

- 1:3 But Esau I hated and made his mountains as desolation and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness. I removed Esau, and made of his mountains a desolation and of his fortresses also a desolation. (Targum) Because of Esau's wicked deeds the Lord removed him to the land of Seir. Elsewhere the land of Edom is also referred to as Mount Seir, therefore here, too, the land of Edom is called his mountains. (Targum) Because of Esau's wicked deeds the Lord removed him to the land of Seir. Elsewhere the land of Edom is also referred to as Mount Seir, therefore

here too the land of Edom is called his mountains. (Radak)

- 1:5 And your eyes shall see, and you shall say: "The Lord is great beyond the border of Israel."

Great will be the glory of God, for he will extend the borders of Israel. (Rashi and Targum) You who were beyond the borders of Israel will say: "The Lord is great." (Ibn Ezra) At the time of redemption you who are beyond the borders of Israel will say, "The Lord is great," because of the wonders he continually performs.

We must keep in mind this is after the Babylonian Exile.

Note the commentators do not follow the Targum which explains,

וְהָיָה כִּי יִרְאוּ אֶת הַיַּלְדֵּי הַבְּרִיָּה (and his heritage to the Jackals of the wilderness) as אֶת הַיַּלְדֵּי הַבְּרִיָּה (and his fortresses into a desolate wilderness), but they explained on the meaning of יַלְדֵּי (Jackals) and other animals of the desert. (1:5)

- 1:6 A son honoreth his father and a servant his master. If then I be a father where is My honor? And if I be a master, where is My fear? Says the Lord of Hosts, Unto you, O priests that despise My name, and you say wherein have we despised Your name?

It is common knowledge that a son should honor his father (Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Radak and Metzudoth) and a slave also should honor his master (Rashi, Metzudoth) or fear his master (Ibn Ezra, Radak).



This verse and the next are directed against the priests who have slighted God in their sacred duties, by not sharing equally with their colleagues in each and every sacrifice; but they rather preferred to make up their own equalization rules (Rashi 1:7).

Radak and Metzudoth understand that the priest derogated the ordinance of sacrificing the blood and the tallow upon the altar. This practice being unseemly to them.

1:8 And when you offer the blind for sacrifice, it is not evil! And when you offer the lame and the sick it is not evil! Present it now to your governor, will he be pleased with you or will he accept your person? says the Lord of Hosts. These sacrifices which you bring to me, are not evil in your eyes. So, says the Lord, "bring them to your governor, the governor of Judah (Ibn Ezra, Radak) will he accept your sacrifices and respect you for bringing such sacrifices."  
(Radak) פתח is translated by the Targum פתח and Radak agrees with this.

1:10 Oh that there were even one among you that would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on Mine altar in vain. I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

The spirit in which the sacrifices were presented was worthless. The priests were materialistic rather than idealistic, even for the simplest of services in connection with the Temple, such as the closing of a door or the

kindling of a light, a fee was charged (Rashi from the Sifra). Ibn Ezra also looks for idealism and points out that the root of פתח is פתח fire. Radak also mentions God's wish that the gates of the Temple be closed and the altar remain unkindled rather than sacrifices with unbecoming thoughts be brought. Metzudoth concurs. Radak and Metzudoth interpret פתח as vain while Rashi quoting the Sifra interprets as with pay.

1:11 For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My name is great among the nations; and in every place offerings are presented unto My name. Even pure oblations; for My name is great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts.

This verse is an expression of Malachi's universalism. The Targum interprets according to his own time in which prayers took the place of sacrifices, hence whenever Israel prayed the great name of God was sanctified among the nations.

Rashi quotes our rabbis who say, "That God is called the God of Gods. Because even whoever worships his own Idol, knows there is one God over all of the idols; hence even they recognized God. Another interpretation of the rabbis, it refers to scholars who study the laws pertaining to the sacrifices, which, is considered in the absence of the Temple as a valid substitute for the real sacrifice. Rashi



then quotes the Targum.

Radak explains why only East and West is mentioned, saying that from North to South very little of the world is inhabited. He then concurs with Rashi although they worship idols they actually aspire toward the real God, and the idol serves as an intermediary.

1:14 But cursed be he that dealth craftily, whereas he hath in his flock a male, and nameth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a blemished thing; For I am a great King, says the Lord of Hosts, and My name is feared among the nations.

This verse is explained by all that there was contempt for the altar of the Lord.

"Since my name is feared among the nations, how much more, therefore, is it to be feared and revered by Israel.

2:2 If you will not hearken, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto My name, says the Lord of Hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings, yeah, I will curse them, because you do not lay it to heart.

Since I God knew you would not listen, therefore, am I cursing you. (Rashi) Because you did not lay it to your heart to give glory unto My name I am cursing your blessings as, "make bright my darkness." (2 Sam 22:29) God lightens and darkens man's paths. (Ibn Ezra) After the building of the Temple I blessed you, you then showed

contempt for Me with polluted sacrifices, therefore the blessing now becomes a curse, and I will add another curse. (Radak)

2:4 Know then that I have sent this commandment unto you, That My covenant might be with Levi, says the Lord of Hosts.

Take warning to conform to the high standards required of the priesthood. Radak, Rashi and the Metzudoth agree that God is speaking and wants it known that the covenant established with Levi must continue. Ibn Ezra points out that in verses 1-3 the priests are addressed in verse 4 the people.

2:5 My covenant was with him of life and peace, and I gave them to him, and of fear, and he feared Me, and was afraid of My name.

The covenant involves mutual obligations: God, on His part, bestows on the priests life and prosperity, and they, on their part, conduct themselves with reverence towards Him. The covenant established with Pinchas was promised to his descendants. (Rashi and Radak) The Targum states it this way: "I gave the priests perfect Torah."

2:6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips; He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity.

The commentators concur the priesthood is an agency endowed with great possibilities as a positive force for

instruction and reproof in righteousness.

- 2:7 For the priests lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.

The priest is God's deputy like unto the ministering angels who enter within God's own domain (Rashi). Rashi and the others mention also Deut. 33:9ff.

- 2:9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people. According as you have not kept My ways, but have had respect of persons in the law.

Since you despise me (1:6) therefore will I make you despised (Radak) and you priests you do not do what a priest should do. You respect the rich and accept bribes (Ibn Ezra).

- 2:10 Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

This verse is often quoted as a sublime admonition to mankind regarding the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But in the context and in relation to the problem dealt with, the prophet seems to argue that since God is Israel's father and they are His children, brotherly love should be shown one to another and family loyalty be upheld. "We are all descended from Jacob, therefore, if we intermarry, we profane the covenant which our fathers received at Sinai." (Ibn Ezra, Rashi) Why, since

we are Jacob's children, do we deal treacherously against our brother, that we marry strange women (heathens) and love them more than our first wives who are Israelites. Our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never shunned their wives until they themselves brought them their handmaidens. (Radak)

- 2:11 Judah has dealt treacherously and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah has profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loves, and has married the daughter of a strange god.

Judah and Israel are one and the same. If he profaned, he profaned himself. Even the priests transgressed in this way. (Rashi) God who is sanctified saw and despised what he saw, because of the provocation of his sons and daughters. When they deal treacherously against themselves, they deal treacherously against God. This girl who is an idolater is not a descendant from the patriarch nor does she believe in the same God. (Ibn Ezra)

You who are holy, when you marry out of your faith, you are lost to Judaism. (Radak)

- 2:12 May the Lord cut off to the man that does this him that calleth and him that answereth out of the tents of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of Hosts.

The Targum paraphrases וְיִלְכֹּד אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל as son and grandson, this view is adopted by Ibn Ezra and Radak. The

general view accepted by all: He who marries the Gentile will not have the posterity a Jew looks forward to. And if he be a priest he will have no offspring to carry on the priestly duties (see Talmud Babli Shabbath 55b).

2:13 And this further you do, you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with sighing, inasmuch that He regards not the offering any more, neither does he receive it with good will at your hand.

Rashi elaborates the prophet's rebuke: "The first crime for which I censure you, that you take as a wife not one of your own people but a foreign woman, is bad enough; but that you already have a Jewish wife and bring into the house a foreign woman as chief wife (making your Jewish wife a secondary wife in living widowhood) is unpardonable.

According to the Jewish commentators, the tears are those of the rejected Jewish wives who came to the Temple complaining of their cruel lot and pour out their grief before the altar. The tears form a barrier so that God does not accept the offering of the people.

2:14 Yet you say: "Wherefore?" Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and the wife of your covenant.

When the people ask, how have we displeased God? The answer because you have profaned the marriage contract which like all contracts is entered into before God. (Ibn

Ezra, Radak, Metzudoth) The wife of your covenant, she belonged to the covenant between God and Israel, for she was of the Jewish faith as opposed to the daughter of a foreign God.

2:15 And not one has done so who had exuberance of spirit! For what seeketh the one? A seed given of God. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

We offer other translations to this verse which is quite difficult.

Kittel makes this emendation,

וְאַתָּה יְהוָה יָצָקְתָּ

and one God made her, .....

King James: "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.

RSV Has not the one God made and sustained for us the spirit of life? And what does he desire? Godly offspring. So take heed to yourselves, and let none be faithless to the wife of his youth.

Targum Was not one Abraham, an individual because of whom the world was created, and what does one seek of God, that he establish for him a son, from before the Lord, and take heed to yourselves, and the wife of your youth, deal not with her treacherously.

(a) The verse describes an argument between the people and the prophet. The people defended their conduct of divorcing their wives by saying, "Did not the one (Abraham) do so and marry Hagar? The prophet replies, "Yes, but he had an excellence of spirit; he desired a godly seed."

The motive in Abraham's action was different from yours; he did not seek lustful gratification. (Midrash, Targum, Rashi, Kimchi)

(b) "Not one who did so kept his faith intact; and what did that one seek, a godly seed?" A man who married a foreign woman, although he justified his action by his desire for children, invariably lost his faith and adopted the gods of his wife. (Ibn Ezra)

2:16 For I hate putting away, says the Lord the God of Israel, and him that covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of Hosts, therefore take heed to your spirit, that you deal not treacherously.

"Hateful is he that putteth away his first wife; even the altar sheds tears because of this." (T.B. Gittin 90b). Rashi however quotes another view offered by..... in the same passage of the Talmud: "If you hate her, then put her away; but act not cruelly by retaining her in the home, if you are estranged from her." Targum expounds similarly. "If you hate her, divorce her," says the Lord, "God of Israel, "but do not cover the sin with your garment," says the Lord of Hosts, and take heed of your spirit and do not deal

treacherously. Radak quotes the Targum.

2:17 You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet you say wherein have we wearied Him? In that you say: Everyone that does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delights in them; or where is the God of justice?

The commentators agree. The people are admonished for losing faith in the Lord. In their despondency and doubt they are driven to one of two conclusions: either evil is pleasing to God, or there is no God of justice.

3:1 Behold, I send My messenger, and he shall clear the way before Me; and the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in, behold, he cometh, says the Lord of Hosts.

My messenger is coming to clear the path of all the wicked, the Lord whom you seek is the God of justice (Rashi). He is the King Messiah. (Radak) The messenger of the covenant is considered as a designation of the prophet Elijah. As it is written I Kings 19:10 (Radak and Metzudoth). The covenant is that of circumcision, hence the custom of allocating a chair for Elijah at a Brith. (Radak)

3:6 For I the Lord change not; and you, sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

The Targum: Because I the Lord have not changed my eternal covenant and you children of Israel, you imagine that whoever dies in this world his judgment is finished. Rashi agrees with the Targum and adds another interpretation

from the rabbis: I do not repeat my blows on others but with you my arrows may be finite but you will never be destroyed.

Ibn Ezra states it in this way, "As a nation you will always remain, for when the father dies the son remains."

Radak, "Israel's eternity is guaranteed which is not the case with other nations."

3:19 For behold the day comes, it burns as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that comes shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

This day is the day of judgment. The day is the sun (Rashi). He then quotes b. Abodah Zarah 3b, "On the day of judgment the Holy One Blessed be He, will bring the sun from its sheath; the wicked will be consumed by it and the righteous healed by it."

3:20 But unto you that fear My name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings; and you shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall.

Ibn Ezra explains the main aspect of the day is the sun. When we say "the heat of the day, we mean the sun, etc." The sun's rays will radiate healing for broken hearts and perplexed minds.

When this healing takes place then as young calves grow in size and fatness so will you break forth. (Rashi and Radak)

3:22 Remember you the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and ordinances.

By remembering the Torah of Moses and statutes and ordinances, on the day of judgment you will escape punishment. (Ibn Ezra) The Radak explains this verse to be a refutation of all allegorical interpretation of the Torah. He says it is not (the Torah and its commandments) like those who say it was given for a limited time. It is binding for each and every generation.

3:23 Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

I send you Elijah the prophet for the sake of the Torah for even though I have warned you concerning the observance of my commandments he will remind you so when the day of the Lord comes, which is to be a terrible day you will be prepared. (Metzudoth)

Radak poses the question and answers it: How will Elijah appear? He will appear in a resurrected state. His soul will return to the body from whence it came.

3:24 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers lest I come and smite the land with utter destruction.

Through the children, Elijah will get to the parents to uphold and keep God's Torah and His commandments (Rashi, Radak and Metzudoth).

Ibn Ezra's comment is unique and I include the complete translation and with it close this chapter.



"And now I will close the commentary of this book with a word about Elijah. We have found that he was in the days of Abaziya the son of Ahab and we found written also that Jehoram the son of Ahab and Jehoshophat asked Elisha, the prophet, and it is written there, 'here is Elisha, the prophet, the son of Shafat who served Elijah.' And this is proof that he, Elijah, already ascended to the heavens in a storm, because it is not said that he is serving him (present tense) and further more because Elisha did not depart from Elijah only after serving him and after he ascended. And behold we have found that after the death of Jehoshophat in the days of his son Ahazya, it is written and there came a letter from Elijah the prophet and this teaches that he must have written it and sent it to him at that given time. Because if we will say that it was written before his ascent the verse would state: that it was found; or it was brought to him a letter which was left by Elijah (which he wrote before his ascent). (Therefore we must assume that Elijah wrote the letter at that particular time.) And there is no doubt that in the days of our holy sages one will see him again and God in his mercy will hasten his prophecy and will hurry the set time of his coming."

## SUMMARY

"Remember, oh people of Israel, the law of Moses with its statutes and its judgments, which were given unto You on Mount Horeb." Thus, the voice of prophecy was hushed. Thus ends the book of Malachi, a God-fearing man who suddenly appeared in Jerusalem. A man, full of vigor and moved by the prophetic spirit. Worthily did he close the long list of godly men who had succeeded each other for four centuries. Malachi announced to his dejected and despairing brethren the speedy arrival of the Messenger of the Covenant, whom many delighted in and who would bring better days with him. The prophet counseled the people not to omit paying the tithes on account of the evil-doing of some of the priests, but to bring them all, as in former days, into the storehouses.

Malachi, like the early prophets, proclaimed that in the distant future a great and awful day would dawn, when the difference between the pious and the wicked would be made clear. Before the coming of that last day, God would send His prophet Elijah, and he would reconcile father to the son. And so he bade them to "Remember the Law of Moses, given unto them on Mount Horeb."

For it is only occupation with the Torah for its own sake which is life, for this purity of motive forms the main difference "between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." (Mal. 3:18)

Neither the quantity of sins, nor the quality of sins, need make man hesitate to follow the Divine call to repentance. He has only to approach so to speak, the "door" with the determination of repentance, and it will be widely opened for his admittance. Thus said the Holy One, Blessed be He, to Israel, "Open unto me the door of repentance, be it even as narrow as the sharp point of a needle, and I will open it so wide that whole wagons and chariots can pass through it." This Divine call of repentance implies also a certain mutual repentance, or returning on the part of God, who meets Israel halfway. "It is to be compared to the son of a king who was removed from his father for the distance of a hundred days journey. His friends said to him, 'Return unto your father,'" he answered. "I cannot." Then his father sent him a message, "Travel as much as it is in thy power, and I will come unto you for the rest of the way." And so the Holy One, Blessed be He, said, "Return unto me and I will return unto you." (Mal. 3:7)

And then, in keeping with tradition, the editor repeats the twenty-third verse so that the book of Malachi will end with a word of comfort rather than a word of chastisement. My hopes too are for the speedy coming of the Messenger of the Lord and his forerunner the prophet Elijah.

## CHAPTER I

Footnotes

1. Bewer, page 234.
2. Ibid., 253.
3. Ibid., 254.
4. Malachi 1:2-5
5. Ibid., 1:6-3:12
6. Ibid., 1:6, 2:9
7. Ibid., 2:10-16
8. Ibid., 2:17, 3:6
9. Ibid., 3:7-12
10. Ibid., 3:13, 4:6. It must be pointed out here that the Massoretic text has only three chapters. The dividing point being in Chapter 3, verse 21. Hebrew text would read 3:13-24.
11. This division is found in Powis Smith, page 3. Pfeiffer, shows slightly different division. According to Pfeiffer footnote 8 would read 2:17, 3:5; footnote 9, 3:6-12; footnote 10, 3:13, 4:3 (Hebrew 3:13-21); and Pfeiffer divides the last section into two 4:4-6 (Hebrew 3:22-24).
12. Powis Smith, page 3-4. In the case of 2:7, 11, 12 there is not enough conclusive evidence. In the case of 3:22-24 this editorial insertion must be granted.
13. Pfeiffer, page 612. The word of the Lord followed in Zechariah 12:1 with "against  $\delta\lambda$  Israel"; and in Malachi 1:1 with "unto  $\delta\lambda$  Israel"; the Septuagint, the Targum and the Syriac read, however, "against"  $\delta\lambda$  in both passages.
14. Powis Smith, page 4.
15. Pfeiffer, page 614.
16. Powis Smith, page 5. Also Ben Sira 49:13 shows that the Book of the Twelve was already organized in the days of Ben Sirach.
17. Powis Smith, page 6. Cf. Ezra 35:10-12; Isaiah 63, and Obadiah.



18. Powis Smith, page 6.
19. Malachi 1:8 and Nehemiah 5:15
20. Malachi 1:10, 3:1, 10
21. Malachi 1:13
22. Malachi 1:8, Pfeiffer 614
23. Malachi 3:8-10
24. Malachi 3:3, 2:4,8
25. Pfeiffer, page 614.
26. Pfeiffer, page 614; Powis Smith sets this time about 510.
27. Powis Smith, page 7 and Pfeiffer, page 614 and 615
28. Powis Smith, page 8
29. Powis Smith, page 9
30. Powis Smith, page 10
31. Powis Smith, page 11
32. Powis Smith, page 13
33. Powis Smith, page 15

## CHAPTER TWO

Footnotes

1. For a more intensive study of this subject see: Bacher, "Bible, Exegesis," J.E. Vol. 3, pp. 162-165
2. Talmud Babli tractate Megillah 15a
3. Esther 10:3, and he was looked on as an angel (Malak). This view is taken by Maharshah.
4. Malachi then is not Mordecai.
5. Malachi 2:11
6. Talmud Babli tractate Megillah 3a
7. Mikraoth Gedoloth Targum to Malachi 1:1
8. Pesikta Rabati, פסיקתא רבתי, pereq 29-30-30, ed. Friedmann, p.139a
9. Talmud Babli tractate Menachoth 110a
10. Lamentations Rabbah 1:16:50
11. This midrash in connection with Exodus 15:3-4. Mekilta tractate Shirata, pereq 4, ed. Leuterbach, Vol. 2, p.32.
12. Exodus Rabbah 46:4
13. Midrash Tehillim 22:22 - parallels Genesis Rabbah 80:7-8
14. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 3:82
15. Song of Songs Rabbah 8:6:4 - 8:7:1. Other examples; Song of Songs Rabbah 2:7; Numbers Rabbah 17:1; 7:4; 8:2; Leviticus Rabbah 7:1; Genesis Rabbah 86:1; Exodus Rabbah 1:1; Pesikta Rabati, פסיקתא רבתי, supplement pereq 1, ed. Friedmann, p. 193a.
16. Midrash Tehillim 9:2; Ecclesiastes Rabbah 12:7:1
17. Hebrew for earth and land are the same.
18. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 1:4:4; Ecclesiastes Rabbah 11:2:1-3
19. Song of Songs of Rabbah 6:9:5

20. Exodus Rabbah 1:5; Numbers Rabbah 14:10
21. Exodus Rabbah 1:16; 40:1
22. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 9:15:5
23. Numbers Rabbah 12:9; Exodus Rabbah 30:4; Pesikta Rabati, פרשנים p. 14b; Pesikta Rabati, פרשנים p. 14, ed. Friedmann, p. 64a; Mekilta tractate Shirata, 1, ed. Lauterbach, Vol. 2, p. 3; Talmud Babli tractate Shabbath 89a; Midrash Tehillim 1:16.
24. Exodus Rabbah 6:14; Numbers Rabbah 5:23; Ruth Rabbah 4:5.
25. Song of Songs Rabbah 7:2
26. Genesis 15:15
27. Genesis 38:21
28. Numbers Rabbah 11:7
29. The question asked concerns Yom Kippur. The only day that even he was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies. The question should have asked, "Through what merit could Aaron enter the Holy of Holies on this day and make atonement for all Israel." Therefore the answer - circumcision, which of course was practiced by all the people. Note to Exodus 38:8. Soncino Edition.
30. Exodus Rabbah 38:8; Pesikta Rabati, Ahara Moth, p. 191b
31. Leviticus Rabbah 21:10
32. Talmud Babli tractate Aboth 1:12
33. Leviticus Rabbah 3:6; Numbers Rabbah - reference here to Phineas the priest; 1:1 Leviticus Rabbah 20:1; Exodus Rabbah 5:10 - 38:5; Midrash Tehillim 118:7; 2:12; 19:15; Pesikta Rabati, פרשנים p. 33, ed. Friedmann, p. 150b; Talmud Babli tractate Sanhedrin 6b; This also compares Moses and Aaron concluding with Malachi 2:6 that Aaron loved peace. Genesis Rabbah 49:1.
34. Midrash Tehillim 52:1; 78:6; Leviticus Rabbah 21:11; Numbers Rabbah 16:1; Exodus Rabbah 38:3; 33:3; Talmud Babli tractate Haggigah 15b; Moed Katan 17a.
35. Esther Rabbah 7:4-6. The Yalkut adds "And I am likely to receive a promotion from her."
36. Numbers Rabbah 23:4; Midrash Tehillim 9:14; 11:4; Genesis Rabbah 25:23
37. Midrash Tehillim 7:7; Ecclesiastes Rabbah 4:1; Song of Songs Rabbah 1:4:1; Pesikta Rabati, פרשנים, supplement p. 94
38. Numbers Rabbah 11:1; Midrash Tehillim 9:9; 9:7; Numbers Rabbah 14; Genesis Rabbah 35:34
39. Numbers Rabbah 16:11
40. Exodus Rabbah 40:4; Talmud Babli Shabbath 118a; Genesis Rabbah 99:11
41. Ruth Rabbah 5:6; Leviticus Rabbah 34:8
42. Song of Songs Rabbah 4:12:5; Deuteronomy Rabbah 3:17; 6:7; Talmud Babli tractate Eduyyoth 8:7
43. Song of Songs Rabbah 1:1:9
44. Genesis Rabbah 18:5
45. Talmud Babli tractate Gitin 90a - 90b; Talmud Babli tractate Sanhedrin 22a.
46. Sifra, Ahara' Moth, p. 13, par. 4, ed. Weiss, pp. 85d-86a
47. Talmud Babli tractate Sanhedrin 81b-82a
48. Mekilta tractate Nizikin, ch. 3, ed. Lauterbach, Vol. 3, pp. 9-10
49. Talmud Babli tractate Horayoth 3b; Baba Bathra 60b; Abodah Zarah 36a-36b; Midrash Tehillim 137:5.
50. Talmud Babli tractate Rosh Hashanah 17a
51. Numbers Rabbah 9:9; 9:10
52. Pesikta Rabati, פרשנים p. 33, ed. Friedmann, p. 157a.
53. Talmud Babli tractates Menachoth 68b; Hullin 90b; Bikkurin 1:8; Sotah 14b; Maxir 53a.
54. Midrash Tehillim 57:2
55. Numbers Rabbah 8:4
56. Midrash Tehillim 25:2; 12:11; Esther Rabbah 10:15; Talmud Babli tractates Makkoth 32b; Yadayim 4:3; Shabbath 32b; Taamid 8b-9a

57. Leviticus Rabbah 21:6
58. Talmud Babli tractate Baba Kama 67a-67b
59. Talmud Babli Sukkah 29b-30a
60. Leviticus Rabbah 7:3
61. Leviticus Rabbah 8:4. Note the change in the last words of the verse. Meal offering in place of pure oblation. The point being not the material value but on the purity of intention with which it is brought.
62. Song of Songs Rabbah 5:5; Numbers Rabbah 19:3
63. Numbers Rabbah 17:4
64. Midrash Tehillim 41:4
65. Exodus Rabbah 18:7
66. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 1:5:2
67. Exodus Rabbah 15:27
68. Song of Songs Rabbah 7:3:3
69. The name of God represents the divine nature and the relation of God to His people as such it was understood as the equivalent of the Divine Presence, hence the awe with which it was surrounded. Talmud Babli tractate Kiddushin 71a; Sanhedrin 99a.
70. Talmud Babli tractates Nedarim 8b; Abodah Zara 3b-4a; Ecclesiastes Rabbah 1:6:2; Midrash Tehillim 149:6; Genesis Rabbah 78:5.
71. Midrash Tehillim 143:1-2
72. Numbers Rabbah 16:23
73. Mekilta Pisha 12, ed. Lauterbach, Vol. 1, p. 93.
74. Mekilta Bahodesh 8, ed. Lauterbach, Vol. 2, p. 258
75. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 9:1
76. For a detailed study of the Ruah Hakkodesh, see J.J. Petuchowski, "The Idea of Ruah Hakkodesh," 1950, HUC Library
77. Ibid., p. 50-51

78. Talmud Babli tractates Sanhedrin 11a; Yoma 9b; Sotah 48b; Song of Songs Rabbah 8:9:3.
79. Midrash Tehillim 21:5; Genesis Rabbah 26:6; 6:6; Midrash Tehillim 19:13.
80. Genesis Rabbah 21:9
81. Midrash Tehillim 19:13
82. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 1:5:2; Midrash Tehillim 58:3
83. Genesis Rabbah 54:3
84. Talmud Babli tractate Rosh Hashanah 26a-26b
85. Midrash Tehillim 30:5; Song of Songs Rabbah 8:14:1; Talmud Babli tractates Shabbath 63a; Berachoth 6a.
86. Talmud Babli tractate Aboth 3:2; 3:6
87. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 12:5:1; Leviticus Rabbah 18:1

## CHAPTER THREE

Footnotes

1. J.J. Petuchowski, "The Bible of the Synagogue," Commentary, Feb. 1959, pp. 142-150.
2. Rosin, Reime und Gedichte, p. 92, n. 6.
3. Abraham Ibn Ezra, J.E. Vol. 6, pp. 520-524.
4. David Kimhi, J.E., Vol. 2, p. 494ff
5. Joseph ben Isaac Kimhi, J.E., Vol. 2, p. 495ff
6. Yehiel Hillel ben David Altschul, J.E., Vol. 1, p. 479
7. Rashi, J.E., Vol. 10, pp. 324-328

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