

# MALACHI

**AUTHOR:**

Malachi simply means “my messenger” and is not a proper noun, making this book anonymous. We are not sure who wrote it.

**DATE:**

It was written during the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. when the Persians were in control of Israel.

**AUDIENCE:**

Malachi was written to the Jews who had returned to Israel from exile in Babylon. The temple in Jerusalem had been rebuilt (516 B.C.), but the people had fallen into a state of spiritual laziness. They were skeptical about God’s promises and divorce had become all too common.

**CONTENTS:**

The author defends God’s love for Judah by pointing to the recent devastations of the Jewish enemies in Edom. Secondly, he criticizes the people for offering inferior sacrifices to God, sacrifices that they would not even offer to their governor. The author then condemns divorce.

**CULTURAL FACTS:**

The Israelites have just gotten freedom from Babylon and are now under the less oppressive Persian Empire who has allowed them a degree of religious freedom. They are not taking advantage of this freedom but have slipped into religious laziness, getting by with as little as possible. Sound familiar to any of us in the United States?! This last book of the Bible urges us to fear the Lord for the Day of God is coming. The Day of the Lord is indeed coming where he will judge the hearts and actions of men and women. Are you ready?

