

----- Malachi -----

3589a AM, 4298 JP, 416 BC

1306. Malachi, the last of the prophets, was a contemporary of Nehemiah. This we gather from the fact that he nowhere exhorted the people to build the temple, as Haggai and Zechariah did. Since the temple was now built, he reproved those same disorders among the Jews which Nehemiah also reproved at his second return with a new commission. These are: the marriages with foreign women, {#Ne 13:23-29 Mal 2:11} withholding of tithes, {#Ne 13:10-14 Mal 3:8} and abuses in the worship of God. {#Ne 13:15-22 Mal 1:13 2:8} They were no longer to expect a continual succession of prophets, as before. Therefore Malachi, in the last words of his prophecy, exhorted them to hold fast to the law of Moses until Christ, that great prophet of the church, should appear with his forerunner, John the Baptist:

"In the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the rebels to the wisdom of the just." {#Mal 4:5 Lu 1:17 Mt 11:14 17:12}

4033a AM, 4742 JP, 29 AD

6295. The fourth year of John the Baptist's ministry started. His ministry of preparing the people for Christ was drawing

to a close, for this was his primary purpose. The Lord himself, whose way John had prepared, now entered into his ministry. He executed his prophetic office and sealed his ministry with famous miracles, for John did no miracles. {#Joh 10:41} John's ministry of preparation was celebrated by Isaiah and Malachi, so many ages before. [K568] It should not be surprising that we assigned so long a period of time to it, when one considers that for so great a work a shorter time would have been too short, especially without the help of miracles to accomplish all that the angel Gabriel confirmed to his father, Zacharias, that John would do:

"Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, that he may turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and to prepare a people ready for the Lord." {#Lu 1:16,17}