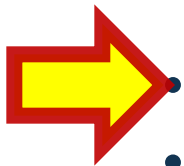

The Silent Years



Introduction

- If reading the Bible chronologically,
 - *“4 Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”* (Mal. 4, circa 435 B.C.)
 - ...
 - *“5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.”* (Luke 1, circa 7 B.C.)



If not in the Bible, why care?

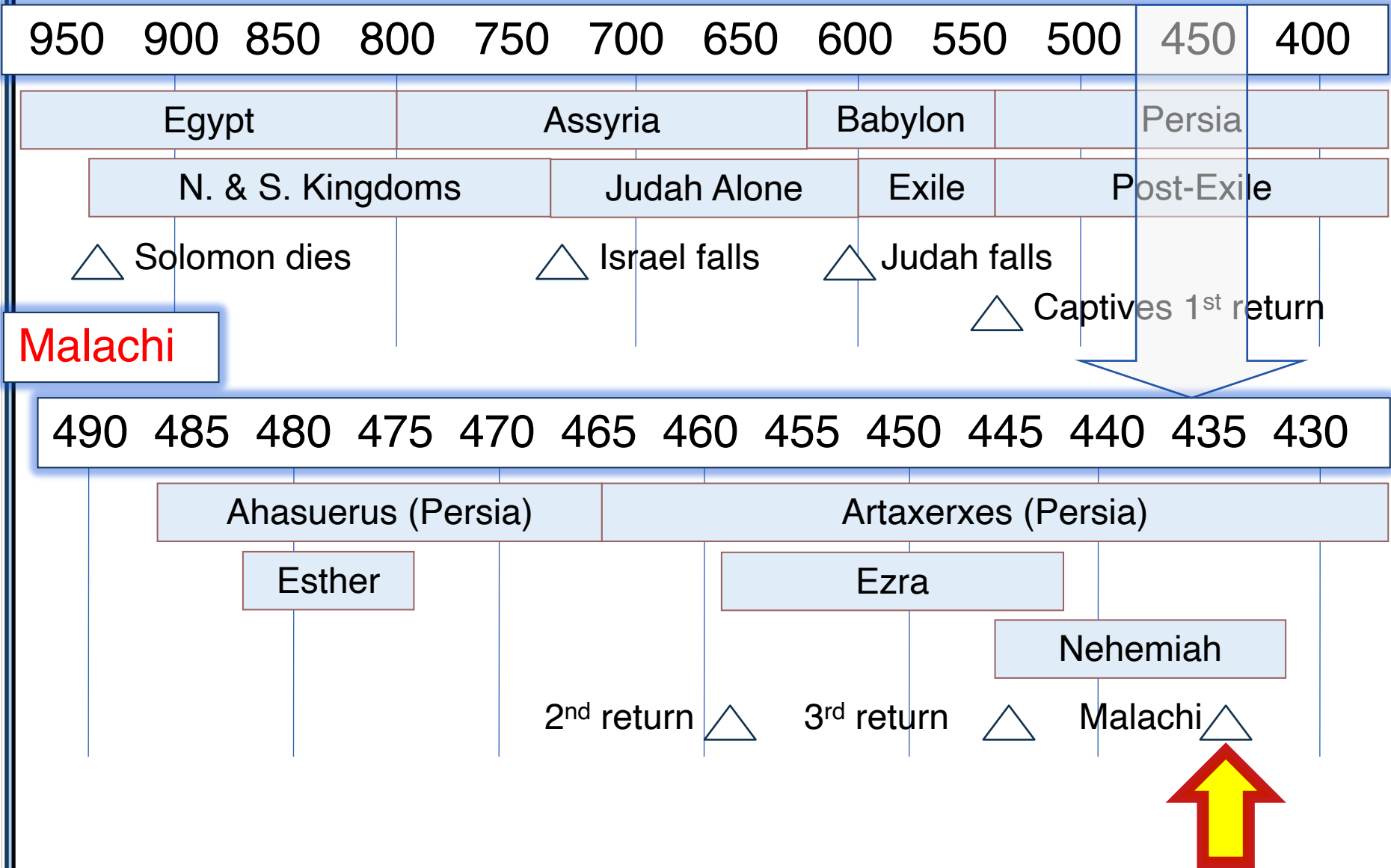
- Major regional events, people, customs, etc. that shape NT context
- Seen in many terms that first pop up in the NT
 - Agape love
 - Artemis (Diana of the Ephesians)
 - Caesar
 - Centurion
 - Christ
 - Crucifixion
 - Hermes (Mercury)
 - Herodians
 - Hellenists
 - Legion
 - Pentecost
 - Pharisees
 - Sadducees
 - Synagogue
 - Zealots
 - Zeus (Jupiter)

If not in the Bible, where?

- Secular historians (Greek, Roman, Josephus)
- Apocrypha?
 - “Deuterocanonical” (Catholic term)
 - “Hidden” – of doubtful origin
 - Written roughly between 200 B.C. and 400 A.D.
 - Includes books of alleged history, like 1 & 2 Maccabees



Where are we starting?



Where are we starting?

- The Book of Malachi is the last of the Minor Prophets and the last book in the Old Testament
 - Both in terms of reading order and date of origin.
 - The themes in Malachi are very similar to many of the Minor Prophets:
 - Ch. 1:1-5 God's love for Israel
 - Ch. 1:6-2:9 The unfaithfulness of the priests
 - Ch. 2:10-16 The unfaithfulness of the people
 - Ch. 2:17-4:6 Repent for the "Day of the Lord" is coming
- Concludes by pointing forward to a time when Elijah will return to prepare the way for the Lord (Mal. 4:5-6).



BC 450 400 350 300 250 200 150 100 50 0 50 AD

Persia

Greece

Rome

Malachi



Alexander the Great



Jerusalem captured



By Pompey

Antipater &

Herod the Great

Ptolemies

Seleucids

Septuagint written



Maccabees

Major Old Testament Prophecies

Coming of Elijah & the Messiah (Mal. 4)



The Suffering Savior (Isa. 53)
Messiah's Kingdom



"The Day of the Lord"



Major New Testament Events

8-4 B.C. Birth of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth

27 A.D. Start of ministry of John and Jesus

30 A.D. Crucifixion & resurrection of Jesus

30 A.D. Start of the Church & Jesus' spiritual kingdom (Acts 2)

70 A.D. Destruction of Jerusalem & the temple by the Romans

The Rise of Greece

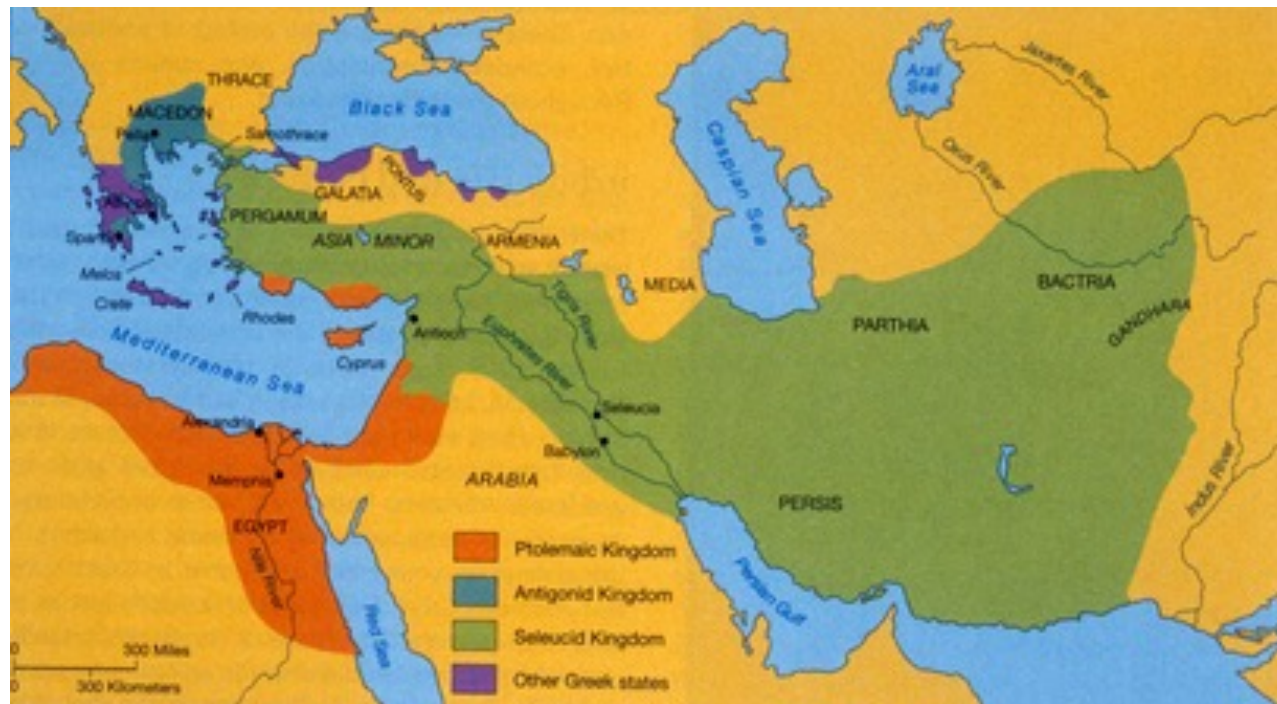
The Rise of Greece

- About 100 years after Malachi, the Medeo-Persian Empire (including the land of Canaan) eventually falls to Alexander the Great around 330 B.C.
 - Introduction of Greek language, culture, art, religion (Zeus, Artemas, Hermes), etc.



A Kingdom Divided

- After the death of Alexander the Great, two major Grecian factions dominate the eastern Mediterranean, the Ptolemies (Egypt) and the Seleucids (Syria, Asia Minor, Persia).



The Rise of Koine Greek

- Due to the rising popularity of the Greek language among Jews, the Old Testament was translated into Greek around 250 B.C.
 - The Septuagint (Latin *septuaginta*, “70”)
 - Greek book names familiar to us (“Genesis”, “Exodos”, “Deuteronomion”, “Routh”, “Esther”, “Psalmoi”, “Amos”)
 - Likely used by Jesus, apostles, and early Christians
 - Used by Jerome in his Latin translation of the Vulgate OT (382 A.D.)
 - Still the standard version used in the Greek Orthodox church



The Dead Sea Scrolls

- ❑ Discovered between 1946 and 1956 in 11 caves near the northwest shore of the Dead Sea and the Hellenistic-period Jewish settlement of Khirbet Qumran (“Qumran caves scrolls”)
 - 981 manuscripts dated from 380 B.C. and 80 A.D.
 - 40% OT, 30% Apocrypha, 30% sectarian
 - Parts from all but one of the books in the OT
- ❑ 1000 years earlier than previously discovered OT manuscripts from 10th century A.D.
 - Demonstrated the unusual accuracy of manuscript transmission over that period



The Maccabees

- Judea came under Seleucid control around 170 B.C. with Antiochus IV Epiphanes
 - Launched religious persecution against the Jews, ordered the worship of Zeus, and polluted the temple
- The Jewish Maccabee family staged revolts against pagan Seleucid influences beginning around 165 B.C.
- Resulted in a rededication of the temple in 164 B.C.
 - With the institution of Hanukkah or the Festival of Lights.



The Rise of the Roman Empire

The Rise of the Roman Empire

- Eventually the Grecian Empire falls to yet another dominating people, the Romans from Italy,
 - The land of Canaan falling under their influence around 65 B.C.



Roman Influence

- Increased commerce, travel, exchange of ideas, and regional governors
 - Beginning with Antipater (appointed by Julius Caesar in 47 B.C.)
 - And his son, Herod the Great (ruling from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C.) who greatly enlarged the second temple around 20 B.C.



The NT Stage is Set

□ Influence of the Koine Greek language

- Angel (*aggelos*) – a messenger Luke 1:11
- Apostles (*apostolos*) – one sent Matt. 10:2
- Baptism (*baptisma*) – immersion Luke 3:3
- Charity/agape love (*agapaō*) – 1 Cor. 13
- Christ (*christos*) – the anointed one Luke 2:11
- Deacon (*diakonos*) – a servant Phil. 1:1
- Evangelist (*euaggelistes*) – bringer of good tidings
- Pentecost (*pentēkostē*) – 50 days after Passover Acts 2
- Sanhedrin (*synedrion*) – assembly, esp. 71-member Jerusalem council Matt. 26:59
- Synagogue (*synagōgē*) - local place of Jewish worship Matt. 12:9
- Even Bible (*biblia*)



The NT Stage is Set

□ Political/religious sects

- Hellenists – Jews who spoke Greek and practiced Greek customs Acts 6:1
- Herodians – Jews who supported the Herodian family Matt. 22:16; Mark 3:6
- Pharisees – Separatist Jews Matt. 3:7; Acts 15:5; Acts 23:6-8
 - First mentioned in 145 B.C. as likely successors to the Assideans (“pious”) who originated during the Maccabean revolt
- Sadducees - Matt. 3:7; Acts 23:6-8
 - Uncertain origin, likely Jews influenced Greek customs/philosophy
- Zealots – Luke 16:14
 - Originated during the Maccabean revolt, resorting to violence against foreigners



The NT Stage is Set

□ Greek religion

- Artemis (Diana of the Ephesians) – Acts 19
- Hermes (Mercury), Zeus (Jupiter) – Acts 14:12

□ Roman rulers and customs

- Caesar – Matt. 22:17; Luke 2:1; John 19:15
- Centurion – Cmdr. of ~80 soldiers Matt. 8; Acts 10:1
- Denarius – Silver coin, day's wage Matt. 20:2; 22:19
- Legion – 4500 to 5300 soldiers Matt. 26:53
- Praetorium/Hall of Judgment – the palace of a provincial governor or procurator Matt. 27:27; John 18:28
- Publicans – Tax collectors
Matt 5:46-47; Matt. 11:19
- Quaternion – 4 soldiers Acts 12:4
- Crucifixion/cross - Matt. 10:38;
Matt. 27:31; Heb. 12:2



And the Biblical narrative resumes...

Elijah Returns!

- Between roughly 8 and 4 B.C., two children are born whose lives will usher in a whole new era.
- The first of these is John, son of Zachariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1).
 - As a young adult, he will become known as "John the Baptist ("Immerser").
 - After almost 460 years, he will fulfill Malachi's final prophecy regarding Elijah's return to prepare the way of the Lord (Luke 1:17 and Matt. 11:14).
 - Eventually, he is beheaded by Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great).



In the Fullness of Time (Gal. 4:4)

- The second child is Jesus, son of Mary and Joseph (Matt. 1-2).
- After escaping death at the command of Herod the Great, He will grow up to have many designations, including "Jesus of Nazareth", "the Son of Man", "Savior", and the "Son of God".
- But from the perspective of the Minor Prophets, He will be the fulfillment of all their prophecies regarding a coming Messiah, Prophet, Priest, and King over His Kingdom.



Conclusion

- "The Silent Years" contain over four centuries of rise/fall of nations, notable events/people, changing languages/customs, etc.
 - Longer than U.S. history
- Some value in using uninspired historical accounts as an aid to better understand NT words, customs, & culture
- Helps build a conceptual "bridge" between the Old Testament and the New

