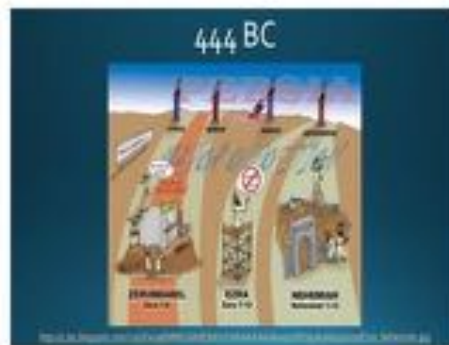


Malachi 02 – Judaism of Malachi’s Day: Pharisaism

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Malachi 1:6-14

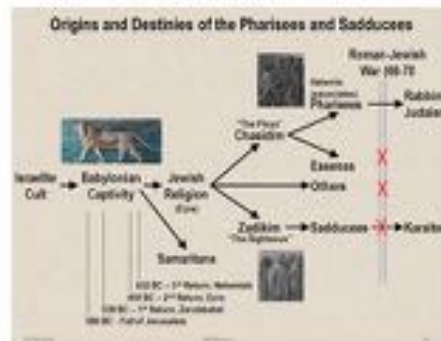
Perspective Post-Exilic Books

- Not just about building the Temple or the Wall
- About rebuilding Judaism without Davidic kings
- Their beliefs much different than Christian beliefs of OT today



Judaism not a Monolithic Faith

- Well known Jewish sects developed during the Babylonian Captivity
- Sadducees (Priests) linked to the Temple - Extinct
- Pharisees & Scribes are the face of Judaism today



The Great Synagogue

- During the Second Temple period at the end of the Persian Empire the great men of Jerusalem formed a body that became known as *The Great Synagogue*
 - Ezra was its leader - Founded the Scribes
 - Traditionally 120 men but at least 85 linked to Nehemiah 8-10
 - Seen as the link between the prophets and the scholars

Reforms of Great Synagogue

- This body sought to codify Judaism changing its form as practiced before the Captivity
 - Canonized the final books of the Old Testament
 - Possibly edited earlier books
 - Reformed and codified the Law - System of government
 - Classified the Oral Law (Talmud) into: *midrash* (The Torah), *halakhot* (The Way), and *haggadah* (The Lore)

Judaism Dynamic Faith

- Judaism was not a static faith but adapted to meet changing historical circumstances before the exile
- The post-exilic faith was very different in that the centrality of the Temple was replaced by the synagogue
- Sadducees seen as *liberal*, adapting to political currents, and the Pharisees/Scribes as *conservative*, traditional

Judaism Had to be Retaught

- The settlers of Jerusalem rebuilding both the Temple and Judaism had to be clarify their faith in this new political environment without a monarchy
- The Oral Law became the vehicle for practice and interpretation of previous Scriptures
- These developed into the traditions and customs Christ criticized in the Gospels (Mt 23:1-9)

Imagine the Religious Cacophony

- There may have been a "Temple" in Babylon during and after the exile (Elephantine)
- Priesthood no longer the sole authority
 - Interpretation of Scriptures
 - Adaptation of the Laws to civil life and practice
- Priesthood regulated simply to temple sacrificial rites

New Authority in Judaism

- The Scribes and Pharisees were the new authorities
 - The Great Synagogue determined civil life and practice
 - Religious texts, liturgy and practice defined by scholars
 - The Oral Law gained ascendancy over Torah competing with priestly authority on Judaistic life and practice
- Priesthood joined with Samaritans consolidating dynastic power in the intertestament period

Priesthood Despised Their Duty

- Competing for political and religious power in post-exilic Judah the priesthood despised their duties
 - Probably felt regulated to a relatively unimportant status
 - Base ritual of animal slaughter was probably seeming pointless to them compared to Zoroastrianism
 - Their power came from tax collection and land ownership and farming via serfs and slaves

<http://achillatIsrael.net/docs/learning/intertestamental.html>
 Good History. Poor hermeneutics (higher textual criticism)

Faith in God No Longer Mattered

- Priesthood aligned with political forces for power
 - Their temple duties insignificant in this new order
 - Lackadaisical approach revealed lack of faith in God
 - The people looked elsewhere for guidance
- Pharisees/Scribes defined piety: works based on reason
 - Common people could be righteous based on "doing" rather than dynasty; thus, despised temple ritual also

People No More Faithful than Before

- Though there was no longer the practice of idolatry neither was there a faithfulness to the faith in God
- People changed but not in faith that God had control
 - They were part of and at the mercy of the Gentile world
 - Promises of God seemed irrelevant if not impossible
 - Pointless rituals for ignorant people & nonexistent God

God Confronts Priesthood

- Through Malachi God confronts the priesthood on two levels:
 - God as Father - He was due obedience because He was the originator of them since Abraham, and Exodus
 - God as Lord - He was due fear, reverence, because He was over His creation
 - They rejected Him on both levels evidenced by their polluted sacrifices that violated the written Torah

Polluted Sacrifices

- The sacrificial system became a means of getting rid of unsalable animals: selling them to the Temple for sacrificial purposes; receiving a profit at God's expense
 - Sacrificial system pointed to Christ as sacrifice for sin
 - Polluted sacrifices represented a sinful unfit Christ
 - This represented their lack of faith in God's promises of a coming Messiah and future glorification of Israel

God Talks in Their Terms

- God asks them how their governors or kings would react to receiving such tokens from their hands
 - They were showing civil, political authorities more respect than they were showing God
 - They were destroying God's message of salvation via the sacrificial system; Gentiles had more respect for their gods than the Jews were displaying toward God

God Declares His Name Great

- God declares that the Gentiles will come to realize He has a great name (able to save) despite their disrespect
 - He refers to the coming First Fruits dispensation (Mal. 1:11-12)
 - He will save whom He wills in spite of their rejection
 - He is also speaking of the Millennial Kingdom period
- They are rebuilding Judaism that excludes God

Judaism Never Recovers

- The Judaism that arose from this period survives today, the Pharisaical branch only
- God remains excluded from their religion and thus He has excluded them from His salvation, as a group
- These are the *False Jews* who collude with political powers for their goals but will end up betrayed

Christians No Different

- Sinful human nature is the same regardless of the institution
 - Christians have despaired of Christ's coming again
 - Christians have sought political power and alliances to shape the world to their purposes
 - History is nothing more than the futility of Judaism, Christendom and Gnosticism warring against God

Conflating Christianity & Patriotism

- Christendom has constantly conflated faith with patriotism (nationalism) to legitimize wars of conquests
- Since the Enlightenment man has sought to define the world without God
 - Evolution
 - Atheism
 - Postmodernism

Science Co-opted Against God

- Science, originally a methodology to explain the true nature of forces in this material creation, has been co-opted to legitimize opposition against belief in God
 - These pseudosciences (false knowledge) are no different than the idolatries of the ancients (Ro. 1:18-21)
 - Rather than accepting the truth of God, man rejects the knowledge of God showing himself to be foolish

Churches Corrupting Themselves

- The RCC corrupted itself aligning with Rome for power then with various other powers after Rome
- Protestant churches breaking away from RCC quickly joined nation-states corrupting themselves
- Evangelical churches today join various political movements and incorporate pseudosciences into their movements destroying the gospel message (2x 18:8f)

