

Malachi 1:1-5

Six disputes:

1. **1:2-5** – God has a covenant with Israel
 1. God says, I have a covenant with Israel.
 2. Israel says God does not have a covenant with Israel. Prove it!
 3. God says look at Edom.
2. **1:6-2:9** – Israel does not fear God and they despise His Temple in Jerusalem
 1. God says, Israel despises me and gives me no honor.
 2. Israel says, “How have we despised your name?”
 3. God says look at your worship practices in the temple
 - a. People bring lame sacrifices
 - b. Priests/Levites accepted the people’s lame sacrifices
3. **2:10-16** – Israel is not faithful to Covenant(s) (Mosaic and Marriage)
 1. God says, Judah has married daughter of a foreign god
 2. Israel says, “We repented of that! Why does God not show us favor?”
 3. God says, because the men of Judah used this “separate from foreign wives” as an excuse to abandon any wife breaking the covenant of marriage.
4. **2:17-3:5** – God has grown weary as Israel accuses Him of being unjust
 1. God says, Israel has wearied YHWH
 2. Israel says, “How have we wearied him?”
 3. God says, by saying anyone who does evil is considered to be good
 - a. This is given further detail in **4:1-6**
5. **3:6-12** – God does not change, the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants are intact
 1. God says, “Return to me!” and “Stop robbing from me!”
 2. Israel says, “How shall we return?” and “How have we robbed you?”
 3. God says, bring the tithe into the storehouse and stop neglecting the Temple
6. **3:13-21** – Israel says it is useless to serve the Lord
 1. God says, Israel’s words are hard against Him.
 2. Israel says, “How have we spoken against you?”
 3. God says, when you said,
 - a. “It is vain to serve God.”
 - b. “What profit is there in keeping his charge?”
 - c. “What profit is there in walking before the Lord or repenting?”
 - d. “The arrogant are the blessed ones.”
 - e. “Evildoers prosper.”
 - f. “Evildoers test God and they escape.”

Malachi 1:1 – The oracle of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.

4401 [e]	3027 [e]	3478 [e]	413 [e]	3068 [e]	1697 [e]	4853 [e]
mal·'ā·kî.	bə·yad	yîs·rā·'êl;	'el-	Yah·weh	də·bar-	maš·sā
מְלֹאכֵי:	בְּיַד	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֶל-	יְהוָה	דְּבַר-	מַשָּׂא 1
Malachi	by	Israel	to	of Yahweh	of the word	The burden
N-proper-ms	Prep-b N-isc	N-proper-ms	Prep	N-proper-ms	N-msc	N-msc

1. Malachi is speaking to the exiles who had returned from Babylonian captivity and their descendants living in Judah.
2. The goal of Malachi is to convince the people of restored Israel that the Lord is still faithful to his covenant with Abraham.
 - a. This is an admonition
 - b. And, an exhortation
3. Malachi's Israel was not convinced that the Word of God given to the past prophets was really true. They likely thought the written prophecies of ancient Israel such as Isaiah, or the more contemporary prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah were just propaganda pushed out by the ruling class to keep the people of the nation in service to this unrealistic fantasy. The people needed reassured YHWH was real and his covenant with Abraham was real and the current nation of Israel was really in a continuation of YHWH's plans and covenant
 - a. YHWH will use the contemporary condition of the nation of Edom as a contrast to the present condition of the nation of Israel
 - b. Malachi will repeatedly use (6x) a three-part disputation argument between YHWH and Israel. These three parts include:
 - i. Declaration from God (revelation, Word) by the prophet
 - ii. Refutation by the recipients of the oracle (the declaration, revelation, Word)
 - iii. Rebuttal from God delivered by Malachi with evidence that YHWH is right and the people need to start keeping their side of the covenant with "love" manifested as obedience, appreciation, reverence.
4. The superscription (1:1) identifies four things:
 - a. The form of prophetic speech
 - i. "oracle" from Hebrew *massa*
 1. Technical term for a type of Prophetic speech that is centered on delivering a threat or utterance of doom.
 2. *Massa* used Isaiah 13:1; Nahum 1:1; Habakkuk 1:1; Zechariah 9:1; 12:1)
 3. *Massa* translated "burden", "oracle", "message"
 - b. A divine revelation from the LORD in the phrase
 - i. "the Word of YHWH" or *debar YHWH*.
 - ii. this phrase *debar YHWH* is a technical phrase in prophetic literature indicating a message of revelation from the eyes, mouth, mind of God
 - iii. Together the words *massa* and *debar YHWH* in this superscription voice the overwhelming intention to identify this text as divine words from God which are a rare event of revelation spoken directly by God himself.
 - iv. This message carries some serious weight and is authoritative Word of God!
 - c. The people of Israel are the recipients of this divine Word of correction or doom.

- i. Israel is the name used to identify the whole, complete nation (12 tribes) that have returned from Babylon
- ii. Their nation is now called Judah and their land has been limited to a small section having belonged to the tribe of Judah and Benjamin.
- iii. The people are called Israel here and in 1:5; 2:11; 2:16; 4:4
- iv. **The use of the name “Israel” to refer to the people of the Persian province of “Judah” is the beginning of YHWH providing evidence that he is still committed to his Covenant with Abraham and these people are still part of his universal plan of salvation which requires them to be obedient covenant partners.** This is the whole theme of the book.
- v. The prophets foretold the dispersion of Israel when they proved unfaithful to the Mosaic Covenant, but they also promised that God would remain faithful to the Abrahamic Covenant and restore them.

1. **Mosaic Covenant dispersion promises:**

- a. Deuteronomy 28:58, 63-64 – “If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, ... And as the Lord took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the Lord will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known.”
- b. Leviticus 26:33 – “I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.”
- c. Deuteronomy 4:27 – “the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you.”
- d. Psalm 106:27 – “Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them that he would make them fall in the wilderness, and would make their offspring fall among the nations.”
- e. 1 Kings 14:15 – “The Lord will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their fathers and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their Asherim, provoking the Lord to anger.”
- f. Jeremiah 9:16 – “I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them.”
- g. Jeremiah 13:24 – “I will scatter you like chaff driven by the wind from the desert.
- h. Jeremiah 18:17 – “Like the east wind I will scatter them before the enemy. I will show them my back, not my face, in the day of their calamity.”

- i. Ezekiel 12:15 – “They shall know that I am the Lord, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the countries.”
- j. Ezekiel 20:23 – “Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries, because they had not obeyed my rules, but had rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers' idols.”
- k. Ezekiel 22:15 – “I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the countries, and I will consume your uncleanness out of you.”
- l. Zechariah 7:14 – “I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate.”

2. **Abrahamic Covenant restoration promises:**

- a. Deuteronomy 30 :1-3 – ““And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you.”
- b. Jeremiah 30:1-3 (introducing an entire nine chapter section of Jeremiah (30-38) entitled “Restoration of Israel”) – “This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **‘Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you. The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their ancestors to possess,’** says the Lord.”
- c. Jeremiah 30:10-11 – ““Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the Lord, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with you to save you, declares the Lord; I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you, but of you I will not make a full end. I will discipline you in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.”
- d. Ezekiel 11:16-17 – “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Though I removed them far off among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a while in the countries where they have gone.’ Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples

and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’ ”

- e. Zechariah 10:9 – “Though I scattered them among the nations, yet in far countries they shall remember me, and with their children they shall live and return.
- f. Nehemiah 1:8 – “Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.’

- d. The writer/speaker Malachi
 - i. “Malachi” means “my messenger”

1:2 – “I have loved you,” says the Lord. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “Is not Esau Jacob's brother?” declares the Lord. “Yet I have loved Jacob

251 [e]	3808 [e]	157 [e]	4100 [e]	559 [e]	3068 [e]	559 [e]	853 [e]	157 [e]
'ah	hā-lō-w-	'ā-hab-tā-nū;	bam-mah	wa-'ā-mar-tem	Yah-weh,	'ā-mar	'et-kem	'ā-hab-ti
אֵל	הָלוֹ-ו-	אֶחָבְתֵנוּ	בַּמָּה	וְאָמַרְתֶּם	יְהוָה	אָמַר	אֵתְכֶם	אֶחָבְתִּי
brother	[Was] not	have You loved us	in what [way]	And yet you say	Yahweh	says	you	I have loved
N-ms	Adv-NegPrt	V-Qal-Perf-2ms 1cp	Prep-b Interrog	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjPerf-2mp	N-proper-ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms	DirObjM 2mp	V-Qal-Perf-1cs

"LOVE" is *ahab* and has covenant implications in this context.

3290 [e]	853 [e]	157 [e]	3068 [e]	5002 [e]	3290 [e]	6215 [e]
ya-'ā-qōb.	'et-	wā-'ō-hab	Yah-weh,	nə-'um-	le-ya-'ā-qōb	'ē-śaw
יַעֲקֹב:	אֵת-	וְאֶחָב	יְהוָה	נֹאֲמַר	לְיַעֲקֹב	עֵשָׂו
Jacob	-	And yet I have loved	Yahweh	says	of Jacob	Esau
N-proper-ms	DirObjM	Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImpf-1cs	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Prep-l N-proper-ms	N-proper-ms

1. First dispute addresses the fact that Jacob (or, Israel) is the heir of the Abrahamic Covenant
2. This message rebukes Israel’s misunderstanding and ignorance by assuring them the story they may or may not have heard concerning Abraham and the Covenant is true.
3. Despite the captivity and the harsh times of restoration, these people are the heirs of that unconditional, unending covenant that YHWH made with Abraham
4. The issue Israel is having in Malachi’s day is:
 - a. They do not believe (or, understand) the Abrahamic Covenant
 - b. They do not reciprocate their side of the Mosaic Covenant with the same “love” God has shown them. The “love” is not emotional, but their love is shown by:
 - i. Obedience
 - ii. Devotion
5. “Love” is *ahab* and has covenant implications in this context.
 - a. YHWH is saying,
 - i. “I have a covenant with you”
 - ii. You are the heirs of the covenant promises I made to Abraham
 - iii. You are the people I am never giving up on
6. Israel responds by saying, “In what way have you loved us?” or “Really? What evidence is there of this Abrahamic Covenant?”

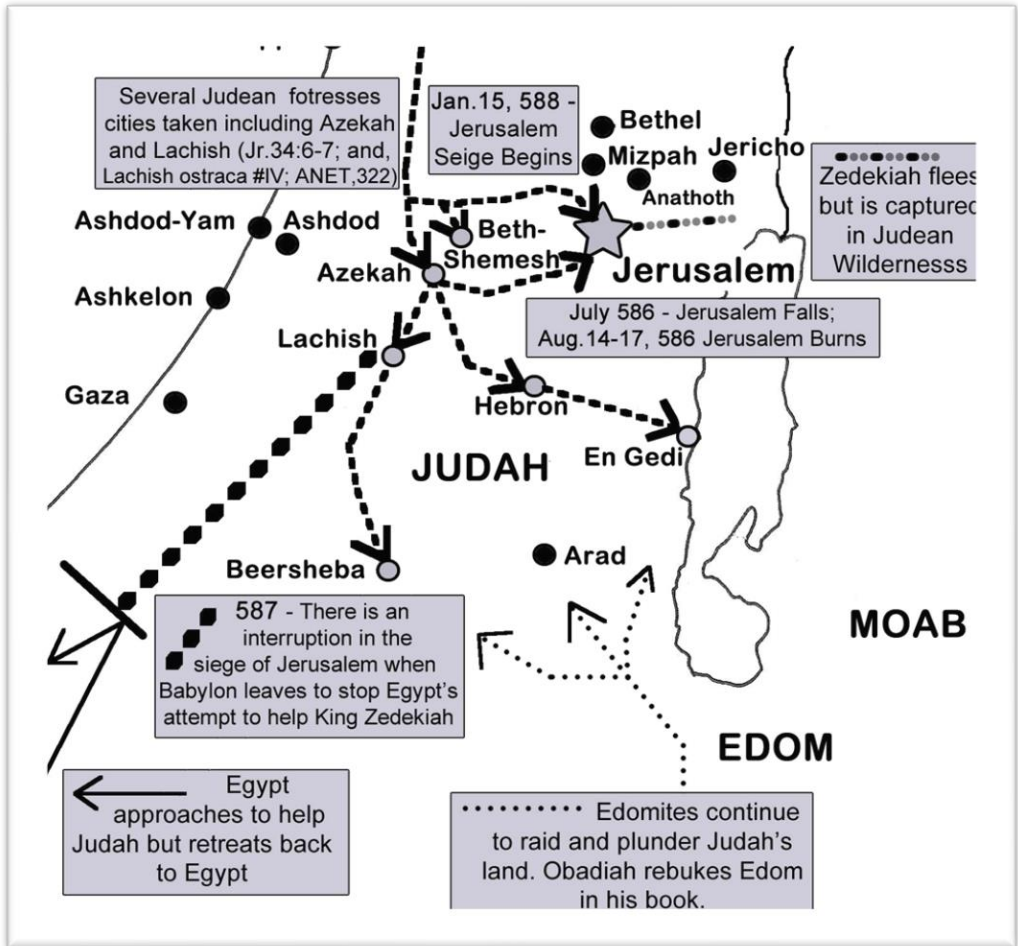
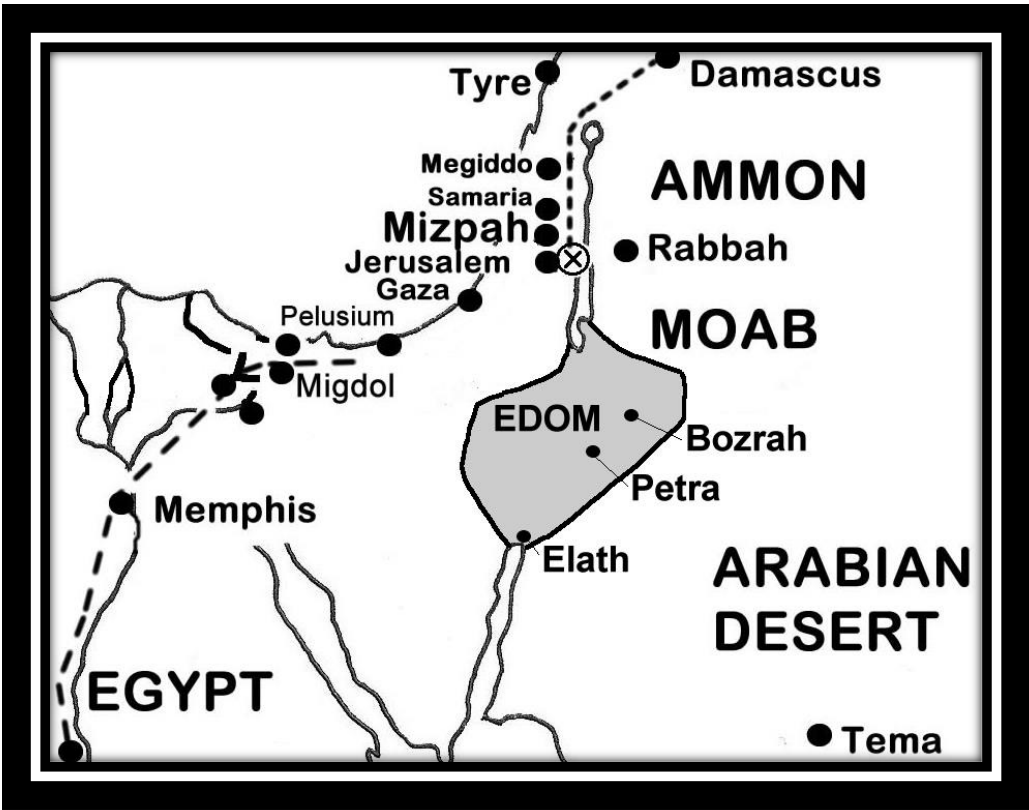
- a. Israel is beaten down from captivity, the struggle to return, the hopelessness of constant opposition during rebuilding and now a continuation in poverty.
 - b. Israel has justified their unbelief and are making no effort to ask questions.
 - c. Israel is basically an atheistic state
7. God responds by going right to contemporary evidence that Israel can see and evaluate.
- a. The promises were ancient. God’s faithfulness is recorded in Scripture.
 - b. But, God is going to show them how evidence of the Abrahamic Covenant and how they have had a chance to experience it in their own lives.
 - c. God asks Israel to consider Jacob’s brother Esau who was right there with Jacob and their father Isaac, the first heir of the Abrahamic Covenant.
8. Genesis 15:22-34 –
- a. God chose Jacob to be heir after Abraham and Isaac instead of Esau.
 - i. Abraham – Isaac – Jacob – twelve sons (tribes) → the Nation with a Covenant
 - ii. Abraham – Isaac – Esau – five sons → a gentile nation with no covenant
 - b. Genesis 25:21-24 – Rebekah – twins – the older shall serve the younger
 - c. Genesis 25:31-32 – Esau sold his birthright...”of what use is a birthright to me?”....”Thus Esau despised his birthright”
 - d. Genesis 25:33 – Jacob wanted the birthright!...”Swear to me now!”...”Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew.”
 - e. Esau’s Family in Genesis 36

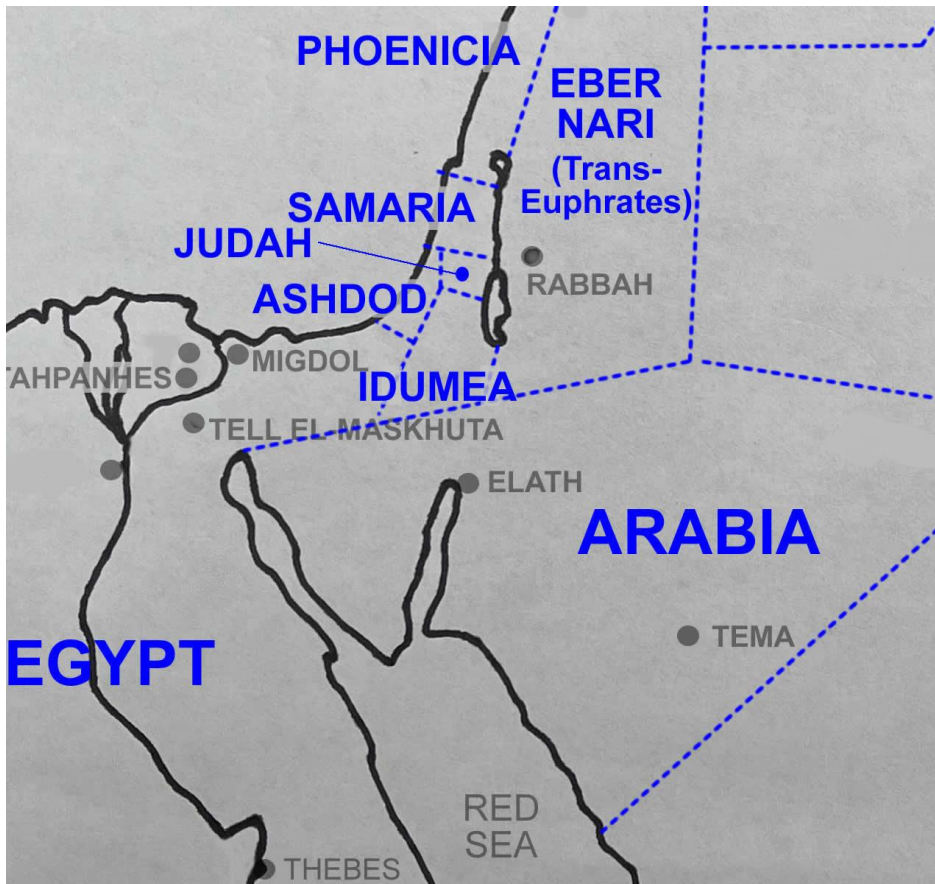
1:3 – but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.”

8077 [e] šə·mā·māh, שְׂמָמָה	2022 [e] hā·rāw הָרָיו	853 [e] 'et- אֶת-	7760 [e] wā·'ā·šîm וְאֲשִׁים	8130 [e] šā·nê·tî; שָׂנֵאתִי	6215 [e] 'ê·šāw עֵשָׂו	853 [e] we·'et- וְאֶת- 3
waste	his mountains	-	and laid	I have hated	Esau	but
N-fs	N-mpc 3ms	DirObjM	Conj-w V-Qal-ConseclImperf-1cs	V-Qal-Perf-1cs	N-proper-ms	Conj-w DirObjM

4057 [e] mid·bār. מִדְבָּר:	8568 [e] lə·tan·nō·wt לְתַנּוֹת	5159 [e] na·hā·la·tōw נַחֲלָתוֹ	853 [e] we·'et- וְאֶת-
of the wilderness	for the jackals	his heritage	and
N-ms	Prep-l N-cp	N-fsc 3ms	Conj-w DirObjM

1. “Hate” is *sane* which is the antonym for *ahab*.
2. God had chosen Jacob, but Esau also considered the Abrahamic Covenant useless and “despised” the Abrahamic Covenant by his own choice.
3. God had rejected Esau as heir of the covenant
4. Esau was given territory and a large family that became powerful, successful and wise





5. During the wilderness years Moses was told by the Lord to respect Edom (Esau):

“Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea, as the Lord told me. And for many days we traveled around Mount Seir. Then the Lord said to me, ‘You have been traveling around this mountain country long enough. Turn northward and command the people, ‘You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful. Do not contend with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. You shall purchase food from them with money, that you may eat, and you shall also buy water from them with money, that you may drink. For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing.’” So we went on, away from our brothers, the people of Esau, who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road from Elath and Ezion-geber.” (Deuteronomy 2:1-8)
6. Edom known for wisdom:
 - a. Jeremiah 49:7 – “Concerning Edom. Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished?”
 - i. Jeremiah 49:7-22 records God’s judgment coming on Edom during the days of Babylon, but it was not Babylon who moved in on Edom, but the Arabs or Nabateans.
 - b. Obadiah 8 – “Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?”
 - i. The whole book of Obadiah is an announcement of judgment on Edom for how Edom plundered Judah when Babylon was destroying Jerusalem
7. Edom moved north up into southern Judah, the Negev, while Israel was in Babylon because Edom’s land was overrun by the Nabateans (Arabs). The Nabateans built up Petra.
8. Judas Maccabeus eventually subdued the Edomites in Idumea (then called Idumeans)
9. The Hasmoneans forced the Idumeans into Judaism. Herod the Great was an Idumean (Edomite, a descendant of Esau)

1:4 – If Edom says, “We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,” the Lord of hosts says, “They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called ‘the wicked country,’ and ‘the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.’”

7725 [e] wə-nā-šūb וְנָשׁוּב	7567 [e] ruš-šaš-nū, רָשָׁשׁנוּ	123 [e] 'ē-dō-wm אֶדוֹם	559 [e] tō-mar תָּאמַר	3588 [e] kī- כִּי
but we will return	we have been impoverished	Edom	has said	Even though
Conj-w V-Qal-ConjImperf-1cp	V-Pual-Perf-1cp	N-proper-ms	V-Qal-Imperf-3fs	Conj

1992 [e] hēm-māh הֵמָּה	6635 [e] še-bā-'ō-wt, צְבָאוֹת	3068 [e] Yah-weh יְהוָה	559 [e] 'ā-mar אָמַר	3541 [e] kōh כֹּה	2723 [e] ho-rā-bō-wt, תְּרֵבוֹת	1129 [e] wə-nib-neh וּנְבִנֶה
they	of hosts	Yahweh	says	thus	the desolate places	and build
Pro-3mp	N-cp	N-proper-ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms	Adv	N-fp	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjImperf-1cp

7564 [e] riš-'āh, רִשְׁעָה	1366 [e] ge-būl גְּבוּל	lā-hem לָהֶם	7121 [e] wə-qā-re-'ū וְקָרְאוּ	2040 [e] 'e-hē-rō-ws; אֶהְרֹס	589 [e] wa-'ā-nī וְאֲנִי	1129 [e] yib-nū יִבְנוּ
of Wickedness	the Territory	to them	and they shall be called	will throw down	but I	may build
N-fs	N-msc	Prep 3mp	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjPerf-3cp	V-Qal-Imperf-1cs	Conj-w Pro-1cs	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp

5769 [e] 'ō-w-lām. עוֹלָם:	5704 [e] 'ad- עַד	3068 [e] Yah-weh יְהוָה	2194 [e] zā'am זַעַם	834 [e] 'ā-šer- אֲשֶׁר	5971 [e] wə-hā-'ām וְהָעָם
ever	forever	Yahweh	will have indignation	against whom	and the people
N-ms	Prep	N-proper-ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms	Pro-r	Conj-w, Art N-ms

1. Edom was going to try to recover like Judah after the fall of Babylon.
 - a. Edom planned to regain their ancient territory that was their ancestor's native land.
 - b. Edom planned to rebuild their cities along the Kings Highway that led to the Gulf of Aqaba at the Red Sea.
 - c. Edom planned to rebuild their trade routes:
 - i. into the east that had been overtaken by the Nabateans
 - ii. into the Red Sea that led down the coast of Egypt and into southern lands of the Arabs
 - iii. into the north along the Kings Highway
 - d. Edom planned to rebuild their temples, shrines and their culture.
 - e. Edom was going to do all of this just as they watched Israel return to their land, rebuild their cities, rebuild their temple, restore trade and production.
2. But, God said, "No," to Edom's plans.
 - a. They are a people without a Covenant.
 - b. They were a people that were absorbed into the Arab Nabateans or moved into Idumea to be dissolved as a national identity.
 - c. Edom was merely a Gentile nation passing through time. Ancient, but passing away.

1:5 – Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, “Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel!”

5921 [e] mê·al מֵעַל upon Prep-m	3068 [e] Yah·weh, יהוה Yahweh N-proper-ms	1431 [e] yiġ·dal יגדל is magnified V-Qal-Imperf-3ms	559 [e] tō·mā·rū תאמרו shall say V-Qal-Imperf-2mp	859 [e] wə·'at·tem ואתם and you Conj-w Pro-2mp	7200 [e] tir·e·nāh; תראינה shall see V-Qal-Imperf-3fp	5869 [e] wə·'ê·nê·ḡem ועיניכם And Your eyes Conj-w N-cdc 2mp
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מֵעַל	מֵ	→ /me/ = "from"	"from upon"	3478 [e] yiś·rā·'êl. יִשְׂרָאֵל: of Israel N-proper-m	1366 [e] liġ·būl לְגִבּוֹל beyond the border Prep-l N-msc
	עַל	→ /al/ = "upon"			

1. Edom was an example for Israel to physically look at. They did not read it in a history book.
2. Actually, Israel’s “own eyes shall see this!”
3. It was not a part of the text of Scripture that they would have to believe. Although, the facts Israel was watching develop were events prophesied by their own prophets and in their own Scriptures.
4. Now, the point: The Lord had given Israel three external proofs of the Covenantal faithfulness (“love”) connected with the Abrahamic Covenant:
 - a. **Divine Revelation** – God was declaring for the people of this day through their own prophet Malachi that he still loved Israel. God, by his own divine Word told them in Malachi 1:2, “I have loved you!” That was the Word of God spoken to these people.
 - b. **Evidence of Edom** – Watch and learn. The prophecies against Edom had and would continue to occur. Edom had been overrun and Edom would not turn this judgment around. The prayer of the writer of Psalm 137:7-9 was going to be answered because Israel was God’s Covenant people:
*“Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem, how they said,
 “Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations!”
 O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed, blessed shall he be who repays you
 with what you have done to us!
 Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock!”*
 - c. **Testimony of the Rebuilt Temple** – Clearly the Rebuilt Temple stood in Malachi’s day. So, clearly Israel (Jacob) was well ahead of Edom (Esau), a people forgotten by the Lord, or “hated” without a Covenant of “faithful love”.
 - i. There could be much more evidence along the same line as the rebuilt temple:
 1. Return of all twelve tribes
 2. Return and reoccupy their families’ ancestral towns and villages.
 3. The restoration of self-government within the Persian Empire
 4. The continuation of the priesthood of Aaron with their genealogical records.
 5. If after Ezra, the reestablishment and reteaching of the Law of Moses.

6. If after Nehemiah, the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls and gates. This was the capital city that Sennacherib tried to attack and Nebuchadnezzar overthrew. Now it was rebuilt with a Temple, walls, gates and was occupied with families who had recovered from the dispersion or captivity.
5. One of the themes of this book and the point made at the end of this first dispute was God is in control of the whole world, all the nations and the final destination of history. This means:
 - a. All nations will eventually be brought into the rulership of YHWH
 - b. YHWH's name will be honored in all those nations. (How can God's covenant people NOT honor him today?)
 - c. And, most important, YHWH has not yet finished building and destroying or rewarding and judging. The sure plan of YHWH is still developing. It is in process. Be faithful today because God will be faithful to keep his Word into the future.
 - d. Israel will see and say in Israel and "upon" Israel and "from" the borders of Israel in all the world "Great is YHWH.