



UNIT 18 | SESSION 4 | FEBRUARY 22-23, 2020

2s-3s Lesson

Malachi the Prophet

Bible Passage: Malachi

Story Point: Malachi said a messenger would get people ready for the Messiah.

Key Passage: “God ... will himself restore ... you after you have suffered a little while.” 1 Peter 5:10

Christ Connection: John’s job was to get people ready for the last Messenger, Jesus! Jesus is God’s Son. Jesus came to save us.

**KID CONNECT:
30 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

After many years living as prisoners in Babylon, God’s people had returned to Judah. They had worked hard and overcome opposition to rebuild the temple and the walls around Jerusalem. Surely God would restore them ... finally! But nothing happened. As they waited, they faced drought and economic uncertainty. God’s people probably didn’t feel like God had blessed them at all.

“It is useless to serve God,” they said. “What have we gained by keeping his requirements?” (Mal. 3:14). Did God still care? It wasn’t long until God’s people fell back into the same patterns of sin that led to their exile in the first place: idolatry, covetousness, hypocrisy, arrogance, and abuse of the poor.

But God did still love His people. He had been working out His divine plan of redemption, and He never gave up on them. God sent a message to His people through the prophet Malachi.

Malachi was the last of the Old Testament prophets. He spoke to God’s people approximately 100 years after the end of the Babylonian captivity. Malachi’s message from God was a wake-up call.

God communicated through Malachi that the people’s lack of blessing didn’t mean that God didn’t

care. God exposed His people's sin and made clear that their actions merited a curse. God's people needed to repent and turn back to God. "But for you who fear my name," God said, "the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings" (Mal. 4:2).

Explain to preschoolers that 400 years of silence followed Malachi's prophecy; God did not communicate to His people. This period brings us to the New Testament, when the silence would be broken by the last prophet before Jesus, John the Baptist. His words about Jesus in John 1:29 offered hope to all who heard: "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

MAKE A MALACHI PUPPET

(**"Malachi Puppet" printable, 1 per child, Craft Stick, 1 per child, Crayons and Glue Sticks**)

Provide one Malachi puppet picture to each child and crayons for them to decorate with. Help preschoolers glue the puppet to a craft stick. Encourage preschoolers to hold the puppet as you introduce the Bible story.

SAY • Malachi told people God's words. God promised to send a messenger to get people ready for Jesus. Jesus is God's Son.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: WHEN I LOOK UP, VIDEO: GOD WILL!)

Sing "When I Look Up" and "God Will!"

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

(Bible, Bookmark, Letter, Envelope)

Place a bookmark at Malachi 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's Bible story is from the Book of Malachi.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God saves people through His Son, Jesus.

Show preschoolers the unopened letter. Excitedly open the letter and tell preschoolers who it is from and what the message says.

SAY • This letter has a message from my friend. What a great message to receive! The mailman is a messenger because he delivers messages through the mail. In today's Bible story, a man named Malachi told God's people about another messenger. This messenger wouldn't bring the mail. This messenger would tell about Jesus!

Show the Bible story video.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: MALACHI THE PROPHET, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

SAY • God sent Malachi to talk to His people. He told the people what they were doing wrong. Malachi told them that God wanted His people to obey Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION

(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

SAY • Malachi said another messenger was coming. That messenger was John the Baptist. John's job was to get people ready for the last Messenger, Jesus! Jesus is God's Son. Jesus came to save us.

PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

Place the Key Passage Marker at 1 Peter 5:10. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying.

SAY • "God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)" 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*).

PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Malachi

Story Point: Malachi said a messenger would get people ready for the Messiah.

Key Passage: “God ... will himself restore ... you after you have suffered a little while” 1 Peter 5:10.

Christ Connection: John’s job was to get people ready for the last Messenger, Jesus! Jesus is God’s Son. Jesus came to save us.

MUSICAL KEY PASSAGE

(Key Passage Card, 1 per group, Gift Bag, 1 per group, Worship Music)

Place the key passage card in a colorful gift bag. Invite preschoolers to sit in a circle. As the music plays, preschooler will pass the bag around the circle. When the music stops, open the bag, read the key passage, and encourage preschoolers to cheer. Play as time allows. Retell the Bible story.

SAY • God’s people were not giving good gifts to God. The priests were teaching wrong things about God. They needed help! Malachi told people God’s words. God promised to send a messenger to get people ready for Jesus. Jesus came to save us.

BIBLE STORY PUZZLES

(Bible Story Pictures, 2-3 per group)

Display the Bible story picture puzzles. Review the Bible story as preschoolers work.

SAY • Malachi said a messenger would get people ready for Jesus. Jesus is God’s Son.

KEY PASSAGE WITH MOTIONS

Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying. “God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)” 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*).

GOSPEL GEMS

(Bible Story Picture, 1 per group, Key Passage Card, 1 per group, small Bibles)

Provide small Bibles for preschoolers to handle. Say the Bible is God’s words. Read the key passage card. Open your Bible to the Book of Malachi. Show the Bible story picture as you retell the Bible story. Say the story point and gospel gems. Pray for the preschoolers.

- Malachi told people God’s words.
- God promised to send a messenger before the Messiah.
- Jesus is God’s Son, the Messiah.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Big Picture Card & Story Point coloring page (optional), 1 per child)

Two & Three-year olds may color the optional Story Point coloring page as parents arrive. Encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool Christ Connection with their child this week.