



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

## 4s-5s 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. He came to rescue people from sin.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

**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.

### LACE HEARTS

(Foam heart with hole punches, 1 per child, String of Yarn, 1 per child, Tape and scissors)

Guide preschoolers to lace the yarn through the holes of the hearts. Help them trim the yarn and secure the ends with tape.

SAY • Hearts make us think of love. Some of God's people wondered if God really loved them. God *did* love His people. In today's Bible story, Malachi said a messenger would come and get people ready for Jesus. God loves us so much! He had a plan to send Jesus to save us so we could be with Him forever.

## 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 and 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 or she delivers messages through the mail. In today's Bible story, a prophet 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 also told the people about another messenger who was coming. That messenger was John the Baptist. John's job was to get people ready for Jesus! Jesus is God's Son. He came to save people from sin.

## 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*).

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

**SAY** • Do you remember our big picture question and answer? Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything. His people waited for God to bless them. When nothing happened, they wondered if God really loved them, but God was working out His good plan to give them, and us, the best blessing of all—Jesus! Jesus came to save us from sin.

## 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. He came to save people from sin.

**Big Picture Question:** Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

## PLAY A QUIET GAME

(No Supplies Needed)

Invite preschoolers to sit in a circle. Choose a preschooler to go first. Instruct her to walk around the circle and gently tap a quiet person on the shoulder. Then she will take that child’s spot while he walks around the circle and gently taps another quiet person. Continue playing as time allows.

**SAY** • Great job being quiet friends! Malachi said a messenger would get people ready for Jesus. God was quiet for 400 years after Malachi gave God’s message. 400 years is a very long time! Then God sent the messenger whom Malachi told about. That messenger was John the Baptist. John’s job was to get people ready for the Jesus! Jesus is God’s Son. He came to save people from sin.

## HOW DO YOU FEEL?

(“How Do You Feel?” printable, 1 per child, Pom-Poms, 9 per child)

Give each child a “How Do You Feel?” chart and nine pom-poms. Help children point to and name the different feelings. Encourage them to make a face and show how they look when they feel each emotion. Retell parts of the Bible stories from this unit and give present-day examples of different emotions. Encourage the children to place a pom-pom on the emotion in each example. Continue telling Bible or present-day stories until the children have covered all the emotions.

**SAY** • God’s people were happy they had rebuilt the temple and fixed the walls around their city. They were sad when they wondered if God really loved them. God did love them, and He loves us too! God wanted the people to know that Jesus was coming to save them from sin.

He wanted them to obey Him and He promised to give them more blessings than they could count! Do you think they were surprised that God wanted to give them so many blessings? The people needed to remember *Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.*

## 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*).

## REVIEW AND PRAYER

(1 Bible Story Picture per group)

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

God’s people wondered if He loved them because He was not blessing them. Did He love them? (*yes*)

Why was God not blessing His people? (*They had been doing wrong things.*)

Who was the special Messenger God planned to send? (*Jesus*)

Will people who obey God be happy or sad? (*happy*)

*Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.*

SAY • Malachi said a messenger would get people ready for the Messiah. *Messiah* means special king. Jesus is the Messiah—God’s Son! Jesus died to take our punishment for sin. Anyone who believes that Jesus died in their place for their sin will be forgiven and be with God forever!

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

SAY • God, you are good and powerful. You know what will happen in the future. You sent Malachi to say that Jesus was coming. Help us trust in Jesus to save us from our sin. Amen.

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Preschool Activity Page, 1 per child and Crayons)

Preschoolers may color the Story Point coloring page as parents arrive. Encourage them to do the activity page at home with their family this week.