



Mustard Seed Children's Summary for August 26, 2007
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"God's Judgment"

MEMORY VERSE:

"The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple...But who may abide the day of His coming?" (Malachi 3:1-2)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Malachi 2:17-3:5; 4:1

Malachi 2:17

17 Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?

Malachi 3:1-5

1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

Malachi 4:1

1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God promised that Jesus would come and then come back as Judge and King of the world.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God promised that He would not permit evil to go unjudged forever.
2. God promised that Jesus would someday be Judge of the world, making wrong things right and dealing appropriately with those who would not listen to Him.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For the "Helping to Remember" section, for each child, you will need a sheet of art paper, glue, and crayons. Type "God's messenger" on strips of paper, two for each child. A lesson activity is included at the end of this summary to further help with understanding the lesson. A quarterly review is also included to review the prophets studied this quarter.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

The events in this lesson take place after the people of God have returned to their land following the Babylonian captivity. The prophet Malachi ministers, most likely, during the time of Nehemiah. Many of the sins highlighted in Malachi are the same sins that Nehemiah had to deal with. These include indifference to the sacrifices that the Lord required (Malachi 1:6-14; Nehemiah 10:37-39), disregard for the Lord's teaching concerning marriage (Malachi 2:14-16; Nehemiah 13:23-27), and the issue of tithes and offerings for the Lord's work (Malachi 3:8-10; Nehemiah 10:37-39; 13:10-13).

This week's lesson focuses on Malachi's message to the people of his day but also gives us a glimpse into the future that Malachi saw concerning what God would accomplish through the Lord Jesus Christ.

TEACHER'S NOTES / TELLING THE LESSON:

1. Who was Malachi?

Not much is known about Malachi himself other than his name means "my messenger." The book of Malachi is the last book in the Old Testament, and Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet to deliver messages to God's people before the gap of 400 years until the New Testament period begins. Malachi closes the Old Testament with an appeal to God's people to do the right thing.

2. Describe the attitude of the people during the time of Malachi.

Malachi preached after Nehemiah led the efforts to rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. This was about 100 years after God's people had returned from captivity in Babylon, and about 70 years after the second temple had been completed. During this time, the people had returned to their land, but they were not pleased with life in Judah. Life was hard – the land did not produce good crops, and the people had many enemies. The people blamed God for their troubles and even began mocking God – saying that God blessed the wicked, that God was pleased with sin and questioned why God (in their eyes) would not judge the wicked.

3. What would God's messenger do when He came? (Malachi 3:1-2)

When Malachi wrote of "God's messenger" coming, the Lord Jesus had not come into the world yet. But Malachi said that He was going to come and refers to Him as the "messenger of the covenant." Malachi said that He would come when they were not expecting Him, and the Lord Himself would come to His temple. This really did happen (John 2:13-17), and Jesus was not pleased with what He saw. Instead of being a place where people could pray and worship, the temple was filled animals, money tables and people trying to make money. On that occasion, Jesus upset the tables, chased out the animals and cleansed the temple.

Malachi also spoke of another time that has not happened yet. That is when Jesus will come back and be Judge and King. Jesus will come again and make everything right.

4. How would God purify His people? (Malachi 3:2-4)

God will purify or cleanse His people. Malachi used two images to describe this purifying process that God's people will go through. The Lord would be like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.

His judgment will burn like a fire. The Lord would be like a refiner of silver or gold. A refiner heats silver and gold and removes the impurities that are burned off. The Lord would also be like a strong soap in a washbasin that whitens soiled clothes. Like this fire and soap, the Lord would purify His people and remove their impurities so that they would be able to bring righteous offerings to Him.

5. How does Malachi describe the Day of Judgment? (Malachi 3:5, 4:1)

Malachi warned that God would punish people for sins of witchcraft, adultery and perjury. He will punish those who cheat people of their wages. He will punish those who neglect widows and orphans. God will judge all who do not trust Him.

The Day of Judgment will be like a red-hot furnace whose flames burn the evildoers as if they were straw. Not a branch or a root of them will survive.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

If you belong to Jesus, you are His messenger too. Jesus said to go into all the world and tell the good news that He died for our sins and came alive again. You can also let people know that Jesus will come back someday. He is the one who will make right all the wrong things in the world. He will be a good judge.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Have the children fold their art paper in half lengthwise. On the front they will draw a picture of Malachi and glue one "God's messenger." On the inside they will draw a picture of themselves and glue the other "God's messenger." Discuss how each of us, like the prophets, can be a messenger for God.

To further enhance learning, other activities, including a quarterly review, are included at the end of this lesson summary.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple...But who may abide the day of His coming?" (Malachi 3:1-2)

God's people would find the Lord in His temple someday. That happened when Jesus was here. Someday He will come again. Next time, He will be King and Judge. No one will be able to stand against Him.

PRAYER

Father in heaven, You alone know what is good and right. We are often wrong, but we praise You that You are always right. Help us to commit to doing what is right and not to judge others. In Jesus' name, amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week begins a new quarter focusing on the book of Genesis and God's creation of people. Next week's lesson is from Genesis 1 and is entitled "God Created the Universe."

Lesson Summarized By:

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WORD SEARCH: God's Judgment

Malachi 2:17 - 3:5; 4:1

Find each of the following words.

JUDGMENT
ABIDE
FIRE
WITNESS

GOLD
COVENANT
PURGE
MESSENGER

PREPARE
MALACHI
DELIGHT
SILVER

TEMPLE
OFFERING
REFINER
PURIFY

S R I U I M T F J A E P R G C R I E E R I N E A R
I R E V N E I T Y C O M E E E L W M E U R E E A T
D E L I G H T R G E R I L R R E P N E M U I A A I
R V I R E N I F E R N F L H B E M U A M H R O F E
H L I E E G I U V J E E I S E D G L N I G E E L E
U I L F W I T N E S S G R I N R A N I G R D R T L
F S T E D I B A O U T R R E E C F F E R T E R N I
D M M M F E S F E O E U O U H A M F I S P M S E G
I T F V D F F M T S M D E I P O A G F S S M O M A
R E F I T E A H F M P E N P R E P A R E I E E G E
U A U N R N V I M E L D I R R E E L M I A L M D B
G N I I V E V O N T E Y D I R M S A E U E R V U J
O L N R N E D R R R L M M I E U C E R R O U S J R
L G S J T A G P N G S O O P U R I F Y U A C W R N
D T N A N E V O C E O N A R L G S E U D F E A I Y
R U R E E C D D E E L R L S E G T N E A E E N L E

**QUARTERLY REVIEW
SUMMER 2007**

This summer we learned about some of the Old Testament prophets. Each of the prophets had different personalities and interests, but they all gave messages from God. Do you remember what each one had to say?

Fill in the name of each prophet who is described in each statement. The statement may apply to some or all of the prophets, but fill in the ONE best answer. Some letters are already given to help you. You may use a name more than once.

- 1 I am a prophet who told the people to hate evil and love good. A
- 2 I am a prophet who preached of God's controversy with the people. H
- 3 I am a prophet who preached about true worship. I
- 4 I am a prophet who preached about what God requires of us. M
- 5 I invited everyone to come to God's feast. I
- 6 I am a prophet who warned that God would judge the nations. Zep
- 7 I am a prophet who gave people reason to hope because the earth would be filled with the knowledge of God's glory. H
- 8 I am a prophet who warned the people that God would cast them out of His sight because of their disobedience. J
- 9 I am a prophet who told the people to trust that God had good thoughts toward them. J
- 10 I am a prophet who told the people to turn from their sins and live. E
- 11 I am a prophet who told the people to turn to God and He would turn to them. Zec
- 12 I am a prophet who foretold Christ's coming and His just judgment. M

Answer Keys

Solution for Word Search (God’s Judgment – Malachi 2:17-3:5; 4:1):

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R
D E L I G H T           R           M
V R E N I F E R           E       A
L                       E           G L
I       W I T N E S S G           A N           T
S E D I B A O T R       C       E           N
                F       E       U H           S       E
            F           F       M       I P           S       M
                I       E           P       P R E P A R E       E       G
                R           L           M D
G       I       E       E           U
O       N           J
L G           P U R I F Y
D T N A N E V O C
  
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Answers to Quarterly Review (Summer 2007):

- 1 – Amos
- 2 – Hosea
- 3 – Isaiah
- 4 – Micah
- 5 – Isaiah
- 6 – Zephaniah
- 7 – Habakkuk
- 8 – Jeremiah
- 9 – Jeremiah
- 10 – Ezekiel
- 11 – Zechariah
- 12 – Malachi