

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 39

Malachi

Objects to have:

New sign for today: MALACHI
Tithe

A sheet of black construction paper, larger than the heart and circle described below:

A gold heart prepared: Cut out four little hearts along one side of the big gold heart.

Have behind the cut-out hearts a circle of gold construction paper, one edge of the circle is to be plain, the other edge is to have words which become visible through the cut-out hearts when the circle is turned. One of these words goes behind each cut-out heart: TELLS, SEES, HEARS, WARNS. Fasten the gold heart and the gold circle onto the black construction paper with a brass fastener in the center of them all.

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Review with the children the books of the Old Testament. Tell them that today we will hear something of what is in the last book of the Old Testament. Repeat with the children the name of that book, Malachi. Tell them that this name is another name of a man. The man Malachi was a preacher, a prophet to whom God would tell things that were going to happen. Then that man, the prophet or preacher, would tell God's people. Repeat with the children the names of the books of the Old Testament, beginning with Isaiah.)

(Show your visual aid so that only the sheet of black construction paper can be seen by the children.) Black reminds us of sin. People love darkness whenever they plan to do wrong. Sin also is dirty; black sometimes reminds us of sin.

In the world there is lots of sin. People are born sinners. There is something beautiful, however, that shines into the blackness of sin; that is the love of God. (Turn your visual aid over so that the children can see the gold heart on it. It will appear to be solid gold with just the head of the brass fastener showing.) God is love. God loves every person in the world; He loves you, and He loves me.

Telling the story:

(While telling the story, hold the prepared visual aid in front of you. At appropriate times, turn the circle so that the next word shows in addition to the word that has gone before. At the close of the lesson all four words will show through the four hearts.) Malachi knew of the love of God. Malachi knew and admitted that he was a sinner. Every person on earth is a sinner. He knew that only God could save him from his sin, so he told God about his sin. He believed that the blood of Jesus would wash away his sin even though Jesus had not yet come to earth. Because Malachi believed God's promise, God saved him from his sin. How happy Malachi was about that! He was so happy to know that God loved him!

Malachi lived in Jerusalem. Remember? God's people were driven from Jerusalem and the land of Israel to a country that was not their own. The enemy had torn down and burned the temple and torn down and burned parts of the wall around Jerusalem. Houses were burned and only a few very poor people were left in Israel. All the rest of the people were taken to this strange country. Then some of the people came back from that strange country and they got to work. They started rebuilding the temple. They started rebuilding the wall.

Finally the big job of rebuilding the temple was finished, and the big job of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem was finished. The people were so happy to see the temple and the wall finished. They praised God and thanked Him for His goodness to them. Malachi lived in Jerusalem after the temple had been rebuilt and the wall around Jerusalem was once again a big, strong, high wall.

Something bad happened, however. The people soon forgot to go to church every time they were supposed to go. Sometimes they decided to go on picnics, or play, or work around the house, or just stay home in bed instead of going to the temple. Then the people were not bringing their offerings to God because they weren't coming to church when they were supposed to come. Pretty soon they began to be dishonest. They were taking things that did not belong to them. Pretty soon they started lying. They were telling things that were not really true. How sad! They had forgotten God Who loved them, and they forgot that they had once loved God. Do you know that because they stopped living close to God, stopped praying to Him, stopped reading His Bible that pretty soon they forgot that He loved them?

God did not want His people to feel as if He did not love them. God said to Malachi, "Tell My people that I love them." (Turn the circle so that the word TELLS shows.) This word says TELLS: God tells His people what He wants them to know.

Malachi obeyed God; he started to preach to the people, "Listen, people, God is telling you something. God tells you that He loves you. He does not want you ever to forget that."

God talked to Malachi again, "Malachi, please tell My people that I see them all the time. I see everything that they do. I see every place where they go." (Turn the circle so that the words TELLS and SEES show.) God sees everything.

Malachi called to the people, "People of Israel, God sees you. He sees everything that you do. He sees every place where you go."

God was listening to His people. He wanted to see if any of His people remembered to talk about Him with each other. He listened to hear what His people were saying. God said to Malachi, "Malachi, tell My people that I listen to what they say. When they talk about Me with other people, I am so happy then. I love them. I want them to love Me and to talk about Me. I hear what they say." (Turn the circle so that the words TELLS and SEES and HEARS show.)

Malachi said, "All right, dear Lord. I will tell the people that You hear them." Malachi called to the people, "Listen, people, God hears you. He hears everything you say."

Once again God said, "I love My people. I do not want them to be unhappy. I want My people to be happy all the time. The only way they can truly be happy is to talk to Me, and to obey what I tell them in My Word, the Bible. Malachi, warn My people not to do wrong. Warn My people not to read bad literature. Warn My people to speak only as they ought to speak. Warn My people to give as they ought to give; some of them are not giving the offerings to Me that they ought to give. Warn My people that the money that belongs to Me ought to be given in the offering." (Turn the circle so that the words TELLS and SEES and HEARS and WARNS show.)

Once again Malachi obeyed God. Malachi talked to God's people. "People, listen. God is warning you about something. First of all, He knows that you are robbing Him. You are not giving Him the money that you are supposed to put into the offering in the church. Do not do wrong. Give God the money that belongs to Him. One-tenth of every dollar that you earn belongs to Him. Ten cents of every dollar is God's.

Children, whatever money Mother or Daddy gives you to put into the offering in church belongs to God. Do not rob God; He knows when you rob Him. He is warning you that He will have to punish you for robbing Him, and He does not want to punish you. God loves you dear people."

What a helpful book is this book called Malachi. (Lay down the visual aid, and pick up your Bible. Show the children the location of the book of Malachi.) Malachi wrote down all the words that God told him to tell and to write. Let us all remember that God is love, and He loves us. (Pick up the heart again.) He tells us of His love, He sees us, He hears us, and He warns us against doing wrong. Let us all decide to do as God would have us to do.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Malachi 3:10, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse...saith the LORD...I will...pour you out a blessing....”