Exile

“Malachi”

Series Objective:

 Students will learn:

* The message of the Prophet Jeremiah
* Ezekiel’s encounter with a valley of bones
* Malachi’s prophecy of Jesus and the call to give to God

Series Theme Verse: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” – Jeremiah 29:11

Lesson Objective: For students to understand that God used prophets like Malachi to speak for God, and prepare the way for Jesus.

Lesson Passage: Malachi 3:1-10

Materials Needed: Bibles, Series Theme Verse on a poster

Lesson Plan:

 Talking Points: Malachi 3:1-10

* Who did Malachi say God was sending? (My messenger)
* What was the messenger’s job? (Prepare the way before me)
* Will the coming of the messenger be a good thing? (Yes, but it will not be easy)
* What will the messenger do? (It will purify or refine)
* The result of the message will be what? (That the people will be pleasing to God)
* Why are they not pleasing to God right now? (They are robbing God)
* How are they robbing God? (They are not giving to God what they should: their tithes. They are keeping some for themselves)
* You might need to explain a tithe to students:
	+ A tenth that is given back to God
	+ Expected of all who follow God
	+ Explain to students how even they are expected to give to God, though it is not only a monetary thing, it can mean in their time and service to God.
	+ Also explain how a monetary tithe works. When we earn money, God expects us to give back to God through our Church. Connect the tithe to the offering that is taken in Worship. Help students understand how to figure a tenth.
* If they give to God as they are supposed to, what is God’s promise? (Blessings)
	+ Blessings are not something that is physical, but something that only God can give.
	+ Have students think about and list some blessings.

 The Story Retold:

* Come back to the messenger. Ask students who they think God is referring to through Malachi.
* Brainstorm ideas and list on the board.
* Explain to students that Malachi is the last time that God speaks through a Prophet for 400 years.
* After 400 years of silence, the messenger arrives on the scene, preparing the way for God.
* Have students look up Matthew 11:1-11. Have them pair up and read the passage and determine who they think the messenger is that Malachi is talking about. (John the Baptist)
* Who did John prepare the way for? (Jesus, who is God in human form)

The Story and Me:

* Have the theme verse on a poster board.
* Give students an opportunity to say the Series Theme Verse individually without looking.
* Ask students how they feel about the verse knowing that God has a plan for each of them. Remind students that God had a plan for God’s people that included a messenger, and it took 400 years, but God’s promise is always fulfilled.