

# THE BIG STORY

FROM CREATION TO CHRIST

## WEEK 11

*The Last Word Before The Light: Malachi & the 400 years of silence*

### DAILY READING – March 30 – April 3

Mon – Malachi 1–2

Tue – Malachi 3–4

Wed – Psalm 13

Thu – Luke 1:5–25

Fri – John 1:1–14

### DEVOTIONAL

**Memory Verse:** “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son...” Galatians 4:4

**Story Thread:** God’s silence is not His absence—it is often His preparation for His greatest work.

Silence can be unsettling. It’s one thing when life is loud and active, but it’s another when things go quiet—especially in our relationship with God. When prayers seem unanswered and direction feels unclear, it’s easy to wonder if God is still there or still working.

That’s exactly where the Old Testament leaves us. The book of Malachi is God’s final word before centuries of silence. God speaks to a people who are still going through the motions of worship, but whose hearts have drifted. They offer half-hearted devotion, question His justice, and withhold trust. Yet even in correction, God reminds them, “I have loved you” (Malachi 1:2). The final message is both a warning and a promise—a coming messenger and a coming day when God Himself will act.

Then... silence.

For roughly 400 years, there are no prophets, no new Scripture, no recorded voice of God. Generations come and go, and it seems like heaven is quiet. But the silence is not empty. God is still working—just not in ways people can immediately see. He is preparing the world for Jesus. A common language spreads across nations. Roads connect distant places. A deep longing grows among the people for a Savior. What feels like silence is actually preparation.

Scripture reminds us that waiting is not wasted. Psalm 13 gives voice to the question, “How long, O Lord?”—a question many of us understand. Yet Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that those who wait on the Lord will find renewed strength. God uses waiting to shape trust, deepen faith, and prepare hearts for what is coming.

And then, at just the right time, God speaks again—not through another prophet, but through His Son. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). The silence is broken by the arrival of Jesus. The God who seemed distant becomes near. The God who seemed quiet becomes fully revealed.

Palm Sunday reminds us that the waiting was not in vain. Jesus enters as the promised King—the One Malachi pointed toward, the One the silence prepared for. God had not forgotten His people. He was setting the stage for His greatest act of redemption.

The same is true for us. When God feels silent, it does not mean He is absent. It does not mean He is finished. Often, it means He is preparing something we cannot yet see. The question is not whether God is working—but whether we will trust Him while we wait.

Because in Jesus, we see the truth: silence is never the end of the story.

## **FAMILY DEVOTIONAL**

**TALK** Have you ever had to wait for something important? What made waiting hard?

**READ** Isaiah 40:31

**Prayer:** God, thank You that You are always working, even when things feel quiet. Help our family trust You while we wait and remember that You keep Your promises. Amen.

## **SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS**

### **Week 11**

Text: Malachi 1–4; Psalm 13; Luke 1:5–25; John 1:1–14

1. **Malachi describes people who were still worshiping, but their hearts had drifted.** Why do you think it's easy for faith to become routine instead of personal?
2. **The Bible describes a long season where God seemed silent.** Why do you think seasons of waiting can feel so difficult?
3. **Psalm 13 shows that it's okay to ask, "How long, O Lord?"** What does this teach us about being honest with God?
4. **Even in silence, God was preparing the world for Jesus.** How does that change the way we view times when we don't see God working?
5. **John 1 says, "The Word became flesh."** Why is it significant that God didn't just send a message, but came Himself?
6. As we think about Palm Sunday and Jesus' arrival, how does it encourage you to trust God's timing in your own life?

