



PROPHETS
Faithful to
GOD'S COVENANT

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THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell — 5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell — silence

THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

EDITORIAL STAFF

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Rev. Faith M. Waters, Lessons
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M.E. Russell, Layout Design

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my A.M.E. Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

A.M.E. Discipline



LESSON 1

MARCH 7, 2021

Moses: Prophet of Deliverance

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 12:28-50; Deuteronomy 18:15-22

Focus Scripture: Deuteronomy 18:15-22

KEY VERSE: *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. Deuteronomy 18:15*

WORDS TO KNOW

- **PROPHET** – God’s spokesperson; the divinely called minister who announced the will of God to God’s people
- **HEED** – give attention to
- **COMMAND** – to order or direct with authority
- **PRESUMPTUOUS** – to be overconfident in doing something not entitled or qualified to do
- **HOREB** – pronounced: HAWR-ehb

FOCUS SCRIPTURES: DEUTERONOMY 18:15-22

- 15** The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet.
- 16** This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die."
- 17** Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said.
- 18** I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command.
- 19** Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable.
- 20** But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."
- 21** You may say to yourself, "How can we recognize a word that the Lord has not spoken?"
- 22** If a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; do not be frightened by it.

INTRODUCTION

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Pharaoh ordered all Israelite newborn males to be thrown in the Nile River to their death (Exodus 1). Moses' mother hid him until he was three months old. When she could no longer hide him, she placed him in a basket in the Nile River. He was rescued by Pharaoh's daughter but nursed by a woman who was actually his mother. Eventually Moses grew and was taken to Pharaoh's daughter who became his mother (Exodus 2:1-10).

In today's lesson, we will examine how the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery by God's prophet, Moses.

BIBLE STORY

The Israelites were oppressed by the Egyptians. God responded to their groaning after remembering his covenant with Abraham (Exo. 2:24). Moses had a divine encounter with God at a burning bush. God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery. In spite of Moses' excuses, God appointed him as his spokesperson. Moses, as a prophet, spoke on God's behalf (Exo. 3-4). God places his words in the mouths of God's prophets (v. 18; Jer. 1:7-9).

The Israelites had been enslaved for 430 years. God sent Moses to Pharaoh multiple times to declare God's command to "let the people go." God sent a plague every time Pharaoh refused to comply. It was not until the tenth plague, the death of the firstborn, that Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites leave (12:29-36). The Israelites were spared the death of their firstborns because they had the blood of a lamb on the outside of their doors. They left so quickly their bread dough was unleavened. God gave Moses and Aaron specific instructions about the Passover celebration. The people obeyed God's commands (12:50). It is estimated that over 2 million Israelites escaped from Egypt.

Moses was a faithful prophet who led the Israelites to freedom and became a model for the prophets to come. Moses was near the time of his death. He promised God would send another prophet to take his place (Deut. 18:15, 17). And then another would be necessary for the next generation. This refers to all the prophets who would follow him. It also alludes to the coming Messiah, the eventual fulfillment in Jesus. Moses warns against false prophets (Deut. 18). The fulfillment of prophecies is one test of true prophecy, though further tests may also be required (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:21-22).

Why is personal freedom important? How can you determine whether a leader is a true prophet?

SANKOFA

Today people are still fighting for freedom from oppression. It may be gender, economic, or social oppression. The struggle is not new. Richard Allen left Saint George's Church to be able to worship God freely and without restrictions. Civil rights leaders such as the late Congressman John Lewis and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King protested, marched, and went to jail so we all could have equal rights. Nelson Mandela fought for the end of apartheid in South Africa. Black Lives Matter protesters are marching and fighting against police brutality as well as mistreatment by the justice system. The Innocence Project is helping those who are in prison for crimes they did not commit. There are many others who are doing God's work. Discuss the people or organizations that are working to end oppression in your city or state.

God still speaks to his people. God has people in positions to speak truth to those in authority. They have to make a decision to either listen and make changes or suffer the consequences for their actions. Many will not change until something drastic happens. When George Floyd was killed by the police on May 25, 2020, and everyone saw the video of the policeman kneeling on his neck until he died, it sparked a new civil rights movement. Many police departments and corporations had to respond to the call for change in policies that have almost always negatively affected people of color. We still have a long way to go but slow progress is better than no progress.

REAL TALK, FAITH WALK

Our lives can be complicated by unexpected situations. When we are facing trials, the most important step is for us to seek out a trusted leader who can provide wisdom and guidance. With proper guidance, we can overcome any situation. God is always present and faithful in helping his people during hard times. Do you recall a time God rescued you from a bad situation? Who did God use to help you? How did it impact your faith in God?

Prophets were God's special representatives. The role of the prophet was to speak for God, confronting the people and their leaders with God's commands and promises. Because of this confrontational stance

and the continuing tendency of people to disobey God, true prophets were usually not very popular. Although their message often went unheeded, they faithfully and forcefully proclaimed the truth.

People want to have leaders who are trustworthy like Moses. What are the qualities of a trustworthy leader? What are the qualities of an untrustworthy leader? Write down some characteristics of trustworthy and untrustworthy leaders. Why can we describe Moses as trustworthy?

TRUSTWORTHY

UNTRUSTWORTHY

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Good leaders always take the time to plan. What actions do you think Moses and the other leaders had to plan in advance before the Israelites escaped from Egypt?

SUMMARY

God always has a plan for God’s people. Even though our situations may seem impossible to overcome, there is hope. We must rely on our faith to sustain us. Moreover, we have to demonstrate our faith by our actions. Moses was faithful and demonstrated to the Israelites the importance of trusting God. His faith enabled him to lead the nation out of bondage and towards a new life. What can you do to impart hope to those who find themselves in desperate situations?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Prayer: God, we thank you for always being present when we need you most. Please give us stronger faith and spiritual guidance as we seek to help those who are hopeless. Amen.

*Closing Hymn: "O Thou, in Whose Presence"
(AME Church Hymnal #83)*

LESSON 2

MARCH 14, 2021

Joshua: Prophet of Conquest

Lesson Scripture: Joshua 5:13-6:27

Focus Scripture: Joshua 5:13-6:5, 15-16, 20

KEY VERSE: *Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and he said to him, “What do you command your servant, my lord?”*
Joshua 5:14b

WORDS TO KNOW

- **ADVERSARY** – *an enemy*
- **WORSHIP** – *to honor and respect God*
- **HOLY** – *sacred; set apart to the worship of God*
- **CHARGE** – *to attack something by rushing forward when in a battle*

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: JOSHUA 5:13–6:5, 15-16, 20

- 13** Once when Joshua was by Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you one of us, or one of our adversaries?”
- 14** He replied, “Neither; but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and he said to him, “What do you command your servant, my lord?”
- 15** The commander of the army of the Lord said to Joshua, “Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so.
- 6:1** Now Jericho was shut up inside and out because of the Israelites; no one came out and no one went in.
- 2** The Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have handed Jericho over to you, along with its king and soldiers.
- 3** You shall march around the city, all the warriors circling the city once. Thus you shall do for six days,
- 4** with seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, the priests blowing the trumpets.
- 5** When they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and all the people shall charge straight ahead.”
-
- 15** On the seventh day they rose early, at dawn, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times.
- 16** And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout! For the Lord has given you the city.”
-
- 20** So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpets, they raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat; so the people charged straight ahead into the city and captured it.

INTRODUCTION

Last week we learned about God choosing Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery. Moses obeyed God and as a result the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt. God miraculously parted the Red Sea and they safely crossed. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years (until the disobedient generation had all died).

Moses was dead and God appointed Joshua to be the new leader of Israel. The new generation was faithful and obedient to God's laws. God dried up the Jordan River so they could safely cross over and enter the Promised Land (Canaan). The first enemy to be conquered would be in Jericho. In today's lesson, we will examine Joshua's response to the plan God gave him to conquer Jericho.

BIBLE STORY

There has to be a plan for any battle to be effective. If we fail to plan, we plan to fail. Joshua understood the importance of planning but there was a great task before him. How could he lead the people in conquering Jericho? This must have felt like a monumental mission. Joshua understood obeying God's commands was essential for their success.

Joshua supervised the circumcision of the uncircumcised and observed Passover as a demonstration of their willingness to obey God's commands (5:1-12). Other cultures used circumcision as a sign of entry into adulthood, but only Israel used it as a sign of following God. Joshua, who went to scope out the land of Jericho, was visited by an angel of the Lord (5:13).

He did not know if the angel was a friend or foe. But the angel stated "neither." God had sent the commander of his heavenly armies to take charge of the battle on earth. Joshua took orders from him. He bowed in reverence and desired to know the will of God. The place became holy ground because of the presence of God's angel of superior rank (5:15). The presence of God's messenger is affirmation that victory would come to Israel at God's intervention, not because of human action.

The city of Jericho was one of the oldest cities in the world. Some of the fortified walls were up to 25 feet high and 20 feet thick. The soldiers who stood guard on top of the walls could see for miles. The thought of trying to conquer this city seem insurmountable. But when God intervenes on your behalf the impossible becomes possible. God promised Joshua victory (6:2-6, 15-16, 20). The ark accompanied the

Israelite army each of the seven days, as it served as the symbol of God's presence and guidance. Joshua and the military were victorious because of God's presence and his obedience to God's instructions.

How important is it to obey God during challenging times? How do personal limitations influence us in trusting God?

SANKOFA

Congressman John Lewis (2/21/40 – 7/17/20) was an iconic civil rights leader. But most importantly, he was a Christian. Everything Congressman Lewis accomplished was rooted in his belief in God and the Word. He was born to sharecroppers in Troy, Alabama. The community recognized he was “a gifted boy preacher.” As a young child many noticed the Holy Spirit was moving in his life. His job as a boy was to raise the chickens on his family's farm. His family recalled how he would preach to the chickens and sometimes baptize a few. If the family had to kill a chicken to consume it, he would protest by not eating dinner. John Lewis stood by his beliefs even at an early age.

He was greatly inspired by the actions of Rosa Parks and a young preacher named Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Upon hearing Dr. King's voice on an old radio, he felt like “He (King) was speaking directly to me.” He thought Dr. King was saying, “You too, John Lewis, can make a difference in our society.”

John Lewis furthered his education and training by attending American Baptist Theological Seminary and Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. While living in Nashville, he attended workshops conducted by the Nashville Christian Leadership Council. There John Lewis listened and learned about non-violence. Later, he was nominated as Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). John Lewis was also a Freedom Rider. He endured beatings and at least 45 arrests so all people could have equal rights. John Lewis also served as an Atlanta city councilman. He went on to be elected to the United States House of Representatives for Georgia, where he served for 33 years.

How do think John Lewis' faith impacted his decisions to join the Civil Rights Movement? What steps did he take to be prepared what actions were necessary to overcome racial inequalities?

*Sources: Congressman John Lewis Funeral Program and
www.biography.com/political-figure/John-Lewis*

REAL TALK, FAITH WALK

It can be difficult to obey God and have the confidence to stand up against insurmountable situations. We may get instructions from God that may not seem logical. Joshua and the military had to march around Jericho seven times. What do you suppose the army was saying every day they marched around Jericho? What could have happened if the military rebelled and attacked Jericho before God instructed? Joshua obeyed God and gained the victory.

What can we learn from the lives of Congressman John Lewis and Joshua, the prophet? What is God speaking to you about? How can you prepare to take action to accomplish God's plan? Write down your plan, pray, and then take action.

SUMMARY

We do not always understand God's ways, but we can still trust him. He is present with us. God has the power to do the impossible. God instructed Joshua and the military to march around Jericho for seven days. This proves victory may not always come instantaneously. We have to have patience. The Civil Rights Movement lasted for years. And we are still dealing with racism and injustices today. We have to just remain faithful and obey God. Victory will surely come!

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

*Prayer: God, we thank you for your presence with us.
We know obeying your Word is important. Forgive us
for the times we did not. We appreciate those who you
send to guide and help us. Reveal your will to us and
we promise to obey so glory can be given to your name.
Amen.*

*Closing Hymn: "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
(AME Church Hymnal #571)*



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