

# PROPHETS

Faithful to

# GOD'S COVENANT

# **THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE**

## **SPRING QUARTER 2021**

**MARCH • APRIL • MAY**

Christian Education Department  
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## BASIC SUPPLIES

Bible dictionary	writing paper
Bible pictures and maps	DVD recorder/player
CD players	milk crates
chart paper	paper – letter, drawing, pen-cils, pens, markers
Christian music – books, sheets, recordings	poster boards
Christian videos and DVDs	robes, scarves
crayons	old clothing
digital camera	scissors, glue, paste
digital camcorder	video player
drawing paper	

**The Teacher's Guide  
Liberating Faith Studies  
Spring Quarter: March – May 2021  
Prepared by  
Reverend Dr. D. Melynda Clarke**

**Moses: Prophet of Deliverance**

**Lesson 1**

**March 7, 2021**

**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

**Key Terms**

- **Accountability** – An expectation to take responsibility for one’s actions; culpability.
- **Horeb** – Also known as Mount Sinai; the mountain of God (Numbers 10:33), the location where God’s laws were given to Israel (Exodus 17:6; 33:6).
- **Presumptuous** – To be overconfident in assumptions.
- **Prophet** – A spiritual leader who has been given a divine ability to foresee the future, a seer; one who warns a community of an expected fate: one who speaks on behalf of God.

**Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize why prophets were not only necessary in Israel’s history but in God’s plan for humanity.
2. Illustrate the role of prophets continuing as God fulfilled his promises to Israel.
3. Examine the dynamic intersection between God’s voice through the prophets and the people’s response.

## Teaching Strategies

This quarter presents an introductory discussion of a few of the prominent Old Testament prophets. Unit One will illustrate the importance of the earliest prophets in Israel's history. Beginning with Moses, the lesson will immediately reveal the importance of establishing a legacy of prophetic ministry, and the importance of having authentic and anointed prophets to speak God's messages.

Suggestions for presenting this lesson is to first assess any preconceived beliefs about this biblical text. This may be an effective ice breaker to lead into a more appropriate examination and study of the text. The theme of this lesson is transitioning qualified and anointed leadership to carry on the vision for the future. Use a portion of the lesson to allow participants to brainstorm the qualities they would look for in a leader. Use post-it notes and a flip chart to allow them to brainstorm and then post them on the wall, or you can discuss them openly.

Finally, take time to discuss the apprehensions that some may feel when transition occurs. Reaffirm the fact that Moses used this as an opportunity to not only remind the people of their responsibilities for obedience, but to reassure them that they would have a godly replacement to fill his shoes.

For Lesson 1, consider the following:

- Remember your participants may view from different backgrounds, cultures, and generational perspectives. Therefore, some learners may be unfamiliar with seeing Moses as a prophet, or in any significant role beyond the exodus from Egypt.
- Use the lesson as an opportunity to discuss succession planning within your local church or the broader connection. Promote embracing the wisdom of seasoned leaders and the

need to utilize their knowledge to inform a new generation of leadership.

- Compare and contrast how Moses informed the congregation of his transition role to other leaders such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jesus Christ.

### **Questions**

1. How do you distinguish between an authentic leader who seeks to serve God and provide for his people, from leaders who lack integrity and are guided by selfish ambition?
2. What evidence of prophetic gifting can be found in today's church?
3. What action should Christians take to confront prophets and other leaders who falsely proclaim God's will and mislead the public?

### **Closing Devotions**

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "Lead Me, Guide Me" –

AME Hymn #378

**Closing Prayer:** Close with prayer for leaders of any capacity, including pastors, lay leaders, politicians, teachers, coaches, medical professionals, judges, etc.... End the prayer with: "May they hear the Lord's voice and lead us like Moses; with faith, with power, and with a pure and sincere heart. Amen."

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube, post-it notes, flip chart paper (optional)

### **Joshua: Prophet of Conquest**

**Lesson 2**

**March 14, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Joshua 5:13–6:27

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

**Key Verse:** "The Lord said to Joshua, 'See, I have handed Jericho over to you, along with its king and soldiers.'" Joshua 6:2

## Key Terms

- **Ark** – Referring to the Ark of the Covenant (Joshua 3:11). A wooden box covered with gold, containing the holy vessels. When placed in the Tabernacle, it was considered sitting at the throne of the footstool of God (2 Kings 19:15).
- **Commander (of the Lord's Army)** – The lord of the armies of heaven, leader of angelic forces that do his bidding on earth.
- **Priest** – A position or office restricted to men of the tribe of Levi; descendants from Aaron and his sons; distinguished as a holy office; highest responsibility of service to God.
- **Wall** – A massive structure built to protect cities and communities. The wall that stood between residents and attacking adversaries.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Develop understanding of imperialistic warfare in contrast with divine judgment.
2. Revisit the importance of God's presence when facing life's challenges.
3. Recognize the involvement of divinity and spirituality in humanity.

## Teaching Strategies

This lesson is designed to provide an illustration of God's judgment and reinforce the importance of faithful obedience to him. The story of Joshua's military accomplishment at Jericho is not intended to recognize his brilliance as a general. Instead, it is an example of God's faithfulness in fulfilling his promise to his people. Be aware of participants who have a military or law enforcement background. Provide a few ground rules for the discussion, to enable people to openly discuss opinions but to avoid judgment.

Take time to discuss the purpose of carrying the ark of the

Covenant. Inform people that carrying a gold-laden chest around a city numerous times would not be an easy feat. Illustrate the importance of Joshua's encounter with a heavenly being. Use components of the text, to return to this unit's theme of *Faithful Prophets*. With understanding the outcome, it is easy to feel self-assured that their actions were appropriate. However, Joshua had to have tremendous faith in God and the power given to him by God, in order to faithfully carry out the commands as God instructed.

In addition, use visual aids such as rendering of the Jericho city and of the ark. Provide contemporary comparisons, such as a large chest and weights for the ark, as well as cities that are comparable in circumference to Jericho.

### **Teaching Tips:**

- Use audio or visual tools whenever possible.
- Provide space for questions.
- If weather permits, consider moving the class outside and compare distances, structures that you could relate to the Bible story.

### **Questions**

1. What can the AME Church do to adopt programs and practices that intuitively identify gifted, God-ordained young people like Joshua, and mentor them to step into leadership roles?
2. What are the critical areas in your community that require new leadership?
3. Walls are frequently used to separate communities and diverse groups or nations. Discuss the concept of building structural barriers (gated communities, for instance) and how they may promote cultural and class barriers in society.

## Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "I Am on the Battlefield" – AME Hymn #390

**Closing Prayer:** Lord of heaven and earth, almighty and all wise God, we long for your presence as we enter the spiritual battles that confront us. Strengthen our faith, Lord Jesus, to believe that the same power that parted the Red Sea and brought down the walls of Jericho will rest in us as we face the adversaries of life. May our mouths be filled with praise, like the Levites who walked around Jericho's walls. May we be united as your army to face every battle with a victorious heart. May our faith in Jesus Christ be our ark of safety to carry us through every battle in life. We lift this in his matchless name. Amen.

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube; African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church Hymnal

## Huldah: Prophet of Wisdom

**Lesson 3**

**March 21, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Kings 22

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Kings 22:14-20

**Key Verse:** "Because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the Lord." 2 Kings 22:19

## Key Terms

**Curse** – To threaten or pronounce evil on someone or something.

**Penitent** – Feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong; repentant.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Remind believers that repentance is a critical act of faith, obedience, and love.
2. Promote beliefs for gender equity in the church.
3. Examine displaced value on the structural church over the heart of the believer.

## Teaching Strategies

Share examples in scripture of other female prophets. Read 2 Chronicles 34 where the prophetess Huldah is further mentioned. Give background on the prophetic gifts of Miriam, Moses' sister.

This lesson also points to the concerns of corruption that occurred in both civil and religious leadership (Zephaniah 1:1;3:1-5), which all indicates the prophet was the driver for the temple restoration. This reinforces the importance of the prophet as the conscience over political authority. Allow time to discuss whether there is evidence of prophetic conviction in this modern era. Acknowledge that the prophecy would ultimately be fulfilled, leading to the destruction of the temple and the people's exile.

## Teaching Tips:

- Discuss each character and the values of Huldah the prophet, Zephaniah the priest, and King Josiah. Discuss what can be learned from each of them.
- Research the AME Church's history regarding female clergy. Provide a handout or website for the biography of Jarena Lee.
- Direct participants to information regarding monumental women in ministry throughout the AME Church, including those who were not embraced into ordained ministry.

## Questions

1. What are examples of parental direction and instruction that you received in your youth that you recognized as valuable lessons, later in life?

2. Do you believe some past laws, traditions, routines, and/or cultural beliefs from the past need to be revitalized? Examples include.

- Family dinners (daily)
- Sunday Worship
- Honor the Sabbath (no work)

### **Closing Devotions**

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “All to Jesus I Surrender” – AME Hymn #251

**Closing Prayer:** Lord, as I surrender to you, I lay my drooping spirit in your arms. I am stained by sin and my wrongdoing Is staring me in my face. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. What I have done has driven a wedge between us. I have sinned against you and my heart aches with guilt and shame. Forgive me for disappointing you. Dip me in the fountain of your forgiveness. Wash away my sin and bring brilliance to my tarnished spirit.

Make me over, Lord, with a new heart, obedient spirit, and a joy-filled life. Sin has brought sadness – give me the gladness of your spirit. Instruct me with the teachings of your truth, so that I may have wisdom in my secret heart. Restore in me the joy of your salvation. Show me new ways of living and when I commune with you, remind me of the path I should follow.

Father, I am ready to sing praises of your goodness and your mercy. Part my lips for singing. You alone have accepted me as I am; thank you for not despising my broken heart. O Healer, Restorer, and Strengthener of my soul, I want to live in your will. Restore me and my relationship with you that I may be whole again. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

Written by: Carlene L. Douglas, 13<sup>th</sup> Episcopal District; “Penitential Prayer for Spiritual Healing Based on Psalm 51”; Found in *The*

*Anvil; Sankofa: Worshipping God Yesterday, Today and Forever Annual Resource Guide; 2019-2020.*

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

### Elijah: Prophet of Courage

#### Lesson 4

March 28, 2021 (Palm Sunday)

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 18–19; Matthew 17:1-13

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 18:5-18

**Key Verse:** “He answered, ‘I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father’s house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals.’” 1 Kings 18:18

#### Key Terms

- **Baal** – Baal is a Canaanite and Phoenician deity and the son of the chief god El. In artistic depictions and archeological finds, Baal took the shape of a bull or ram and had associations with fertility. According to Canaanite folklore, this god defeated El and was considered a god of weather (sun, thunder, etc.).
- **Wadi** – The valley or bed of a stream, usually dry except during the rainy season; most known wadis in Israel are the Wadi Qelt (between Jerusalem and Jericho), Wadi Engedi (along the Dead Sea), and the Wadi Kidron (also along the Dead Sea).

#### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Celebrate the courage and resilience of ministry leaders who fight for justice and promote the expansion of God’s kingdom.
2. Acknowledge and reflect on the challenges and dangers facing prophets historically as well as today.

3. Recognize the importance of supporters to spiritual leaders as well as the challenges they may face.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Provide a brief background on the practices of Baal worship, which include ritualistic prostitution and even child sacrifice. Present the backdrop of the devastating drought presented in this text, with the added desperation of an ongoing famine. Allow time for reflection on the impact this would have on their families. Ensure that participants understand the current ruler, Ahab, had similarities to a dictatorship. The story illustrates the importance of not only a voice for righteousness, but a prophet with divine power. The challenge between Elijah and the Baal prophets is the classic test of good against evil, the God of Israel against the pagan, illegitimate gods.

### **Teaching Tip:**

- Guide participants in comparing this Bible standoff to events in the Civil Rights Movement. Discuss the symbolic nature of the altars in this challenge. Discuss how Elijah's courage was driven by his recent encounter with God on Mount Sinai. Discuss how believers are able to draw strength through corporate prayer.

### **Questions**

1. Is there evidence of false prophets throughout the kingdom of God and what can be done to address them?
2. Where can Christians intervene to speak against systemic issues in our society? Discuss potential areas your local church can become involved in.
3. Discuss the problems with bystander apathy as it relates to ignoring destructive behavior in relationships and organizations you are in. (Examples: gossip, sabotage, unethical and

immoral behavior)

## Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “King of My Life (Lead Me to Calvary)” – AME Hymn #306

**Closing Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus, we live in a world that has become absorbed with fabrication and false premises, a world that is consumed with creative deceptions and cons, modified facades, illusions, and distortions. We look to you, Jesus, the true light of the world. Send your Holy Spirit and anoint us to discern truth from lies, and to fully follow God's divine and holy way. Guide us to all truth and lead us to complete understanding, so that we may be your vessels of righteousness and speak truth to power. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

## The Suffering Servant Brings Salvation

**Lesson 5**      **April 4, 2021 (Easter Sunday)**

## **Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 24:1-35

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 53:4-11 (end with “light”)

**Key Verse:** “But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5.

## Key Terms

- **Iniquity** – Immoral or grossly unfair behavior; evil; literal meaning is crooked or perverse.
  - **Intercession** – The act of intervening or mediating between differing parties; particularly the act of praying to God on

behalf of another person. The heroes of Old Testament faith are in most cases heroes of intercessory prayer.

- **Perversion** – The alteration of something from its original course, meaning, or state to a distortion or corruption of what was first intended.
- **Transgression** – The violation of a law or known principle of rectitude; breach of command; offense; crime; sin.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Remind participants that the prophecy of Jesus' suffering and death was God's message for all humanity.
2. Recognize that the most important component of Isaiah's prophecy was an eternal salvation.
3. Restore faith in a future victory, when one is in the midst of their current suffering.

### **Teaching Strategies**

This lesson correlates with the conclusion of the season of Lent. The prophet Isaiah is presenting the graphic imagery of the suffering servant, like a sheep led to slaughter. The parallel can also be seen with the Passover lamb, and the complete absolution of sins for those who believe. Use the scripture to compare the new image on Sunday morning to the graphic image presented of that fateful Friday. The victory is won by all who believe, and therefore offers an opportunity for members to rejoice that their loved ones who experienced death, will also experience resurrected life. Use this lesson to remind participants of the great love demonstrated by Christ. The visual portrait of the suffering servant is frequently too much to bear. Therefore, use the joy of Resurrection to rejoice that a Christian's victory is already won.

## Questions

1. What is the difference between earthly justice and God's justice?
2. How did Jesus demonstrate justice for his persecutors while he was dying on the cross? (Read Luke 23:33-35)
3. How does Easter Sunday give hope in times of injustice and oppression?

## Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" – AME Hymn #167

**Closing Prayer:** God, we give you glory. Hallelujah! Jesus is alive. Death is defeated and our victory is won through the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross. The vision has changed to light and life; and, we are now heirs to this divine promise of everlasting life. Thank you for eternal life! Thank you for saving my soul! Thank you, Jesus, for your justice that redeemed me and paid the price for all of my sins. Now I am made whole. I am free. Amen, Amen, and Hallelujah!

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube, AME Hymnal

## Ezra: Faith and Action Preacher

**Lesson 6**

**April 11, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezra 9–10

**Focus Scripture:** Ezra 10:1-12

**Key Verse:** "O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens." Ezra 9:6

## Key Terms

- **Confession** – Admitting that one is guilty of a crime; acknowledgment or disclosure of sin or sinfulness.
- **Exile** – A period of absence from one's homeland, often imposed as a form of punishment. The OT regards Israel's exile in Babylon as a form of divine punishment.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize painful experiences resulting from relationship disharmony.
2. Develop healthy approaches to embrace diversity in the body of Christ.
3. Realize the influence of worldly conduct that opposes the principles promoted by Christ.

## Teaching Strategies

Before entering the lesson, establish some ground rules around the discussion. You may need to illustrate that someone need not agree with opinions, but always respect the presenter. Inform the students that the lessons for today and next week coming from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are interrelated. Explain how authors record these events from their unique perspectives. Use the Sankofa segment and/or other proverbs to introduce the overlying principles in this lesson. Avoid condemning discussions upon races, ethnic groups, and alternative lifestyles. Plan time within the lesson to illustrate how a practice of exclusivity can also damage relationships, families, and prevent bridges towards cultural understanding. Encourage participants to show love and have faith in God's ultimate plan of salvation for all.

## Questions

1. What can your local church do to change stereotypes about cultural groups in your community?

2. How can the local church begin embracing diversity?
3. What are some of the obstacles in bridging relationships with other cultural groups and why?

### **Closing Devotions**

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "Give me a Clean Heart"

**Closing Prayer:** Create in me a clean heart, O God, and plant a fresh spirit of righteousness within me. Please God, do not ignore my prayers or discard or reject me from being in your presence. God, I sincerely pray that you never remove your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation. Oh Lord, I know that I am not worthy of your love. But you are a loving and merciful God. Mold me into your image. Fill me with your sweet spirit. Cover me with your loving arms, so that I will not fall prey to the temptations of this world. I pray not only for me, but for my family, friends, our local church, and the community. Change our hearts, oh God, so that we may follow you. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke; a prayer inspired by Psalm 51

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary; laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

## **Nehemiah: The Captive Cupbearer Rebuilds a Nation**

### **Lesson 7**

**April 18, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20; 13:1-22

**Focus Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

**Key Verse:** "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace." Nehemiah 2:17

## Key Terms

- **Rebuild** – Establish, cause to continue, to repair what was destroyed or broken.
- **Ruins** – Useless, lay waste, rubble, desolation.
- **Shame** – Disgrace, a consequence of sin; feelings of guilt.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Inspire others to believe that God will lead them to fulfill their goals.
2. Reveal that the Old Testament theological understanding of God's presence was dependent on obedience.
3. Recognize the risks of negative influence that opposes God's plan.

## Teaching Strategies

Take time to briefly review the previous lesson and the relevance for today's church school. Illustrate how God's people have struggled to recognize the importance of a heart for God as well as honoring God through a place of worship. Show the parallels between the physical and spiritual relationships with God. For example, the wall is also symbolic of the need to set God's people apart, which parallels Ezra's concern about intermarriages from the previous lesson. Research the connection of Artaxerxes, who authorized Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem, and whose father Xerxes (Ahasuerus) married Hadassah, also known as Esther (Esther 2). Use this as an opportunity to illustrate God's divine plan that transcends generations.

Use visual aids, such as historical pictures and photographs, to illustrate the massive undertaking of this project. Discuss how the walls are still significant in modern day Israel and why. Conduct an exercise where two volunteers engage in an

experiment. One student will attempt to draw a wall, while the other student attempts to distract them by talking, criticizing, or engaging in other distractions. An alternative approach is to find a video or case study of a similar activity, to illustrate the impact of negativity when attempting to accomplish a goal. Use this exercise to promote a need for faith and continued prayer in the projects the local church is undertaking.

### Questions

1. Provide examples of miraculous accomplishments that have occurred through both hard work and prayer.
2. If currently involved in a building project, what types of obstacles are you facing? Use this time to pray for God's direction and strength to complete it.
3. What values do you expect in someone, in order for you to share your vision and goals? When is it more appropriate to avoid disclosing future strategies with other people? How does this apply to the work and goals set within the local church?

### Closing Devotions

#### Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:

“No Weapon” by Fred Hammond and Radical for Christ

*No weapon formed against me shall prosper, it won’t work*

*No weapon formed against me shall prosper, it won’t work*

*Say no weapon formed against me shall prosper, it won’t work*

*Say no weapon formed against me shall prosper, it won’t work*

**Closing Prayer:** Dear Lord, we are grateful for your faithfulness to the AME Church in completing the work of various churches, schools, clinics, family life centers, and other ministry facilities. We have come this far by faith in you and your promises. Strengthen our resolve to continue the work you have started. Help us not only build great structures of bricks and mortar, but build strong and lasting institutions of faith, programs for healing,

projects for community transformation, and systems that promote positive change. Mostly, Lord, help us to continue to build strong faith communities that are fostered on sound doctrine, and are sustainable over the sands of time. Let it be for your glory and the edification of your people, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, worship music on iTunes or Google Play

### A Plea for Restoration

#### Lesson 8

**April 25, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Focus Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Key Verse:** Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old. Lamentations 5:21

#### Key Terms

- **Acrostic** – A series of lines or verses which uses the first, last, or other particular letter to spell out a word or phrase.
- **Lamentation** – The act of lamenting or expressing grief.
- **Suffering** – The state of undergoing pain, distress, or hardship.

#### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Inspire believers to strengthen their faith in God, even during times of great tragedy.
2. Recognize grief and mourning as a natural means for healing and restoration.
3. Encourage believers to call on the Lord during times of trouble.

#### Teaching Strategies

Research how an acrostic is used to aid in learning and memorization. Select a commonly used acrostic, such as PUSH

(Pray Until Something Happens), to instruct students on how this might have assisted Jeremiah in his time of grief. Be aware of potential discussions that may trigger a participant's emotional response from a past tragedy or trauma. Encourage the class to be supportive of those who experience grief from natural disasters, common accidents, COVID-19 events, and other incidents. Share a list of other Psalms that also reflect a similar tone, such as Psalms 3, 6, 13, 28, 56, and 142. Empower participants to share their favorite song or Psalm of healing.

### Questions

1. What are some examples from your family history that help you draw strength and courage during difficult times?
2. How have you learned about African American history in your immediate area? Do you believe public schools are teaching enough about African American or other cultural history? Why or why not?
3. How can your local church better inform members and the community on African American history, the history of Africa and the Pan-African diaspora, and the significance of this history in national and global issues?

### Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

– AME Hymn #84

**Closing Prayer:** God, we gather this morning with our hearts full of praise; lift us. We honor you; we thank you; we glorify your holy name. You have blessed us from last Sunday till this very moment. Thank you. You have helped us climb mountains, survive the valley, and defeat giants. God, your presence has been evident in every moment from the opening of our eyes till the close of the same. You are the merciful, grace-granting, hope-providing God of yesterday and today. Lead us this morning into a place of healing, a place of peace, a place of purpose. We

hand this service to you. We have come to glorify you, praise you, worship you, and hear from you. Use each of us in the worship. Amen.

Congregational Prayer by Rev. Florence M. McElroy, 16<sup>th</sup> District, *The Anvil; Sankofa: Worshipping God Yesterday, Today and Forever Annual Resource Guide, 2019-2020*.

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube, AME Hymnal

### Micaiah: Speaking Truth to Power

#### Lesson 9

May 2, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:1-40

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:15-23, 26-28

**Key Verse:** “Micaiah said, ‘As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak.’” 1 Kings 22:14

#### Key Terms

- **Ramoth-Gilead** – Meaning in Hebrew is “heights of Gilead,” a city of refuge to the tribe of Gad on the east of Jordan; seized during a Syrian incursion.
- **Spirit** – The nonphysical part of a person which is the seat of emotions and character; the soul.
- **Threshing Floor** – A smooth, flat surface that was used in the process of harvesting grain; symbolic of judgment.

#### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Encourage believers to seek God in shaping their views and decisions.
2. Motivate believers to avoid compromising what is right for personal gain.
3. Inspire students to feel confident in their ability to successfully reject popular decisions for what is right.

## Teaching Strategies

The lesson today illustrates the dangers of unhealthy, unethical, and immoral alliances. This topic has timeless relevance in today's world. Be prepared to discuss any current issues that clearly reflect a similar situation or the dangers of impending tragedies that could occur if left unchecked. Ensure current news events, articles, and videos are readily available to present. Illustrate the concern for receiving misinformation as it applies to this lesson, and contrast that with the same concern in today's world inundated by social media.

Use opportunities to celebrate success stories in which individuals have stood their ground on important issues. Allow participants to reflect on incidents that have occurred on the job, in church, at school, or other areas. Be willing to discuss the fears that people have when being the dissenting view. Illustrate national, local, and personal heroes who expressed their voice of concern and led others to do the right thing.

## Questions

1. What are the current signs of failed leadership within government, both local and at the national level? What specific events suggest this assessment? An example may include disregard of important factual information resulting in devastating consequences.
2. When has the church been the catalyst to confront apathetic attitudes towards faulty and inequitable systems throughout our society? Is the church doing enough in today's current environment?
3. What can your local church do to be more engaged with the community and more outspoken about the issues involving social injustice?

## Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “Speak to My Heart” by Donnie McClurkin

*Speak to my heart, Holy Spirit*

*Give me the words that will bring new life*

*Words on the wings of a morning, the dark night will fade away*

*If you speak to my heart*

*Speak to my heart, Holy Spirit*

*Message of love to encourage me*

*Lifting my heart from despair, how you love me and care for me*

*Speak to my heart*

**Closing Prayer:** Oh Lord my God, how excellent is thy name above all the heavens. Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation and in you I wait all day long. I thank you, Lord Jesus, for providing the sacrifice for my sins. Teach me, Lord, to be a reflection of your love, a beacon of your light, and a model of your commands. This I pray in your name. Amen. (excerpts from Psalm 8 and Psalm 25:4-5)

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube, flip chart paper, markers, tape, or dry erase markers; access to play iTunes and/or Google Play music

## Isaiah: Offering Hope for the Future

**Lesson 10**

**May 9, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 29

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 29:13-24

**Key Verse:** “And those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who grumble will accept instruction.” Isaiah 29:24

### Key Terms

- **Potter** – The literal definition is a worker/artist/creator who molds and forms clay into useful objects. Metaphorical use of the potter as God molding his people into the creation he intended, can be found throughout the Old Testament (Job 38:14; Ps. 40:2, Is. 64:8, Jer. 18:7).
- **Rote** – Mechanical or habitual repetition of something to be learned.
- **Sanctify** – The practice of godliness in the life of the believer; hallow, consecrate; set apart from the sinful.
- **Scroll** – Lengthy written document in ancient times, made up of papyrus or leather. Used for legal documents; a reference to both the physical parchments used to record God’s laws, as well as a metaphorical illustration of prophecy.
- **Tyrant** – One who seizes power unconstitutionally and then exploits and oppresses the people subject to him. One who illegitimately seizes power and initiates a slave culture.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize that God is always working to improve his creation.
2. Reassure believers that God forgives and restores his people.
3. Remind believers that Jesus restored our personal relationship with God, that rituals could not provide.

### Teaching Strategies

This lesson provides an opportunity for members to examine current traditional practices and understand the meaning and purpose behind them. One example is to look at the process of the Lord’s Supper and discuss the liturgy and importance of each step. Allow participants to ask questions about other traditional worship activities. Guide the group in healthy discussions.

Illustrate how offices such as a class leader help to strengthen the fellowship as well as promote spiritual growth. Discuss having follow-up discipleship classes with the pastor. Remind everyone how these steps are not only for the current membership, but for preparing for the future.

Use this lesson to discuss areas of need within the church, including building new ministries to affect change in the community. Allow members to discuss the impact of recent crises and the local church's capacity to respond. Post a flip-chart sheet on the wall to allow members to brainstorm ideas in which they believe God is redefining the church and his people. Discuss how this list may be used for talking points at future planning meetings within the local church.

### Questions

1. What events have you witnessed that reinforce the power of remaining hopeful during times of crisis?
2. How do we recognize the signs that God is either reshaping the church and/or his believers?
3. What are some examples of God possibly modifying our current state, due to society's reckless disregard for him?

### Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “Our Hope Is Built” – AME Hymn #364

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, Lord Jesus, our hope is built on you. Our faith is drawn from your love. Our future is redeemed through your mercy and your grace. We are continuously revived by your relentless and undying faithfulness in our lives. Jesus, Lord Jesus, when the world tries to steal our joy, delete our value, exploit our gift, and exasperate our pain, we call on the name that is above every name. Lord Jesus, oh Jesus, give each one of us in

this community of faith, the peace that passes all understanding and the joy that is unspeakable. Jesus, Lord Jesus, we say your name, because nothing else needs to be said. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

Inspired by “Daddy Said Say the Name”; found in “My People, My People, My God” by Donald Marbury.

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

### **Jeremiah: The Suffering Preacher of Doom**

**Lesson 11**

**May 16, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jeremiah 37–38

**Focus Scripture:** Jeremiah 38:14-23

**Key Verse:** “Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, ‘If I tell you, you will put me to death, will you not? And if I give you advice, you will not listen to me.’” Jeremiah 38:15

### **Key Terms**

- **Babylon** – Mightiest of all cities, used by God to inflict judgment upon nations.
- **Chaldeans** – The country of Chaldea was an ancient land in southern Babylonia, on the Persian Gulf near the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. In biblical times the name was applied to all of Babylonia.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Reinforce prayer and godly wisdom in decision making.
2. Encourage believers to remain vigilant in their quest for the highest moral and ethical practices.

3. Encourage believers to trust God despite the dire consequences they have endured.

### Teaching Strategies

Today's lesson plays out more like a suspense drama than a Bible story. The confrontations that Jeremiah faced would result in his imprisonment and suffering. Yet, he would ultimately be freed. An exciting way to bring this to life is to have members of the class take on the characters and act out the scene. Be prepared to give members a part to play and instruct them on what to read. Upon reading the lesson, engage each participant in a discussion on their thoughts of their character. Encourage people to be frank and open and reflect on human emotions as honestly as possible. Compare this lesson on authentic speech to previous lessons during this quarter. Allow students to share how this story can resemble other tragic occurrences in society or in their lives.

### Questions

1. What can Christians do to strengthen their faith in God?
2. What are some examples of Christians working in hazardous and volatile environments that require intense faith in God? How can your local church help?

### Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "I Will Trust in the Lord"

*I will trust in the Lord*

*I will trust in the Lord*

*I will trust in the Lord until I die*

*I will trust in the Lord*

*I will trust in the Lord*

*I will trust in the Lord until I die*

*(verse 2) I'm goin' to treat everybody right*

*(verse 3) I'm goin' to stay on the battlefield*

(verse 4) *I'm goin' to stay on a bended knee*

**Closing Prayer:** He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, “*He is* my refuge and my fortress; my God, in him I will trust.” Dear Lord, we thank you for your unwavering compassion and steadfast love towards us. We are grateful, oh God, for your mercy that protects us from the multitude of trials in this world. We know that our lives are in your hands. We know that our church, our families, communities, our nation, is in your hands. We ask, dear Lord, to give each of us clear understanding of your direction and your will. And we will trust you in all things. With our Lord Jesus to strengthen us, we can do all things. This we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

(excerpts of Psalm 91:1-2 and Philippians 4:13)

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

### Ezekiel: Street Preacher to the Exiles

**Lesson 12**

**May 23, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezekiel 18

**Focus Scripture:** Ezekiel 18:1-9, 30-32

**Key Verse:** “Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4

#### Key Terms

- **Judge** – Correctly discern wrong from right, culminating in a decision for a just reward or punishment.
- **Repent** – Recognizing one’s wrong actions, admit wrong-doing and correcting one’s future behavior.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize that God is constantly seeking to revive the relationships with his children at every generation.
2. Acknowledge that mistakes impact the lives of future generations.
3. Reinforce accountability for everyone.

## Teaching Strategies

The proverb of the sour grapes was commonly used as an excuse for accepting the Jewish people's current plight as well as their behavior. God directed Jeremiah to inform this generation to reject this concept. Allow the class to reflect on issues within the church or the society as a whole, that were inherited from previous generations. Ask the members to examine these issues to ensure they have not applied a "sour grapes" perspective to it. Discuss the importance for a fresh perspective on old problems. Brainstorm ways to regenerate excitement about the local church and spreading God's message.

- Discuss how Christian disciples are integral in sharing the gospel to other faiths.
- Discuss opportunities where the church can partner with a local Jewish synagogue.

## Questions

1. What are some common sayings that people use to generalize and normalize their adverse conditions? What would be your response to these common axioms?
2. How can Christians respond when someone assumes a fatalistic perspective? Discuss with others how to balance sensitivity, empathy, and realism in these conversations.
3. What is an appropriate test or moral examination to ensure that Christians do not use God's grace and mercy to avoid accountability?

## Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** “What Can Wash Away My Sin?” – AME Hymn #405

**Closing Prayer:** Heavenly Father, all wise God, who sees all, knows all, and is the judge of all, we laud and magnify your holy name. We extol you and we lift up the name of Jesus our Redeemer, our Deliverer, and our Good Shepherd. We recognize that people of color are constantly feasting on the bitter grapes of our social existence. We acknowledge that the key elements of these racial and cultural divisions have been oppression and inequality. We clearly observe and rebel against the current class divisions. Firmly entrenched primarily with minority races, but also existing with the generational poor. Oh, God we realize that this is often seen through a Euro centric perspective, that lacks complete authenticity and fails to reveal the based ideologies of a portrayed group. Dear Lord, we call on you to address and convict the hearts of these people that apathetically denounce accountability to right the wrongs of past generations. We look to you, oh Lord, to impart your anointing on our modern-day prophets, and through your infinite wisdom and steadfast love, these prophets and others will guide your people towards complete understanding of our human failings and restore our hearts to you. Let our history inform us, but also guide us to speak truth to power. May we embrace our faith and obedience to God as our steadfast anchor and moral compass, that manifests our community to righteous and abundant living. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the unmatched name of Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen.

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

## Jonah: Fiery Harbinger of Doom

### Lesson 13

May 30, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Focus Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Key Verse:** “When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.” Jonah 3:10.

### Key Terms

- **Fast** – Abstinence from food and/or drink as an element of private or public religious devotion.
- **Sackcloth** – A coarsely woven fabric, usually made of goat’s hair; used to display a person’s state of repentance or sorrow.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Inspire believers to accept God’s calling in their lives.
2. Promote personal spiritual growth while also ministering to others.
3. Remember to celebrate the salvation of every soul who repents and turns to God, through Jesus Christ.

### Teaching Strategies

This final lesson for the quarter is a clear message of the need for obedience, not simply by the recipients of God’s oracles, but the prophet as well. This is an opportunity to remind students that many of the lessons Christians attempt to teach to others, must be accepted by the proclaimer first. This can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. However, the most effective way is through open dialogue and personal testimonies. Inquire if anyone is comfortable with sharing their story of deliverance and repentance. The teacher may have to model this first. Stories can include overcoming poor eating habits, alcohol or substance abuse, gambling, uncontrolled anger, self-harm, and more.

Examples of God's second chance do not have to be as severe as the examples listed. A common problem among Christians is the struggle to forgive others. Jonah's story can resonate with people who are angry against specific groups of people for prior injustice or harm. Allow people to discuss it in small groups or in pairs. Ensure you have discussed the importance of confidentiality and trust among the group. Ask if anyone needs prayer for themselves and make time for the group to intercede on the person's behalf.

As you close this session, remember to humanize the prophets that you have studied. Make every attempt to recognize the frailties that each prophet faced. No one should be idolized except the Lord.

### Questions

1. When has God directed you or your local church to evangelize and reach people outside of your culture or community?
2. What are some ways you can expand ministry to reach people of other ethnicities?
3. When have you seen God change the hearts of unsaved people who would appear grounded in worldly and sinful lifestyles?
4. What are some signs that God may be launching messengers of hope from your local congregation?

### Closing Devotions

**Closing Hymn or Song of Praise:** "Take My Life, and Let It Be"  
– AME Hymn #292

**Closing Prayer:** All the way my Savior leads me, what have I to ask beside? Can I doubt his tender mercy? Who through life has been my guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in him to dwell! For I know what o'er befall me, Jesus doeth all

things well. Precious Lord, I am so grateful that you insured that I was informed of your great gospel message. I give thanks unto you for your mercy that saved me. Now Lord, I realize that as a disciple, I must also be willing to tell others about your great love for us. I need no title to state that Jesus is Lord. I don't need an office in the church to proclaim, "Jesus saves!" Dear Lord, let my heart be joined to yours and be as bold as these prophets we have studied. Let us all be steadfast missionaries, evangelists, exhorters, and disciples that are not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to give good news, when all other news seems bad. We pray together in this local faith community, that many souls will repent and turn to you as we have seen in our throughout the biblical lessons. Your calling is still clear. Let every soul be saved, in Jesus' name I pray. Amen

Written by Rev. Dr. D. Melynda Clarke; inspired from adaptation of "All the Way My Savior Leads Me" – AME Hymn #293

**Resources:** The Holy Bible – New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and Bible Commentary, laptop with projector or large screen; access to Internet and YouTube

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**The Teacher's Guide  
Senior Lessons  
Spring Quarter: March 2021 – May 2021  
Prepared by Rev. Faith M. Waters**

**Moses: Prophet of Deliverance**

**Lesson 1** **March 7, 2021**

**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 announces 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.

**Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine how the Israelites were freed from Egyptian slavery by God’s prophet, Moses.
2. Reflect on seemingly impossible situations that had positive outcomes.
3. Model for others acts of faith to demonstrate there is hope even in the midst of impossible situations.

**Teaching Strategies**

1. In the beginning of class, take a few minutes to discuss background information on Moses’ life.

2. Tell the class to search for a map that shows the location of Goshen and Egypt on their electronic devices. Bring a map to show them the locations if they do not have access to an electronic device.
3. Discuss the Passover celebration and the significance of each part of the Seder meal. If at all possible, set up a Seder meal for the class with the permission of the pastor.
4. The Israelites' 430 years of slavery in Egypt represented the fulfillment of prophecy in Genesis 15:13-14.
5. Discuss all ten plagues that the Egyptians experienced and why the tenth plague caused the most devastation for them.
6. Select a Negro spiritual to share with the class and discuss its importance as a rallying anthem for the abolitionist movement during American slavery (e.g.: "Go Down, Moses," "Wade in the Water," "Ride on, Moses," or "Sweet Canaan's Happy Land"). The class may want to translate it into a rap or poem. Discuss why biblical allusions were so appropriate in the battle to end American slavery and during the American Civil Rights Movement. In what ways did God provide leadership for those battles? What can we learn about hope and redemption in these songs and the responsibilities of leaders who are charged to lead God's people through difficult situations?

### **Joshua: Prophet of Conquest**

#### **Lesson 2**

**March 14, 2021**

**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.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine how Joshua obediently followed God's command to conquer Jericho.
2. Reflect on how we react impulsively during times of trials.
3. Commit to obeying God during challenging times.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss impulsive actions during times of trials that have caused more trouble than resolutions.
2. Joshua succeeded Moses, so God recreated key moments of Moses' life for Joshua. Both sent spies into Canaan (Numbers 13:1-2; Joshua 2:1). Both crossed a body of water on dry land (Exodus 14:21-22; Joshua 3:14-17). Both received divine orders to remove their sandals while on holy ground (Exodus 3:5; Joshua 5:15).
3. The camp of the Israelites in the wilderness was arranged with the Ark of the Covenant in the center, surrounded by the individual tribal camps – the position normally reserved for a king going into battle (Numbers 2). Therefore, the Ark of the Covenant on the front lines indicated that God, their king, was orchestrating the battle.
4. Be sensitive to students who do not feel God is present in their lives.
5. Be sensitive to students who feel defeated by the trials they have endured.
6. Discuss the importance of remembering past personal and community victories as we face present-day trials.
7. God's designation of *holy ground* is wherever God is present

- and working, rather than any specific nation, city, or building.
8. Provide additional information on the Civil Rights Movement, SNCC, and Freedom Riders.
  9. Discuss the faithfulness of Rahab (Joshua 2), which led to her family being rescued before the fall of Jericho.

## Huldah: Prophet of Wisdom

### Lesson 3

March 21, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Kings 22

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Kings 22:14-20

**Key Verse:** “Because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord . . . I also have heard you, says the Lord.”  
2 Kings 22:19

### Words to Know

- **Provoke** – To make angry, irritate.
- **Wrath** – Violent anger.
- **Quench** – To extinguish; to suppress a feeling completely.
- **Penitent** – Expressing or feeling regret or sorrow for having committed sins.
- **Desolation** – To make a place barren or deserted.
- **Hilkiah** – Pronounced: hihl-KAI-uh.
- **Ahikam** – Pronounced: uh-HAI-kam.
- **Achbor** – Pronounced: AK-bawr.
- **Shaphan** – Pronounced: SHAY-fuhn.
- **Huldah** – Pronounced: HUL-duh.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the prophetess Huldah’s message from God for King Josiah.
2. Reflect on Josiah’s behavior after hearing from the words of the book of God’s law.
3. Pray and seek godly wisdom for future plans.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Research the lives of the kings that came before King Josiah. Compare and contrast their time in power as leaders.
2. Handout index cards or sheets of paper to write their prayer for guidance.
3. Share with the class a summary of what Deuteronomy 27 and 28 states about the blessings and curses as an example of what King Josiah's secretary may have read to him.
4. Share with the class about Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie being the first ordained female bishop in 2000. Let the class research more information on Bishop McKenzie. Jarena Lee made this possible because of her successful fight to permit females to preach the Gospel.
5. Josiah's rule of Judah is also mentioned in 2 Chronicles 34.
6. Be sensitive towards students who do not feel females should be able to preach or be a pastor of a church.
7. Although not identified as prophets, other Old Testament women are believed to have spoken prophetically: Rachel (Genesis 30:24); Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10); Abigail (1 Samuel 25:28-31).
8. The throne of Judah lurched from the control of a godly king to an ungodly king. In doing so, changes were radical and implemented relatively quickly. Manasseh and his son Amon reversed the religious reforms of King Hezekiah, rebuilding pagan worship sites (2 Chronicles 21:3). Manasseh even erected pagan altars in the temple itself, so that within the course of a single lifetime the temple was in need of remodeling and true worship needed to be restored (2 Kings 22:3-7).

**Resources:** Index cards

## Elijah: Prophet of Courage

### Lesson 4

March 28, 2021 (Palm Sunday)

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 18–19; Matthew 17:1–13

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 18:5–18

**Key Verse:** (Elijah) answered, “I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father’s house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals.” 1 Kings 18:18

### Words to Know

- **Wadis** – A mainly dry oasis that water only flows through after heavy rainfalls.
- **Oath** – An appeal to God to uphold the truth of a statement.
- **Revere** – To regard God with admiration and deep respect.
- **Forsake** – To desert or leave.
- **Ahab** – Pronounced: AY-hab.
- **Obadiah** – Pronounced: oh-buh-dahy-uh.
- **Baal** – Pronounced: bail.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine Elijah’s response to speak to Ahab versus Obadiah’s response back to Ahab.
2. Reflect on how it feels when we have to give a word from God to someone.
3. Act courageously and boldly when sharing the Word of God.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Scriptures about 1) Obadiah: Obadiah 1; 2) Elijah: 1 Kings 17–19; 2 Kings 2:11; Matthew 11:14 and 17:3–5; 3) Jesus: 2 Samuel 23:3; Luke 1–3; Mark 3:31–35; Matthew 5–7 and 26–28. Additional scriptures can be used.
2. Obadiah was the administrator of the palace and steward of the king’s properties. Additional information can be found in Obadiah 1 about him.

3. Kamala Harris, who is Indian and African American, was nominated to be Joe Biden's vice president during the 2020 U.S. presidential race. Ask: "How can Kamala Harris use the non-violent techniques of Mahatma Gandhi to reform the government if confirmed as the next U.S. vice president in 2021?"
4. Have the class use their electronic devices to research Voice of the Martyrs ([www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)) to read some stories of people today who share their faith even when consequences may be severe.
5. Elijah prophesied in the ninth century B.C. but became the archetype of all Jewish prophets. Malachi predicted that Elijah would return to precede a closing chapter in Israel's history (Malachi 4:5-6). Elijah stood as the embodiment of all prophets at Jesus' transfiguration (Matthew 17:2). Similarly, two witnesses described in Revelation 11:6 allude to the work of the law and the prophets as embodied by Moses and Elijah.
6. Have the class share occasions when they had to speak to someone whom they feared or had been in conflict with. Ask them to share their story.
7. Research Hinduism and Jainism in case the class asks questions about these religions mentioned in the Sankofa section.

### The Suffering Servant Brings Salvation

#### Lesson 5

April 4, 2021 (Easter)

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 24:1-35

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 53:4-11 (end with “light”)

**Key Verse:** “He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

## Words to Know

- **Infirmitiess** – Sickness, diseases.
- **Afflict** – To cause severe physical or mental distress to somebody.
- **Transgression** – Any act that violates the commands of God.
- **Perversion** – The turning of good into bad.
- **Anguish** – Deep distress of the emotions.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover the connections between the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and the resurrected Christ in Luke 24.
2. Feel the joy of knowing Jesus has been resurrected.
3. Commit to sharing the story of the Suffering Servant, who is the resurrected Jesus Christ, with the world.

## Teaching Strategies

1. This is Resurrection (Easter) Sunday. It also is Holy Communion Sunday. Discuss the symbolism of the Bread and Cup that is shared in remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice. There are typically many people who come to church on Easter Sunday who do not usually attend. It is very important to help them understand why we take Holy Communion.
2. Isaiah's name means, "Jehovah is salvation."
3. Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is the climax of four Servant Songs of Isaiah. The first three are found in 42:1-4; 49:1-6; and 50:4-9.
4. This Servant Song is quoted multiple times in the New Testament as a description of Jesus' ministry, death, and burial (examples: Matthew 8:17; Luke 22:37; 1 Peter 2:22).
5. Sheep/shepherd imagery that is common in scripture has a double focus in this song. First, humankind is depicted as reckless sheep that wander into danger. Second, the Servant steps in to be led to slaughter in our place (53:6-7). This is

what a good shepherd does on behalf of the sheep.

6. Be sensitive towards those in attendance who do not believe in Jesus' death and resurrection. If time allows, let them explain their position without being harsh towards them.
7. Before class begins, play a movie clip that depicts the resurrection of Christ. (Example: Look on YouTube for *The Gospel of John* (2003 full movie)).
8. An alternative teaching method for Resurrection Sunday can be letting the class reenact Luke 24:1-12. You can incorporate Isaiah's prophecies as a part of the discussion.

## Ezra: Faith and Action Preacher

### Lesson 6

April 11, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezra 9–10

**Focus Scripture:** Ezra 10:1-12

**Key Verse:** “O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens.”

Ezra 9:6

### Words to Know

- **Confession** – Admission of a wrong.
- **Covenant** – Mutual agreements that were made between God and the Israelites.
- **Tremble** – To shake slightly, continuously and uncontrollably, from fear.
- **Exile** – Banishment from one's own country to another place as punishment.
- **Trespassed** – To break God's laws.
- **Shecaniah** – Pronounced: Sheca-NI-ah.
- **Jehohanan** – Pronounced: Je-ho-hanan.
- **Eliashib** – Pronounced: EL-ia-shib.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine Ezra's call for the people to repent and totally obey God's commands.
2. Aspire to fully obey God's commands daily.
3. Pray to courageously share your joy of knowing God with others.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive towards students who are bi-racial and/or from an interracial family.
2. Deuteronomy 7:1-5 prohibits any relation with the people of Canaan. Deuteronomy 20:15-18 further demands their annihilation on the grounds that they lead to religious defection. Ezra – Nehemiah substitutes separation for destruction. This shows mercy on the foreigners.
3. The crisis is resolved through communal consensus to reinterpret earlier laws and apply them to present circumstances, and therefore to oppose mixed marriages within the covenant community.
4. The threats of confiscation of property occurred for those who refused to participate in the general assembly, not those who offer a different opinion as to what should be done (10:7-8).
5. Ezra arrived before Nehemiah and they are found together in Nehemiah 8:9 and Nehemiah 12:26, 36.
6. The tearing of one's clothing was a common way to express grief or distress.
7. Ezra felt an inner shame before God and an outward humiliation before people for his own sins and the sins of the people.
8. Discuss with the class whether they have friends who may encourage them to stray from their faith and beliefs.
9. Read Ezra 10:1-12 and list some steps Ezra took to solve a big societal problem. For example, some steps might be: bring

the problem to God in prayer; bring the problem to leaders to decide on a solution; bring the problem to a larger group to implement a solution. Discuss how such a plan could be implemented today in resolving societal problems of racism, police brutality, drug abuse, violence, etc.

## Nehemiah: The Captive Cupbearer Restores a Nation

### Lesson 7

April 18, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20; 13:1-22

**Focus Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

**Key Verse:** “I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, ‘Let us start building!’ So they committed themselves to the common good.” Nehemiah 2:18

### Words to Know

- **Inspect** – To examine something officially.
- **Ruins** – The physical remains of the temple that was destroyed.
- **Disgrace** – To cause shame or dishonor.
- **Mock** – To treat someone with disrespect.
- **Gracious** – To display divine grace, mercy, or compassion.
- **Sanballat** – Pronounced: san-BAL-lat.
- **Tobiah** – Pronounced: to-BAI-uh.
- **Geshem** – Pronounced: Geh-Sheh-m.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how Nehemiah prayed for guidance and then led the people in the rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls, as well as a spiritual restoration.
2. Identify and appreciate community buildings of historical significance.
3. Examine ways that they can contribute to the preservation and appreciation of the community’s history.

## Teaching Strategies

1. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah were historically one volume. Ezra reveals how God once restored God's people. Nehemiah reveals how people played a central role in God's work of renewal.
2. The name Nehemiah means, "The Lord comforts."
3. Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer. One of the cupbearer's duties was to choose and taste the king's wine to make sure it was not poisoned. So he had the unreserved confidence of the king. Nehemiah wanted to honor his ancestors by rebuilding the wall.
4. Artaxerxes may have held Nehemiah in high regard because of the example of his father, Ahasuerus (Xerxes). He was greatly influenced by the character and faith of his wife, Queen Esther, and her relative, Mordecai.
5. Nehemiah's request of the king could have been misinterpreted as divided loyalty (treason) resulting in death.
6. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem led the opposition of Nehemiah's renewal efforts.
7. Nehemiah galvanizes the Jews of Judah to rebuild by appealing to communal pride and disclosing divine and royal support.
8. Bring a city map to class to identify areas that need to be repaired. Or you can tell the class to go to Google maps to pull up a current picture of their neighborhood.
9. Exercise sensitivity and compassion toward students who may live in areas of town that are in need of a rebuilding effort.
10. For more information on the AME Church, go to: [www.amechurch.org](http://www.amechurch.org).

**Resource:** City map

## A Plea for Restoration

### Lesson 8

April 25, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Focus Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Key Verse:** "Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old." Lamentations 5:21

### Words to Know

- **Yoke** – Burden or oppression.
- **Disgrace** – To cause shame or dishonor.
- **Iniquity** – Extreme immorality or great injustice.
- **Peril** – Exposure to danger.
- **Desolate** – To make a place barren or deserted.
- **Reign** – To exercise sovereign power.
- **Restore** – Return someone to an earlier and better condition.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine why the author of Lamentations pled with God for the restoration of Israel.
2. Sense the feelings of grief the people of Israel had over their losses.
3. Pray for the guidance to restore broken relationships with God and others.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Suggest the class write their own poem lamenting the current status in their lives, neighborhood, state, and/or the world. Moreover, at the end express their trust in God as the One who offers hope. Alternative: Create a story card video for youth to express to God some contemporary human concerns (global warming, human trafficking, poverty, racism, etc.). Learners should take and use cards to express their grief to God. They can record their cards using smart phone video or some other device. Encourage them to share it on social media, like church's website if possible.

2. Lamentations is one of the books of the Megilloth (or Roll). Because it relates to the ruin of their nation and contains promises of restoration, it is peculiarly prized among Jews and frequently read. The five Megilloth are: Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Ruth, and Esther.
3. Lamentations 1–4 is acrostic poetry, with the stanzas arranged according to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 5, however, is a different form – although it also has twenty-two stanzas – perhaps because the author's pain could not be bound by literary form.
4. Jeremiah remained in Judea during the Exile (Jeremiah 40:1–6). He was not among the thousands of his countrymen exiled to Babylon in three separate deportations (Jeremiah 52:28–30).
5. Lamentations is acrostic poetry, with the stanzas arranged according to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 119 is a similar example of acrostic poetry.
6. Let the students compare and contrast the hymn, "Pass Me Not, Gentle Savior," to a contemporary song they listened to when suffering a broken relationship or sadness.
7. Even though God was angry with the people of Israel, God does not remain angry forever (Micah 7:18).

### Micaiah: Speaking Truth to Power

**Lesson 9**

**May 2, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:1-40

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:15-23, 26-28

**Key Verse:** Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak." 1 Kings 22:14

#### **Words to Know**

- **Triumph** – The act of being victorious.
- **Prophesy** – To foretell what will happen in the future, to

speak clearly about the current situation.

- **Entice** – To persuade.
- **Decree** – The will or purpose of God.
- **Rations** – A fixed and limited amount of food given from the stocks available.
- **Micaiah** – Pronounced: mai-KAY-yuh.
- **Ramoth-Gilead** – Pronounced: RAH-moth-gil-E-ad.
- **Jehoshaphat** – Pronounced: juhh-OH-s-uh-fat.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify with Micaiah's boldness in declaring the word of the Lord to King Ahab.
2. Reflect on a time they found it difficult to tell the truth to someone in authority.
3. Pray and commit to tell individuals in power what the word states.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Using Google, research the proper way to create effective letters to government officials and share it with the class.
2. Information on U.S. senators: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/index.htm>; information on representatives from the U.S. House of Representatives: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>.
3. In countries outside of the U.S., please take precautions before contacting government officials. Talk to your pastor or other knowledgeable person who can direct you in how to best go forth with plans to contact officials or other leaders.
4. Micaiah's name means, "Who is like Yahweh?" He demonstrated his connection to the true God, as he was not intimidated by King Ahab's status or his dislike for the prophet.
5. The four hundred lying prophets could be the four hundred Asherah prophets left alive by Elijah at Mount Carmel,

although four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal were killed (1 Kings 18:19-40).

6. The vision Micaiah saw was either a picture of a real incident in heaven or a parable of what was happening on earth. It illustrated that the seductive influence of the false prophets would be part of God's judgment upon Ahab.
7. In his vision, Micaiah saw Israel as sheep without a shepherd. Some of the Gospels record that Jesus also looked upon the people in this way (Matthew 9:36; Mark 6:34).
8. Micaiah was kept in prison in the house of the king's son (22:26).
9. Ahab disguised himself but still was killed which validated that he could not oppose God's decision (22:34).

## **Isaiah: Offering Hope for the Future**

### **Lesson 10**

**May 9, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 29

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 29:13-24

**Key Verse:** Those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who grumble will accept instruction. Isaiah 29:24

### **Words to Know**

- **Rote** – A mechanical repetition of something so that it is remembered, often without real understanding of its significance.
- **Discernment** – Intensely selective judgment.
- **Meek** – Gentle, kind.
- **Scoffer** – To express ridicule about somebody.
- **Sanctify** – To dedicate, make holy.
- **Err** – To go astray.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand God's promise through Isaiah that after judgment God will show mercy.
2. Appreciate how it feels to be forgiven after committing wrongdoing.
3. Pray and be confident of God's forgiveness of sins.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Arbiter was a man from Arba, Paarai, one of David's mighty men (2 Sam. 23:35).
2. The theme of these woes is the foolishness of separating religious practices from daily trust in God to provide for the nation. While going through the motions of worship, the nation was counting on their political power and international alliances to ensure national safety rather than trusting in God, the one they claimed to worship (28:15; 30:1; 31:1).
3. The nations that devastate Jerusalem will be devastated in God's own timing (29:5-8).
4. Jesus quoted Isaiah 29:13 to demonstrate the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in Matthew 15:8-9.
5. In Isaiah 29:17-24, there is a shift from discipline to the theme of redemption.
6. Discuss ways that corporate worship can become more God-centered instead of tradition and ritual focused at your church. There may be some who believe AME Church traditions and rituals are important.
7. If time allows, tell each youth to create a three to five minute news report about the joyful, hopeful, and inspiring things that have occurred in their lives, as well as that of the church and community. The report can be posted on the church's website with the pastor's permission or their own social media accounts. This is to combat the sad, violent news reports that are broadcast every day.

## Jeremiah: The Suffering Preacher of Doom

### Lesson 11

May 16, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Jeremiah 37–38

**Focus Scripture:** Jeremiah 38:14-23

**Key Verse:** “Just obey the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you, and your life shall be spared.”  
Jeremiah 38:20

### Words to Know

- **Oath** – An appeal to God to uphold the truth of a statement.
- **Spare** – To withhold punishment.
- **Seduce** – To lead astray, deceive.
- **Seize** – To take suddenly, grasp.
- **Zedekiah** – Pronounced: zeh-duh-KAI-uh.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify Jeremiah’s hesitation to give controversial advice to King Zedekiah.
2. Sense the fear and danger that comes when confronting others with the truth.
3. Commit and trust in God when confronting others with truth.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Zedekiah was fearful of others. If he had trusted the Lord, he would not have had to fear either officials or deserters (38:19).
2. Ebed-melech feared God more than humans. He is the only one who stood up against the murder plot. He obeyed God and was spared when Jerusalem fell (39:15-18).
3. Jeremiah 38:14-23 is an alternate account of Jeremiah 37:17-21.
4. In chapter 39, Jeremiah’s prediction was fulfilled and the king witnessed his children’s death, and was then blinded, shackled, and taken prisoner to Babylon.
5. When the armies took Jerusalem, Jeremiah was still

incarcerated and was carried with other captives headed to Babylon, but was released six miles outside Jerusalem, freeing him to continue his prophetic ministry.

6. Be aware that some youth may be engaging in bullying or intimidating behavior toward other youth to elicit compliance.
7. After Nebuchadnezzar took King Jehoiachin captive, he appointed his uncle Mattaniah king. Nebuchadnezzar gave this ineffectual and amoral leader the ironic name *Zedekiah* meaning “Yahweh is righteous” (2 Kings 24:15-17).

## Ezekiel: Street Preacher to the Exiles

### Lesson 12

May 23, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezekiel 18

**Focus Scripture:** Ezekiel 18:1-9, 30-32

**Key Verse:** Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Ezekiel 18:31

### Words to Know

- **Proverb** – A short, well-known saying that expresses an obvious truth and often offers advice.
- **Righteous** – Strictly observant of the Word of God.
- **Defile** – To render unclean, or corrupt.
- **Accrue** – To increase in amount or value.
- **Ordinance** – A law created by God.
- **Repent** – To feel regret about a sin and make a decision to change your ways.
- **Transgression** – Any act that violates God’s Word.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Review God’s Word to Ezekiel about individual responsibility for wrongdoing.

2. Recall a time when students have blamed someone else for their bad behavior.
3. Engage in individual responsibility, repentance, and righteous living.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Two important steps to living victoriously with Christ are repentance and righteous living.
2. Activity: Give each student a piece of paper to write a letter to God. They should first offer praise and thanksgiving to God; second, ask God to forgive them for wrongdoing; third, list actions they will take to live righteously; and fourth, thank God for empowering them through the Holy Spirit to live a transformed life.
3. The law of Moses had rules about charging interest to prevent Jews from taking advantage of the poor or of fellow Israelites (Leviticus 25:36; Deuteronomy 23:19-20; Ezek. 18:8).
4. Ezekiel's solution to the problem of inherited guilt is for each person to have a changed life. The Holy Spirit does the work in us (Psalm 51:10-12).
5. Sin and its punishment may involve long-term consequences for individuals and the corporate community.
6. The prophet's call that the people create for themselves a new heart and new spirit is later replaced by an emphasis that God will have to take the initiative and perform this action (36:26).
7. The proverb cited in verse 2 (also quoted and refuted in Jeremiah 31:29-30) is from the *targumim* (singular: *targum*), a collection of spoken paraphrases, explanations, and expansions of the Jewish scriptures a rabbi would give in the vernacular of the listeners, often Aramaic.
8. Other passages alluding to children bearing their forebears' sins were used as justification of the "sour grapes" proverb (Exodus 20:5; 2 Kings 24:3; Jeremiah 15:4; Lamentations

- 5:7).
9. Yahweh makes an oath in verse 3, swearing by God's own life that from that day on, all people would be held accountable for their own disobedience.
  10. Be sensitive towards some of the youth who may come from families they are not proud of, and strive not to be like them.
  11. Be sensitive towards youth who are suffering the consequences of their family members and feel bitter.
  12. Compare and contrast the promises for regeneration in Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; and 36:26 to Paul's message in 2 Corinthians 5:11-21.

## **Jonah: Fiery Harbinger of Doom**

**Lesson 13**

**May 30, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Focus Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Key Verse:** The people of Nineveh believed God. Jonah 3:5

### **Words to Know**

- **Proclaim** – To call, publish.
- **Fast** – To abstain from food as an act of religious observance.
- **Sackcloth** – A coarse, dark cloth made of goat's hair.
- **Decree** – A law or statute made by a king and published for all to know.
- **Relent** – To become more sympathetic or amenable and do something previously ruled out.
- **Calamity** – A disastrous situation or event.
- **Nineveh** – Pronounced: NIHN-eh-veh.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore Nineveh's response to Jonah's message.
2. Reflect on reasons they would turn to God when disaster threatens their lives.

3. Engage in repentance and right behavior after hearing God's warning.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Nahum stated that Nineveh's sins included plotting evil against the Lord (Nahum 1:11); cruelty and plundering in war (Nahum 2:12-13; 3:1, 19); prostitution and witchcraft (Nahum 3:4), and commercial exploitation (Nahum 3:16).
2. Jonah 2:2-9 is a psalm of thanksgiving for deliverance from death in the sea.
3. God may relent and change his mind dependent on the sincerity of the human behavior: Jeremiah 18:7-8; Exodus 32:12-14; 2 Samuel 24:15-17; Ezra 8:21-23.
4. Jonah prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, as did (at least in part) Hosea and Amos. However, the only prophecy recorded toward Jeroboam II seems to be one of victory rather than doom (2 Kings 14:25-27).
5. The repentance of Nineveh was short-lived. Shortly thereafter, the armies of Assyria (of which Nineveh became the capital) would conquer Israel (2 Kings 17:7-23). The prophet Nahum, however, repeated Jonah's message of doom. This time God did not relent.
6. Bring an Old Testament map to show class the location of Nineveh and Tarshish.

**The Teacher's Guide  
Intermediate Lessons  
Spring Quarter: March – May 2021  
Prepared by Rev. Tashara S. Void  
Moses: Prophet of Deliverance**

**Lesson 1****March 7, 2021****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**

- **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.

**Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Study Moses' role as a prophet of God in leading the Israelites out of Egypt.
2. Reflect on leaders who guide us through seemingly impossible situations.
3. Engage in actions that will help others who are in impossible situations find hope.

**Teaching Strategies**

After reading the **Introduction** section, follow the instructions below.

1. Allow the youth a few minutes to look up what a prophet is.
2. Set a virtual timer.
3. Have them share what they discovered. \*If using an online platform with a chat feature, have them place their findings

there. If using Zoom, use the whiteboard feature to write down what they are saying.

4. Have them build a working definition of a prophet collectively. (Prophet – God's spokesperson; the divinely called minister who announces the will of God to God's people.)

**Read Bible Story and Life Application.**

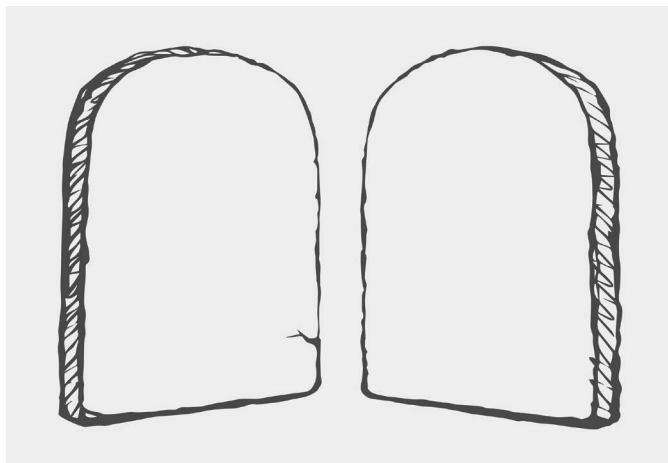
1. Allow the youth about five minutes to search through the passage, identifying characteristics of Moses.
2. Have them write their answers on the tablets in their books.  
\*If they do not have an electronic device, use the index in the Bible to look up *Moses*.
3. Have them share the characteristics they found.
4. Based on the definition created previously, have them compare their earlier definition of a *leader* and *prophet* to the characteristics they found in Moses.

**Close with Summary and Closing Devotion.**

**Resources:** Timer, poster paper markers

**Appendix for Lesson One**

Moses' Tablets:



Timers: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=timers](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=timers)

## **Joshua: Prophet of Conquest**

### **Lesson 2**

**March 14, 2021**

**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.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain how Joshua acted obediently to the vision from God.
2. Discover how God uses people today to fulfill God’s purposes.
3. Commit to obeying God especially in challenging times.

### **Teaching Strategies**

After reading the **Introduction** section, follow the instructions below.

1. Divide class into two teams: Team A and Team B. \*If using Zoom or another virtual platform, you can separate them into breakout rooms.
2. Have each team develop a plan for victory. \*Team A’s plan will be based on God’s instructions in our text. Team B will create their own plan for victory.
3. Have the teams debate why their team’s plan is the best.
4. After the debates, decide which team had a better plan (which more than likely will be Team B, since Team A’s plan seems ridiculous on the surface).

5. Explain to the class how the ways of God are not like our ways and sometimes require us to do things that do not quite make sense, which is what was happening in the text. But, following God's way always bring victory in the end.

Read **Bible Story** and **Life Application**.

1. Play the song, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho."
2. Ask class to explain how this song and others were used to communicate information about escape from slavery.

Close with **Summary** and **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Speakers, poster paper, markers

#### **Appendix for Lesson Two**

"*Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*" lyrics

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY0G\\_S6ZrtE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY0G_S6ZrtE)

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*Jericho, Jericho*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*The walls come tumblin' down, Hallelujah*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*Jericho, Jericho*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*And the walls come tumblin' down*

You may talk about the men of Gideon

You may talk about the men of Saul

But there're none like good old Joshua

At the battle of Jericho

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*Jericho, Jericho*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*And the walls come tumblin' down, Hallelujah*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*Jericho, Jericho*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*And the walls come tumblin' down*

Up to the walls of Jericho

With sword drawn in his hand

“Go blow them horns,” cried Joshua

“The battle is in my hands”

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*Jericho, Jericho*

*Joshua fit the battle of Jericho*

*And the walls come tumblin' down, that mornin'*

## Huldah: Prophet of Wisdom

**Lesson 3**

**March 21, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Kings 22

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Kings 22:14-20

**Key Verse:** “Because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord... I also have heard you, says the Lord.” 2 Kings 22:19

### Words to Know

- **Provoke** – To make angry, irritate.
- **Wrath** – Violent anger.
- **Quench** – To extinguish; to suppress a feeling completely.
- **Penitent** – Expressing or feeling regret or sorrow for having committed sins.
- **Desolation** – To make a place barren or deserted.
- **Hilkiah** – Pronounced: hihl-KAI-uh.

- **Ahikam** – Pronounced: uh-HAI-kam.
- **Achbor** – Pronounced: AK-bawr.
- **Shaphan** – Pronounced: SHAY-fuhn.
- **Huldah** – Pronounced: HUL-duh.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the prophetess Huldah's message from God for King Josiah.
2. Reflect on Josiah's behavior after hearing the words of the book of the law.
3. Pray for godly wisdom in making plans for the future.

### Teaching Strategies

Begin with the question in the **Introduction**:

1. What are some of the national and international crises reported on the news in recent years? \*Visit the links in the appendix to get an idea of what has happened in the past 10 years.
2. Have students share their feelings about where God is during such times.
3. Explain to the students that oftentimes when national disasters happen, people say it is an act of God. They believe that people who experience bad things must have done something wrong, and that is why they are going through what they are going through. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, it was said that God flooded the city, just like he did during Noah's time, because of their voodoo worship. When the gunman went into Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, he said he was acting on behalf of God and getting rid of the people who were sinning against God due to their lifestyle. Though God did not tell the gunman to kill all those people, nor did he flood the city to "cleanse them," there are times when God allows us to be placed in difficult or trying situations when we disobey his commands.

**Read Bible Story and Life Application.**

1. Have students create a list of characteristics that makes a person a bold leader today.
2. Compare their list of characteristics to that of Josiah.
3. Allow students to share and compare their lists.
4. Compile a general list of all the characteristics.
5. If it is not listed, be sure to stress that *age, gender, and/or socioeconomic status does not dictate if someone can be a leader.*

**Close with Summary and Closing Devotion.**

**Resources:** Bible, poster paper, markers

**Appendix for Lesson Three**

10 Most Unforgettable U.S. Natural Disasters in the Past Decade:

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/slideshows/the-10-most-unforgettable-us-natural-disasters-of-the-past-decade>

Decade of Perpetual Crisis 2010s:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/dec/17/decade-of-perpetual-crisis-2010s-disrupted-everything-but-resolved-nothing>

List of National Emergencies in the United States:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_national\\_emergencies\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_national_emergencies_in_the_United_States)

**Elijah: Prophet of Courage**

**Lesson 4**

**March 28, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 18–19; Matthew 17:1-13

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 18:5-18

**Key Verse:** (Elijah) answered, “I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father’s house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals.” 1 Kings 18:18

## Words to Know

- **Infirmitiess** – Sickness, diseases.
- **Afflict** – To cause severe physical or mental distress to somebody.
- **Transgression** – Any act that violates the commands of God.
- **Perversion** – The turning of good into bad.
- **Anguish** – Deep distress of the emotions.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare Elijah's response to speak to Ahab to that of Obadiah's response to report back to Ahab.
2. Reflect on how we feel when given the responsibility of delivering a word from God to someone.
3. Develop the courage and boldness to speak the word of God.

## Teaching Strategies

Begin with the question in the **Introduction** section.

1. Have the students share a time when they had to address someone whom they feared or had been in conflict with.
2. Have them explain if their differences were addressed or resolved, and if so, how.
3. Explain to them that sometimes they will find themselves in situations that may force them to have to speak up against an authority figure or someone they really respect or admire. And, though it may be difficult, it may be necessary, especially if the person is acting in a negative manner. This is where we find the prophet Elijah.

## Read Bible Story and Life Application.

Harriet Tubman	<a href="https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/harriet-tubman">https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/harriet-tubman</a>
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Susan B. Anthony	<a href="https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/susan-b-anthony">https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/susan-b-anthony</a>
Mahatma Gandhi	<a href="https://www.history.com/topics/india/mahatma-gandhi">https://www.history.com/topics/india/mahatma-gandhi</a>
Martin Luther King, Jr.	<a href="https://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-martin-luther-king-jr">https://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-martin-luther-king-jr</a>
Nelson Mandela	<a href="https://www.history.com/topics/africa/nelson-mandela">https://www.history.com/topics/africa/nelson-mandela</a>
Erin Brockovich	<a href="https://www.brockovich.com/">https://www.brockovich.com/</a>

\*Be prepared to discuss others if the students bring up others.

Close with **Summary** and **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Poster paper, markers

### The Suffering Servant Brings Salvation

#### Lesson 5

April 4, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 24:1-35

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 53:4-11 (end with “light”)

**Key Verse:** He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

#### Words to Know

- **Infirmities** – Sickness, diseases.
- **Afflict** – To cause severe physical or mental distress to somebody.
- **Transgression** – Any act that violates the commands of God.
- **Perversion** – The turning of good into bad.
- **Anguish** – Deep distress of the emotions.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify the connection between the suffering servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and the suffering servants of today.
2. Recognize that the suffering servant is still present among his followers.
3. Find a way to share their hope in the suffering servant with a friend or family member.

## Teaching Strategies

After reading the **Introduction**, **Bible Story**, and **Life Application** sections, follow the instructions below.

1. Have the students list the names of some people they believe are suffering servants.
2. Ask them how these servants compare to Isaiah.
3. Give a verse from Isaiah 53:2-9 to each student and give them time to find the prophecy fulfilled in the Gospels. \*See appendix below. \*\*If there are more than eight students, break them evenly into pairs or groups.

Close with **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Timer, Bible, poster paper, markers

## Appendix for Lesson Five

Isaiah 53:2	Matthew 1:18-25
Isaiah 53:3	Luke 4:16-30
Isaiah 53:4	Matthew 8:14-17
Isaiah 53:5	John 19:1-30
Isaiah 53:6	John 10:1-21
Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:1-5
Isaiah 53:8	Luke 23:1-25
Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-61

\*These are just examples. The prophecies can be found throughout the Gospels.

## Ezra: Faith and Action Preacher

### Lesson 6

April 11, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezra 9–10

**Focus Scripture:** Ezra 10:1-12

**Key Verse:** “O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens.”

Ezra 9:6

### Words to Know

- **Confession** – Admission of a wrong.
- **Covenant** – Mutual agreements that were made between God and the Israelites.
- **Tremble** – To shake slightly, continuously, and uncontrollably, from fear.
- **Exile** – Banishment from one's own country to another place as punishment.
- **Trespassed** – To break God's laws.
- **Shecaniah** – Pronounced: Sheca-NI-ah.
- **Jehohanan** – Pronounced: Je-ho-hanan.
- **Eliashib** – Pronounced: EL-ia-shib.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Learn the moral of the story: God will provide in difficult situations.
2. Understand sacrifices and offerings.
3. Learn how faithful people respond to God.
4. Rejoice for the ways God provides.

### Teaching Strategies

#### SCENARIOS

Your friends came over to your house for a movie night. One of your friends brought another friend so there are more people

than you planned for. You want to pass out drinks, but you only have five cans of soda and you need six for everyone to have their own. What would you do?

There is a guy in your class who is always mean to you. He always bumps you when he walks by and he calls you names. He knocks stuff out of your hands and makes you feel stupid. You don't think you can take it anymore. What do you do?

If you saw your best friend's boyfriend kissing another girl, would you tell her?

If you found a wallet with \$1500 cash in it, would you try to return it?

If you saw some young kids bullying another kid, would you step in? If they were older kids would it change your answer?

If the guy at the corner store gives you \$10 more change than you were owed, do you tell him?

If someone in this group posts something online (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that really offends you, would you say anything in the group publicly? Would you send them a personal message? Would you do nothing since it was a group?

### **Read Bible Story and Life Application.**

Have the students re-read Ezra 10:1-12.

1. List some steps Ezra took in solving a big societal problem.  
For example:
  - a. bring the problem to God in prayer.
  - b. bring the problem to leaders to decide on a solution.
  - c. bring the problem to a larger group to implement a solution.
2. Discuss how such a plan could be implemented today.

ACTION	VERSE

Close with **Summary** and **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Poster paper, markers

## Nehemiah: The Captive Cupbearer Rebuilds a Nation

### Lesson 7

April 18, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20; 13:1-22

**Focus Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

**Key Verse:** I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, “Let us start building!” So, they committed themselves to the common good. Nehemiah 2:18

### Words to Know

- **Inspect** – To examine something officially.
- **Ruins** – The physical remains of the temple that was destroyed.
- **Disgrace** – To cause shame or dishonor.
- **Mock** – To treat someone with disrespect.
- **Gracious** – To display divine grace, mercy, or compassion.
- **Sanballat** – Pronounced: san-BAL-lat.
- **Tobiah** – Pronounced: to-BAI-uh.
- **Geshem** – Pronounced: Geh-sheh-m.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Go with Nehemiah as he inspects Jerusalem's ruined walls and tells others of God's plan for restoring the walls.
2. Identify structures of historical significance in their community

that have been preserved.

3. Examine ways they can contribute to the preservation and appreciation of their community's past.

### **Teaching Strategies**

After reading the **Introduction** section, follow the instructions below.

1. Have students Google search “civil unrest 2020.” \*To make it even more personable, have them add their city/state. \*\*If a computer or technology is not available, search and print off pictures to show.
2. Have them describe how it makes them feel looking at the pictures and what they felt if anything when it was actually going on.
3. Explain that looking at these pictures is how Nehemiah felt when he thought about and visited Jerusalem’s walls. He saw a place once filled with a lot of promise and excitement, not desolate and barren. He longed to restore the wall back to its former glory and remind the people of God’s goodness.

Have students read **Bible Story** and **Life Application**, answering the questions after **Life Application**.

Close with **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Pictures of civil unrest, poster paper, markers

### **A Plea for Restoration**

**Lesson 8**

**April 25, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Focus Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Key Verse:** Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old. Lamentations 5:21

## Words to Know

- **Yoke** – Burden or oppression.
- **Disgrace** – To cause shame or dishonor.
- **Iniquity** – Extreme immorality or great injustice.
- **Peril** – Exposure to danger.
- **Desolate** – To make a place barren or deserted.
- **Reign** – To exercise sovereign power.
- **Restore** – Return someone to an earlier and better condition.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Introduce the prophet's plea to God to restore all that Israel had lost.
2. Feel the grief the people felt over the destruction of Israel.
3. Pray and engage in restoring broken relationships.

## Teaching Strategies

After reading the **Introduction** section, follow the instructions below.

Ask students to list rules and expectations they have to follow.

1. Have them explain what happens when they do not follow the rules and expectations.
2. Ask them what happens when they are in a bad situation as a result of their own decisions (cheating on an exam, staying out past curfew, etc.).
3. Explain to them what the Israelites were experiencing was their fault. Back when Moses first freed them from the Egyptians, they were given a list of rules to follow. As long as they followed those rules, God would continue to bless them. But, they disobeyed God on several occasions and did what they wanted to. God was frustrated with them, and instead of

rescuing them, God allowed them to feel the pain of their poor choices. But, there was one among them who could not stand to witness the pain they were in, so he prayed and cried out and begged God to restore to them what they lost. It is in this chapter of Lamentations that we find his prayer.

**Read Bible Story and Life Application.**

1. In the chart below, have the students list some of the ways they can break their relationship with God.
2. In the corresponding column, have them write the specific steps that can help restore their relationship to God (repent, seek forgiveness from God and those we hurt, etc.).

Sin that breaks	Action that restores

**Close with Closing Devotion.**

**Resources:** Speakers, poster paper, markers

**Appendix for Chapter Eight**

“Pass Me Not” by Douglas Miller

<https://youtu.be/eN6F8x-ctH4>

Pass me not, O gentle Savior  
Hear my humble cry  
While on others thou art calling  
Do not pass me by

*Refrain:*

*Savior, Savior*

*Hear my humble cry  
While on others thou art calling  
Do not pass me by*

Let me at thy throne of mercy  
Find a sweet relief  
Kneeling there in deep contrition  
Help my unbelief

*Refrain*

Trusting only in thy merit  
Would I seek thy face  
Heal my wounded, broken spirit  
Save me by thy grace

*Refrain*

Thou the spring of all my comfort  
More than life to me  
Whom have I on earth beside thee?  
Whom in heav'n but thee?

*Refrain*

### Micaiah: Speaking Truth to Power

**Lesson 9**

**May 2, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:1-40

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:15-23, 26-28

**Key Verse:** Micaiah said, “As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak.” 1 Kings 22:14

## Words to Know

- **Triumph** – The act of being victorious.
- **Prophesy** – To foretell what will happen in the future, to speak clearly about the current situation.
- **Entice** – To persuade.
- **Decree** – The will or purpose of God.
- **Rations** – A fixed and limited amount of food given from the stocks available.
- **Micaiah** – Pronounced: mai-KAY-yuh.
- **Ramoth-gilead** – Pronounced: RAH-moth-gil-E-ad.
- **Jehoshaphat** – Pronounced: juhh-OH-s-uh-fat.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how Micaiah boldly confronted King Ahab with the true word of God.
2. Reflect on a time when they had to confront an authority figure with the truth.
3. Pray and commit to tell authority figures the truth contained in the word.

## Teaching Strategies

Read first paragraph of the **Introduction**.

1. Have the youth answer the questions.  
Read second paragraph.

Read **Bible Story and Life Application**.

1. Point out that people who take a stand are often ostracized or even beaten for their refusal to comply with the majority.
2. Have them list people who have been ostracized and/or beaten for their refusal to comply.

Close with **Summary and Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Poster paper, markers

## Isaiah: Offering Hope for the Future

### Lesson 10

May 9, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 29

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 29:13-24

**Key Verse:** Those who err in spirit will come to understanding, and those who grumble will accept instruction. Isaiah 29:24

### Words to Know

- **Rote** – A mechanical repetition of something so that it is remembered, often without real understanding of its significance.
- **Discernment** – Intensely selective judgment.
- **Meek** – Gentle, kind.
- **Scoffer** – To express ridicule about somebody.
- **Sanctify** – To dedicate, make holy.
- **Err** – To go astray.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore God's message through Isaiah that after judgment God will show mercy.
2. Appreciate how it feels to commit wrongdoing and then be forgiven.
3. Pray and ask for forgiveness for their wrongdoing.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Have students list their top five friends.
2. Have them rank, on a scale of 1-5, whether association with that friend has the capacity to bring them closer to God or pull them away from God (1 pulling them away and 5 bringing them closer).
3. Explain that the people in the passage thought they could do what others were doing, and God would be ok with it. They did not consider how their relationship with others affected their relationships with God. If they connected with the wrong

people, it would cause them to go astray. Not because the people were bad but because they did not have the same beliefs or practices.

Read **Bible Story** and **Life Application**.

Close with **Summary** and **Closing Devotion**, playing the song for the students to listen to.

**Resources:** Speakers, poster paper, markers

### **Appendix for Lesson Ten**

“My Worship Is for Real”

<https://youtu.be/ChupmceWgpk>

## **Jeremiah: The Suffering Preacher of Doom**

### **Lesson 11**

**May 16, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jeremiah 37–38

**Focus Scripture:** Jeremiah 38:14-23

**Key Verse:** “Just obey the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you, and your life shall be spared.”  
Jeremiah 38:20

### **Words to Know**

- **Oath** – An appeal to God to uphold the truth of a statement.
- **Spare** – To withhold punishment.
- **Seduce** – To lead astray, deceive.
- **Seize** – To take suddenly, grasp.
- **Zedekiah** – Pronounced: zeh-duh-KAI-uh.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the dilemma Jeremiah faced in speaking the truth to King Zedekiah.
2. Recognize that challenging others with the truth can be dangerous.
3. Trust in God to guide them in their difficult confrontations with others.

## Teaching Strategies

Have students share a time when someone attempted to pressure, intimidate, or bully them into compliance with certain behaviors or beliefs.

1. Ask them how they responded.
2. Now have them share a time when they had to take a bold stance and speak God's truth to others.
3. Ask them how they responded?

Say to them that *Jeremiah was the type of prophet known for telling the truth, even if it was not always received openly. There were those like the king who looked to Jeremiah for guidance, but he did not want other people to know he listened to him. Possibly because he felt it would make him look weak. But, that didn't bother Jeremiah. He gave the king his message and went about his business.*

### Read **Bible Story**.

Complete the two activities with the students.

#### *Activity 1*

Do a profile study of Zedekiah.

1. What qualified him as a weak leader?
2. Why didn't he want anyone to know that he was seeking advice from Jeremiah?

#### *Activity 2*

Do a character study of Jeremiah.

1. What gave him the strength to continue speaking the truth despite the consequences?
2. Why did he remain faithful to God even while he was being persecuted?
3. What can today's Christians learn from Jeremiah's example?

Close with **Summary** and **Closing Devotion**.

**Resources:** Poster paper, markers

## Ezekiel: Street Preacher to the Exiles

### Lesson 12

May 23, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezekiel 18

**Focus Scripture:** Ezekiel 18:1-9, 30-32

**Key Verse:** Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Ezekiel 18:31

### Words to Know

- **Proverb** – A short, well-known saying that expresses an obvious truth and often offers advice.
- **Righteous** – Strictly observant of the word of God.
- **Defile** – To render unclean, or corrupt.
- **Accrue** – To increase in amount or value.
- **Ordinance** – A law created by God.
- **Repent** – To feel regret about a sin and make a decision to change your ways.
- **Transgression** – Any act that violates God's word.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that God told Ezekiel we are individually responsible for our sins.
2. Recall a time when they have blamed someone else for their bad behavior.
3. Practice personal responsibility, repentance, and righteous living.

### Teaching Strategies

Ask students:

1. What are some common excuses people make when they are caught doing wrong?
2. Why do excuses rarely address the real problem?  
Have them review Ezekiel 18:11.
1. List the negative behaviors summarized from vv. 5-9.

2. Think of behaviors that are common in our culture today that fit into these categories.

Verse 5	
Verse 6	
Verse 7	
Verse 8	
Verse 9	

### Read **Bible Story and Life Application.**

Have students make a list of people who have not or did not follow the ways of their parents, but instead managed to overcome tremendous odds to be successful in their career.

1. Create a list of traits and characteristics such persons seem to have that kept them from repeating the cycle of a previous generation.

People	Characteristics and traits

### Close with **Summary and Closing Devotion.**

**Resources:** Poster paper, markers

## **Jonah: Fiery Harbinger of Doom**

**Lesson 13**

**May 30, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Focus Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Key Verse:** The people of Nineveh believed God. Jonah 3:5

### **Words to Know**

- **Proclaim** – To call, publish.
- **Fast** – To abstain from food as an act of religious observance.

- **Sackcloth** – A coarse, dark cloth made of goat’s hair.
- **Decree** – A law or statute made by a king and published for all to know.
- **Relent** – To become more sympathetic or amenable and do something previously ruled out.
- **Calamity** – A disastrous situation or event.
- **Nineveh** – Pronounced: NIHN-eh-veh.

### **Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore Nineveh’s response to Jonah’s message.
2. Reflect on how the people of Nineveh felt after hearing Jonah’s message.
3. Engage in repentance and right behavior after hearing God’s warning.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Ask the students:

1. Have you ever been reluctant to obey an instruction or command from God or an adult?
2. Why?
3. How did you feel going against them?
4. Were there others who joined you in the disobedience?
5. How did that work out for you all?

Explain to the students that despite what we may have been taught about Jonah, he had a different side to him that was not so pleasing to God. Jonah was one of God’s prophets, but he did not believe God’s message was for everyone. So, he picked and chose who he gave it to. So much so that when God gave him a message he did not want to deliver, he tried to run away from God. But he could not run from God, for where he was, there God was. God caused a terrible storm to consume the ship he



**Resources:** Newspaper headlines template, poster paper, markers

**The Teacher's Guide  
Junior Lessons  
Spring Quarter: March – May 2021  
Prepared by Rev. Rachel Williams-Glenn**

**Freedom for God's People**

**Lesson 1**

**March 7, 2021**

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

**Focus Scripture:** Exodus 12:31-42

**Key Verse:** The Egyptians urged the people (of Israel) to hasten their departure from the land. Exodus 12:33

**Word Power!!!**

- **Unleavened** – Without yeast, which is what causes bread to rise.
- **Rameses** – Another name for Goshen, the capital city of Egypt. The place where Jacob's family settled when they tried to escape the famine in Canaan.
- **Vigil** – A time of waiting, often before something big and important happens or is expected to happen.

**Lesson Goals**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how God makes sure the Israelites have what they need even though they leave in a hurry.
2. Understand why people of God need to share stories of what God's done with others.
3. Compare and contrast the Passover vigil to Watch Night services.

**Teaching Strategies**

1. Share a video about how to make unleavened bread and information about the history of Watch Night services at the beginning of class.
2. Be prepared to help students who've had to move in a hurry

to manage any uncomfortable, scary, and awkward feelings that this lesson may bring up.

3. **Activity #2: They've Got Something in Common** answers:  
1. C 2. A 3. D 4. B

**Resources:** YouTube “How to Make Unleavened Bread” video, information about Watch Night services; some suggested YouTube videos for unleavened bread are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t06BDMfCRco> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFuNcn\\_3Z3U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFuNcn_3Z3U). Suggested websites for Watch Night service information are: <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/watch-night/> and <https://blackmail4u.com/2015/12/30/the-history-origin-of-the-new-years-eve-watch-night-service/>

## Victory Is Ours!

### Lesson 2

**March 14, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Joshua 5:13–6:27

**Focus Scripture:** Joshua 5:13–6:5, 15–16, 20

**Key Verse:** “Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy.” Joshua 5:15

### Word Power!!!

- **Ram's Horn Trumpet** – A special trumpet called a shofar (pronounced *show-far*) that is used to let Jewish people know it's time to worship or pray.
- **Covet** – To want something someone else has so much that you don't value what you already have.
- **Holy** – Sacred; set apart to the worship of God.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the different ways that God has Joshua and the Israelites fight against Jericho.
2. Identify things the student wants God to help him/her fight

against.

3. Understand how the different symbols and repetitions remind God's people God will lead them to victory.

### Teaching Strategies

1. For **Activity #1: A Shofar to Remember** activity: Have a list of phrases or stickers that have encouraging words about God being helpful, holy, trustworthy, and handy.
2. For **Activity #2: And the Walls Come Tumbling Down** activity: Play shofar music while the class circles their walls of things they want God to help them fight against seven times while holding up their shofars.

**Resources:** Device with YouTube; items to make a shofar: larger paper plate, construction paper, tape, glue and yarn; building blocks and post-it notes. Two good YouTube links for shofar music are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJwfsYxDgJ4> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_YabON03Aqs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YabON03Aqs)

### A Wise Prophet

**Lesson 3**

**March 21, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Kings 22

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Kings 22:14-20

**Key Verse:** Trust in the Lord, and do good. Psalm 37:3

### Word Power!!!

- **Hilkiah** (pronounced *Hill-ki-yah*) – The high priest.
- **Shaphan** (pronounced *Shah-fan*) – The court secretary.
- **Ahikam** (pronounced *A-hi-cum*) – Shaphan's son.
- **Achbor** (pronounced *Awk-bore*) – Court official.
- **Asaiah** (pronounced *A-sigh-yah*) – King Josiah's personal advisor.
- **Huldah** (pronounced *Hull-dah*) – A prophet of Judah.

- **Second Quarter** – A new section of Jerusalem.
- **Penitent** – Feeling sorry and being willing to make amends; repentant.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the significance of the role the prophet Huldah plays in today's lesson.
2. Understand the importance of atoning for wrong actions even if they were started by people who came before you.
3. Identify the ways that God changes bad news into good news for people who trust God and do Godly good.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Use an audio Bible to play today's scripture and assist with the pronunciation of the names in the lesson.
2. Find a picture of the prophet Huldah on the internet and show it to your class.
3. Play Paul S. Morton's *Be Blessed* for the class.
4. **Activity #1: Make Sure You've Got Godly Helpers** answers:  
HILKIAH; HULDAH; SHAPHAN; AHIKAM; ACHBOR; ASAIAH;  
TORE CLOTHES; WEPT; BOOK; KING; BECAUSE YOU  
WERE WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS I WILL WAIT TO SEND  
THE PROMISED DISASTER

**Resources:** Audio Bible; Paul S. Morton's "*Be Blessed*"; a picture of Huldah the prophet from an internet search

### Bold Enough to Speak for God

**Lesson 4**

**March 28, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 18–19; Matthew 17:1-13

**Focus Scripture:** Matthew 17:1-13

**Key Verse:** Suddenly there appeared to (the disciples) Moses and Elijah, talking with (Jesus). Matthew 17:3

## Word Power!!!

- **Transfigured** – When someone’s appearance mysteriously changes into something otherworldly.
- **Son of Man** – Another way of saying *Messiah*; it’s how Jesus referred to himself.
- **John the Baptist** – The relative of Jesus who boldly spoke up for God and was killed for doing so by Herod.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize how Jesus is more than just another biblical prophet.
2. Understand how God steps in to give us what we need to let go of our fear and speak for God.
3. Explore how modern believers are often called to speak up for God and what God loves.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Show the trailer for the *John Lewis: Good Trouble* documentary at the beginning of class.
2. Remind students that Palm Sunday is as much about people coming to know who Jesus is as the Messiah as it is about crowds laying palm branches and clothing at his feet as he enters Jerusalem.
3. Play a video or audio recording of “He Touched Me” (AMEC hymn #402).

**Resources:** Device with YouTube, trailer to the *John Lewis: Good Trouble* documentary which is found on YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z\\_oEkOdIXdo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_oEkOdIXdo); AMEC Hymnal, YouTube video of “He Touched Me”; MESDA Ministries TV and Sister Bev have good YouTube versions

## Salvation Is Sealed

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Luke 24

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 24:13-16, 22-35

**Key Verse:** Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. Luke 24:31.

### Word Power!!!

- **Two of them** – Two unnamed members of the larger group of people who followed Jesus.
- **Moses** – Code word for the first five books of the Bible.
- **Eyes were opened** – Able to understand.
- **The Eleven** – The surviving members of the smaller group of Jesus' followers to whom Jesus gave more intense training and responsibility.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the role that meal sharing plays in helping people understand important things about Jesus and his power to save.
2. Discover what Jesus is willing to do to help people understand that their hope can be restored.
3. Identify ways that students can share why they put their hope in Jesus.

### Teaching Strategy

1. Before students do **Activity #1: Jesus Fills My Plate**, play John P. Kee's "Show Up"

**Resources:** Device with YouTube or Music App, John P. Kee's "Show Up"

### Joy in Obeying God

#### Lesson 6

April 11, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Nehemiah 8:1-12

**Focus Scripture:** Nehemiah 8:2-3, 5-6, 9-12

**Key Verse:** “Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.”

Nehemiah 8:11

## Word Power!!!

- **First Day of the Seventh Month** – The celebration of the Jewish New Year now called Rosh Hashanah. It was originally called the Festival of Trumpets because the shofar and regular trumpets announced the beginning of the celebration.
- **Water Gate** – Jerusalem's only source of fresh water.
- **The Book of the Law** – Either all five of the first five books of the Bible or the book of Deuteronomy.
- **Scribe** – A person who creates new copies of the scriptures by hand.
- **Juneteenth** – A holiday where African Americans celebrate the spreading of the message that slavery was over.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Find signs within the text that the returned exiles repent and rededicate themselves to God.
2. Understand why the leaders in the lesson insist that the exiles celebrate and rejoice instead of mourn.
3. Discover the ways that the returned exiles work together to spread the joy they've found in obeying God.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Show the “May 31<sup>st</sup> (Gr. 2-5) Bible Story – Ezra Read the Law” YouTube video at the beginning of the class.
2. **Activity #1 – Wipe Your Weeping Eyes** answers: 2, 3, and 5.

**Resources:** YouTube, “May 31<sup>st</sup> (Gr. 2-5) Bible Story – Ezra Read the Law” YouTube video by Redeemer Kids Niagara that's located at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKICl8EJ9gE>

## Prayer Builds Faith

**Lesson 7**

**April 18, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

**Focus Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

**Key Verse:** “The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building.” Nehemiah 2:20

### Word Power!!!

- **Valley Gate** – A gate in the southern corner of Jerusalem.
- **Fountain Gate** – A gate in the southeast corner of Jerusalem.
- **King’s Pool** – Most likely the pool of Siloam (pronounced *Sigh-low-um*).

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the benefits of studying a situation in private before sharing plans for how to resolve it.
2. Discover how valuing things differently can cause people to disrespect believers as they seek to repair broken places and things that connect them to God.
3. Learn that God will give them what they need to feel connected to God even if the things that help them get damaged.

### Teaching Strategies

1. To complete **Activity #1**: Split the class into three groups. Have group 1 scatter the puzzle. Have group 2 put it back together while group 3 tries to distract group 2. When the puzzle is put back together, have the whole class discuss everything that happened.
2. Show the YouTube video about Nehemiah rebuilding the wall before going over the **Using God’s Word!!!** section.

**Resources:** 300-500 piece puzzle with religious or theme; YouTube, “Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem’s Wall – Bible Story – Lifekids” video that’s located at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIxqTBIys7s>

## Restored by God's Loving-Kindness

### Lesson 8

April 25, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Lamentations 5

**Focus Scripture:** Lamentations 5:1-7, 15-21

**Key Verse:** Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old. Lamentations 5:21

### Word Power!!!

**Lament** – A poem, song, or prayer that expresses deep sorrow and an unwavering trust in God.

**Our Inheritance** – The land where the kingdoms of Judah and Israel are found.

**Iniquities** – Punishment for sinful actions.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the kinds of circumstances that might drive a believer to lament during worship.
2. Design a lament of one's own.
3. Explore why people of faith need to feel free to share their true selves with God.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Play the YouTube video of “Don’t Nobody Bring Me No Bad News” from *The Wiz Live* at the beginning of the lesson.
2. Play the YouTube video of “We Got It” from *The Wiz Live* just before reading the **Remix!!!** section.

**Resources:** YouTube, Mary J. Blige version of “Don’t Nobody Bring Me No Bad News” from *The Wiz Live* located at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ2\\_Co4VsdA&list=RDcZ2\\_Co4VsdA&start\\_radio=1&t=0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ2_Co4VsdA&list=RDcZ2_Co4VsdA&start_radio=1&t=0), “We Got It” from *The Wiz Live* located at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNfHerF\\_LV4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNfHerF_LV4)

## Truth Has Its Price

### Lesson 9

May 2, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:1-40

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Kings 22:13-14, 17-23, 26-28

**Key Verse:** Micaiah said, “As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak.” 1 Kings 22:14

### Word Power!!!

- **Micaiah (pronounced *Mi-kay-yah*)** – A prophet of God who serves in the northern kingdom of Israel.
- **Jehoshaphat (pronounced *Ja-hoe-sha-fat*)** – The king of the southern kingdom of Judah.
- **Ramoth-gilead** – A city that was supposed to be returned back to Israel three years before the lesson.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand why people of God must speak truth to power whenever they get a chance to provide God’s perspective on an issue.
2. Explore why some people in power are only willing to listen to people who agree with their decisions.
3. Discover why the king of Judah chooses to follow Ahab’s lead even though he knows God doesn’t approve.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Show the Fannie Lou Hamer Centennial Tribute YouTube video.
2. **Activity #1: You Can't Handle the Truth** answers:
  1. Israel was scattered on the mountains.
  2. These have no master, let each go home in peace.
  3. Who will entice Ahab so he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?
  4. I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets.
  5. The Lord has decreed disaster for you.

**Resources:** YouTube, Fannie Lou Hamer Centennial Tribute video located at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgM7xIkE1gc>

## God's Mercy Will Prevail

### Lesson 10

**May 9, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Isaiah 29

**Focus Scripture:** Isaiah 29:13-24

**Key Verse:** The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord, and the neediest people shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 29:19

### Word Power!!!

- **Rote** – Style of learning where people repeat things without trying to understand them; it's a robotic way of responding.
- **Discernment** – Ability to correctly detect if something or someone is right or wrong.
- **Exult** – Rejoice.
- **Scoffer** – Mockers.

### Lesson Goals

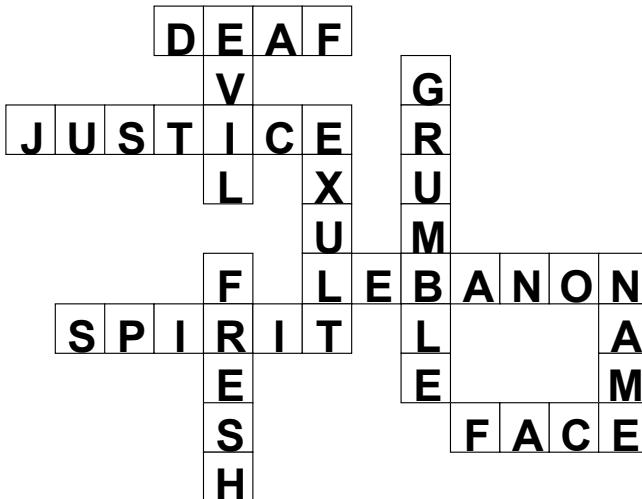
By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Learn what the world will look like as God fixes the God relationship that our and others' sin damaged.
2. Explore why God reacts so strongly to our fake worship and attempt to hide our evil plans from God.
3. Understand the dangers of losing our ability to discern what's right and wrong.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Play the section of the Shirley Caesar "I Remember Mama" YouTube video where she tells the story about playing church after reading "Getting Ready!!!."

## 2. Activity #1: Signs of Our Second Chance answers:



3. Show the YouTube video of “The Final Battle” episode from *Rapunzel’s Tangled Adventure* after reading the **Using God’s Word!!!** section.

**Resources:** YouTube, Shirley Caesar’s “I Remember Mama” YouTube video segment with the playing church story, “The Final Battle” from *Rapunzel’s Tangled Adventure* YouTube video

### Preparing for Doom

#### Lesson 11

May 16, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Jeremiah 37–38

**Focus Scripture:** Jeremiah 38:14-23

**Key Verse:** “Obey the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you.” Jeremiah 38:20

#### Word Power!!!

- **Zedekiah** – The last king of Judah; he was neither dependably good nor bad.
- **Third entrance of the temple of the Lord** – Most likely a private entrance for the king as it faced the palace.

- **Chaldeans** – Another name for the Babylonians.
- **Jeremiah** – The prophet of God whom the people and leaders considered a traitor for saying the nation would fall to Babylon during the reigns of four different kings.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Uncover why Zedekiah chooses to meet with Jeremiah secretly.
2. Understand why Jeremiah is reluctant to share the message God has given to him.
3. Learn that students can trust God to guide them when they have difficult decisions to make.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Show the YouTube video about the Prophet Jeremiah before students read the Into God's Word!!! section
2. **Activity #1: Decisions, Decisions, Decisions** answers:

<u>The Action or Speech</u>	<u>Jeremiah (J) or Zedekiah (Z)</u>
1. Swears a secret oath	Z
2. Says he'll be put to death if he answers the question	J
3. Calls a secret meeting at the third entrance of the Lord's temple	Z
4. Admits to being afraid of the Judeans who've sided with the Chaldeans	Z
5. Promises that surrendering will save lives and property	J

3. Use the scale and marbles to weigh fear of people and things versus trust in God for **Activity #2**.

**Resources:** YouTube, “Jeremiah the Prophet: Jeremiah 38 – Sunday School Lesson & Bible Study for Kids” posted

by Sharefaithkids.com located at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64GYd0\\_ALX8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64GYd0_ALX8); a scale and marbles

## A Street Preacher Says, “Repent”

### Lesson 12

May 23, 2021

**Lesson Scripture:** Ezekiel 18

**Focus Scripture:** Ezekiel 18:1-9, 30-32

**Key Verses:** Turn from all your transgressions . . . and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Ezekiel 18:30-31

### Word Power!!!

- **Proverb** – A short statement delivered in a meaningful way to teach an important belief.
- **Eat upon the mountains** – Code words for worshipping other gods.
- **Pledge** – Something a borrower gives so the other person will know they'll keep the agreement to pay back what they borrow.
- **Transgression** – A type of sin that negatively affects others.
- **Iniquity** – Sin.
- **Ezekiel (pronounced Ee-zee-key-eel)** – He's a younger prophet to the exiled members of the northern kingdom of Israel who ministers at the same time that Jeremiah ministers to the southern kingdom of Judah.

### Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the difference between being punished for someone else's actions and being negatively affected by those actions.
2. Explore why people pay more attention to other's part in the problem than their own.
3. Be able to choose to obey God for themselves instead of depending on what people who came before chose.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Either read Julia Cook's book, *But It's Not My Fault!* or play the YouTube video when class starts.
2. **Activity #1: God's Clap Back Is Solid** Answers: B. E. F.

**Resources:** Julia's Cook's *But It's Not My Fault!* and/or a YouTube video of the book being read

## Do Right by God

### Lesson 13

**May 30, 2021**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Focus Scripture:** Jonah 3

**Key Verse:** The people of Nineveh believed God. Jonah 3:5

## Word Power!!!

- **Nineveh** – The capital city of Assyria, which is the nation that wouldn't give back Ramoth-gilead in Lesson Nine.
- **Fast** – When people of faith stop doing something, like eating or drinking, to draw close to God and/or gain God's favor.
- **Covered with sackcloth** – A way of expressing deep mourning during biblical times.

## Lesson Goals

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how God offers everyone who has fallen short of God's desires a chance to do right by God.
2. Compare the king of Nineveh's response to God's prophecy to the king of Judah's response from Lesson Eleven.
3. Accept that those whom God sends out and those to whom they're sent both need to do right by God.

## Teaching Strategies

1. Help students draw comparisons between the response of the ungodly king in today's lesson and the responses of the king's thought they were leading godly nations in Lesson Nine and Lesson Eleven

2. **Activity # 1 – Did They Really Do That?** Answers: A. God  
B. People of Nineveh C. Jonah D. King of Nineveh
3. Play a YouTube video or audio recording of “Get Right With God” (AMEC Hymn #356)

**Resources:** Copies of Lesson Nine; audio recording of “Get Right With God”

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