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THE ORDER OF SERVICE

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

THE LESSON

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

THE CLOSING

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

EDITORIAL STAFF

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

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

AME Discipline

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OF FAITHFUL WITNESSES

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God's Complicated
Promise

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LESSON 1

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

THE COVENANT CONTINUES

LESSON SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 1*
FOCUS SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 1:1-11*

Key Verse: [The Lord said,] "I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." *Joshua 1:9.*

Vocabulary

Covenant (KUHV-uh-nuhnt) – A sacred agreement or promise between God and God's people.

Joshua (JOSH-oo-uh) – Moses' successor chosen by God to lead Israel into the Promised Land.

* *Promised Land* – The land God promised to Abraham and his descendants.

Courage (KUR-ij) – The ability to do what is right even when afraid.

Meditate (MED-uh-tate) – To think deeply about God's Word and apply it to daily life.

* *Moses (MOH-ziz)* – God's servant who led Israel out of Egypt and received God's Law.

Focus Scripture: JOSHUA 1:1-11

- ¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying,
- ² "My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites.
- ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses.
- ⁴ From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory.
- ⁵ No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.
- ⁶ Be strong and courageous, for you shall lead this people to possess the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them.
- ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go.
- ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful.
- ⁹ I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."
- ¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people,
- ¹¹ "Pass through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for in three days you are to cross over this Jordan, to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God gives you to possess.'"

INTRODUCTION

* * *
Change is a part of life. Students experience change when moving to a new school, joining a sports team, making new friends, or taking on new responsibilities. While change can bring excitement, it can also create fear and uncertainty.

* *
The Israelites faced a major transition after the death of Moses. For forty years, Moses had led God's people out of Egypt and through the wilderness. Now, a new leader was needed. God chose Joshua to lead the people into the land promised to their ancestors.

*
Joshua had a great responsibility before him, but God reminded him that he would not face it alone. The same God who guided Moses would also guide Joshua. God's covenant and promises continued even when leadership changed.

Discussion Question: Have you ever had to take on a new responsibility that seemed overwhelming? How did you feel?

* * * BIBLE STORY

* *
After Moses died, God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. This was a huge responsibility, and Joshua may have felt overwhelmed. To encourage him, God reminded Joshua that the promises made to Moses would continue. God assured Joshua that he would be with him every step of the way.
*

Three times God told Joshua to "be strong and courageous." Joshua's courage would not come from his own strength, but from trusting God and obeying his Word. God instructed Joshua to study the *Book of the Law*, meditate on it day and night, and live according to its teachings.

Knowing that God was with him gave Joshua the confidence to move forward. Instead of hesitating, Joshua immediately obeyed God's instructions and began preparing the people to enter the Promised Land. Joshua's example teaches us that courage means trusting God, following his guidance, and taking action even when we feel uncertain or afraid.

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think God repeatedly told Joshua to be strong and courageous?

How can trusting God help you face challenges that seem too difficult?

LIFE APPLICATION

God's command to Joshua to be strong and courageous still speaks to young people today. Students face challenges in school, friendships, family relationships, sports, social media, and future decisions. At times, these situations can feel overwhelming.

Like Joshua, we are called to trust God's presence and guidance. Courage does not mean never feeling afraid. Courage means choosing

to follow God even when circumstances are uncertain. Examples of courage today include:

- ❖ Refusing to participate in gossip or bullying.
- ❖ Making godly choices when friends pressure you to do otherwise.
- ❖ Sharing your faith respectfully with others.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church has a history rooted in courage and faith. Our founder, Richard Allen, trusted God despite discrimination and obstacles. Through faith and perseverance, he helped establish a church where all people could worship freely and with dignity.

Young people live in a rapidly changing world filled with choices and influences. Joshua's example reminds us that God's Word remains a trustworthy guide. When we spend time reading scripture and praying, we are strengthened to make wise decisions and live faithfully.

Reflection Questions:

- * What challenge are you currently facing that requires courage?
- * How can God's presence help you face that challenge?
- * What role does scripture play in helping you make decisions?

SUMMARY

Joshua's leadership began during a time of significant change for Israel. Although Moses had died, God's covenant and promises continued. God assured Joshua that he would be with him and commanded him to be strong and courageous.

Joshua's success depended on his willingness to trust God, obey God's Word, and act faithfully. Believers today are called to do the same. We can move forward with confidence because the Lord remains with us wherever we go.

Questions:

1. Who became Israel's leader after Moses died?
2. What command did God repeat to Joshua?
3. What was Joshua instructed to do with the *Book of the Law*?
4. Joshua did not wait until he felt completely ready. He heard God's instruction and immediately began preparing the people to move. Courage in this story was not the absence of fear; it was the decision to act anyway because God said go. Is there something God has been nudging you toward, a conversation you keep avoiding, a step of faith you keep delaying, a commitment you keep almost making? What would it look like to stop waiting to feel ready and take the next step today?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Review Activity:

Before our closing prayer, you will participate in a Kahoot review game based on Joshua 1:1-11. You will see questions about God's promises to Joshua, the meaning of courage, obedience to God's Word, and ways students can show courage in their daily lives.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for always being with us. Help us to be strong and courageous like Joshua.

When we face challenges or feel afraid, remind us to trust you and follow your Word. Give us the courage to do what is right and to live each day in a way that honors you. In Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON 2

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

REMEMBER GOD'S ACTIONS

LESSON SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 4*FOCUS SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 4:14-24*

Key Verses: "When your children ask their parents in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, 'Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground.'" *Joshua 4:21b-22*

Vocabulary

Memorial (muh-MOR-ee-uhl) - Something created to help people remember an important event.

Jordan River (JOR-dun) - The river the Israelites crossed to enter the Promised Land.

Legacy (LEG-uh-see) - Something important that is passed down from one generation to the next.

Faithfulness (FAITH-fuhl-nuhs) - God's constant love, care, and commitment to his people.

Testimony (TES-tuh-moh-nee) - A story or witness about what God has done.

Focus Scripture: JOSHUA 4:14-24

¹⁴ On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him, as they had stood in awe of Moses all the days of his life.

¹⁵ The Lord said to Joshua,

¹⁶ "Command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant to come up out of the Jordan."

¹⁷ Joshua therefore commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan."

¹⁸ When the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up from the middle of the Jordan and the soles of the priests' feet touched dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

¹⁹ The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month,

and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.

²⁰ Those twelve stones that they had taken out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal,

²¹ saying to the Israelites, "When your children ask their parents in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?'

²² then you shall let your children know, 'Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground.'

²³ For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we crossed over,

²⁴ so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty and so that you may fear the Lord your God forever."

INTRODUCTION

- * Families often have traditions, stories, photographs, or special items
- * that remind them of important moments in their lives. These memories help us remember where we came from and what we value.

* In today's lesson, God instructed the Israelites to build a memorial using twelve stones taken from the Jordan River. These stones would

help future generations remember how God brought his people safely into the Promised Land.

Just as the Israelites remembered God's faithfulness, we are called to remember and share the ways God has worked in our lives and in our families.

Discussion Question: What is something your family keeps that reminds you of an important event or memory?

BIBLE STORY

After the Israelites crossed the Jordan River on dry ground, God instructed Joshua to set up twelve stones as a memorial. These stones were not just a pile of rocks. They were a reminder of God's power and faithfulness.

God knew that one day children would see the stones and ask, "What do these stones mean?" When that happened, parents were to tell the story of how God stopped the waters of the Jordan River so the people could cross safely into the Promised Land.

The memorial stones helped each generation remember what God had done. They also reminded the people that God's power was greater than any obstacle they faced. By sharing these stories, families passed their faith from one generation to the next.

Today, we may not build stone memorials, but we can remember God's actions through family stories, testimonies, worship, prayer, and scripture. When we share what God has done, we help others grow in faith.

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think God wanted the Israelites to remember this event?

How can sharing stories about God's faithfulness strengthen future generations?

LIFE APPLICATION

Remembering God's actions is important because it helps us trust him in the present and future. When we remember how God has helped us through difficult situations, we gain confidence that he will continue to guide us.

Family legacies are not just about money, possessions, or achievements. A strong legacy includes faith, values, and stories about God's goodness. Parents, grandparents, church members, and mentors often share experiences that teach younger generations how God has worked in their lives.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church has a rich legacy of faith and perseverance. Early AME members faced challenges and discrimination, yet they trusted God and remained faithful. Their stories

continue to inspire us today and remind us that God's faithfulness extends from one generation to another.

In a world where people quickly move on from important experiences, this lesson reminds us to pause and remember. We honor God when we tell others about his blessings, his guidance, and his faithfulness.

Reflection Questions:

What story about God's faithfulness would you like future generations to remember?

How can you help pass on your faith to others?

What has God done in your life that you should not forget?

SUMMARY

God instructed Joshua to build a memorial so future generations would remember how he helped the Israelites cross the Jordan River. The twelve stones served as a reminder of God's power, faithfulness, and provision.

Today, believers continue to remember God's actions by sharing testimonies, reading scripture, worshiping, and telling stories of faith. When we remember what God has done, our faith grows stronger, and we encourage others to trust him as well.

Questions:

1. What memorial did Joshua set up after crossing the Jordan River?
2. Why did God want the people to remember this event?
3. What were parents supposed to tell their children about the stones?
4. Is there a younger sibling, a cousin, a kid you mentor, or someone newer to faith who needs to hear what God has done? What is one story you could tell them this week that might become a stone of remembrance in their own life?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Review Activity:

Before you pray, you will participate in a Kahoot review game based on Joshua 4:14-24. There will be questions about the twelve memorial stones, God's faithfulness, family legacies, and ways we can remember and share God's actions today.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for your faithfulness in every generation. Help us remember the great things you have done and give us the courage to share our faith with others. May our lives be a testimony of your love and goodness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LESSON 3

SEPTEMBER 20, 2026

GOD'S COMPLICATED PROMISE

LESSON SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 6; 8:26; 10:28-43; 11:1-23;*
Deuteronomy 7:1-26
 FOCUS SCRIPTURE: *Joshua 11:6-9, 16-23*

Key Verse: *It was the Lord's doing to harden their hearts so that they would come against Israel in battle, in order that they might be utterly destroyed and might receive no mercy but be exterminated, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Joshua 11:20*

Vocabulary

Promise (PROM-is) – A commitment or pledge that someone intends to keep.

Canaan (KAY-nuhn) – The land God promised to give to the Israelites.

Obedience (oh-BEE-dee-uhns) – Following God's instructions and commands.

Nation (NAY-shun) – A group of people living under one government or ruling authority.

Justice (JUS-tis) – Fairness and righteousness according to God's standards.

Focus Scripture: JOSHUA 11:6-9, 16-23

JOSHUA 11:6-9

⁶ And the Lord said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will hand over all of them, slain, to Israel; you shall hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire."

⁷ So Joshua came suddenly upon them with all his fighting force, by the waters of Merom, and fell upon them.

⁸ And the Lord handed them over to Israel, who attacked them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-maim and eastward as far as the valley of Mizpeh. They struck them down until they had left no one remaining.

⁹ And Joshua did to them as the Lord had commanded him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire.

11:16-23

¹⁶ So Joshua took all that land: the hill country and all the Negeb and all the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and its lowland,

¹⁷ from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He took all their kings, struck them down, and put them to death.

¹⁸ Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.

¹⁹ There was not a town that made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all were taken in battle.

²⁰ For it was the Lord's doing to harden their hearts so that they would come against Israel in battle, in order that they might be utterly destroyed and might receive no mercy but be exterminated, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

²¹ At that time Joshua came and wiped out the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their towns.

²² None of the Anakim was left in the land of the Israelites; some remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod.

²³ So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord had spoken to Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

INTRODUCTION

Some parts of the Bible can be difficult to understand. We often enjoy reading stories about God's love, mercy, and forgiveness, but there are also passages that describe battles, judgment, and difficult decisions.

In today's lesson, the Israelites continue their conquest of the Promised Land. God had promised this land to his people, but many nations already lived there. As Israel entered the land, conflicts and battles followed. These events can raise questions about God's justice, human choices, and the consequences of disobedience.

As we study this lesson, we should remember that God is both loving and just. Even when we do not fully understand his actions, we can trust his wisdom and his faithfulness.

Discussion Question: Have you ever faced a situation that seemed unfair or difficult to understand? How did you respond?

BIBLE STORY

As Israel entered the Promised Land, many kings and nations joined together to fight against them. The Israelites were greatly outnumbered, but God told Joshua not to be afraid because he would give Israel victory.

Joshua obeyed God's instructions and trusted God's promise. Even though the enemy had large armies, horses, and chariots, God helped

Israel defeat them. Joshua and the Israelites continued their campaigns throughout the land until they had gained control of the territory God had promised them.

One challenging part of this story is that God allowed judgment to come upon the nations living in Canaan. These nations had continually rejected God's ways and practiced evil for many generations. The conquest was not simply about land; it was also about God's justice and his plan for his people.

Joshua remained faithful and obedient throughout the process. Because they trusted in God, the Israelites received the land God had promised their ancestors.

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think God repeatedly told Joshua not to be afraid?

What can we learn from Joshua's obedience even when the situation was difficult?

LIFE APPLICATION

This lesson reminds us that following God is not always easy. Sometimes we encounter situations that are difficult to understand or challenges that seem overwhelming. Like Joshua, we must learn to trust God even when we do not have all the answers.

Young people face battles today that may not involve armies, but they still require faith and courage. These battles may include peer pressure, bullying, dishonesty, temptation, or standing up for what is right.

God calls us to trust him and remain faithful. While we may not understand every part of God's plan, we can be confident that God is just, loving, and worthy of our trust.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church has often faced challenges that seemed impossible. Through faith, prayer, and perseverance, AME believers trusted God during difficult times and worked for justice, freedom, and human dignity. Their example reminds us that faithfulness sometimes requires courage and persistence.

Rather than fighting against people, Christians today are called to fight against injustice, hatred, and sin by living according to God's Word and sharing Christ's love with others.

Reflection Questions:

What challenge are you facing that requires trust in God?

How can faith help you respond to difficult situations?

What does obedience look like in your daily life?

SUMMARY

Joshua led Israel through difficult battles as they entered the Promised Land. Although the challenges were great, God remained faithful to his promise and gave Israel victory. Joshua's success came from trusting God and obeying his commands.

This lesson reminds us that God's plans are sometimes difficult to understand, but we can trust his wisdom and faithfulness. When we face challenges, we can follow Joshua's example by choosing faith, courage, and obedience.

Questions:

1. Who led the Israelites into battle?
2. What did God repeatedly tell Joshua?
3. Why was Joshua successful in accomplishing God's mission?
4. Joshua's mission was long, difficult, and required staying faithful through multiple campaigns, not just one dramatic moment. A lot of us can show up for the big, visible challenges. The harder test is staying obedient and focused when the work is slow, unglamorous, and nobody is watching. What is a commitment, a calling, or a responsibility in your life right now that requires that kind of long-haul faithfulness? What is threatening to make you quit, and what would it look like to keep going anyway?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

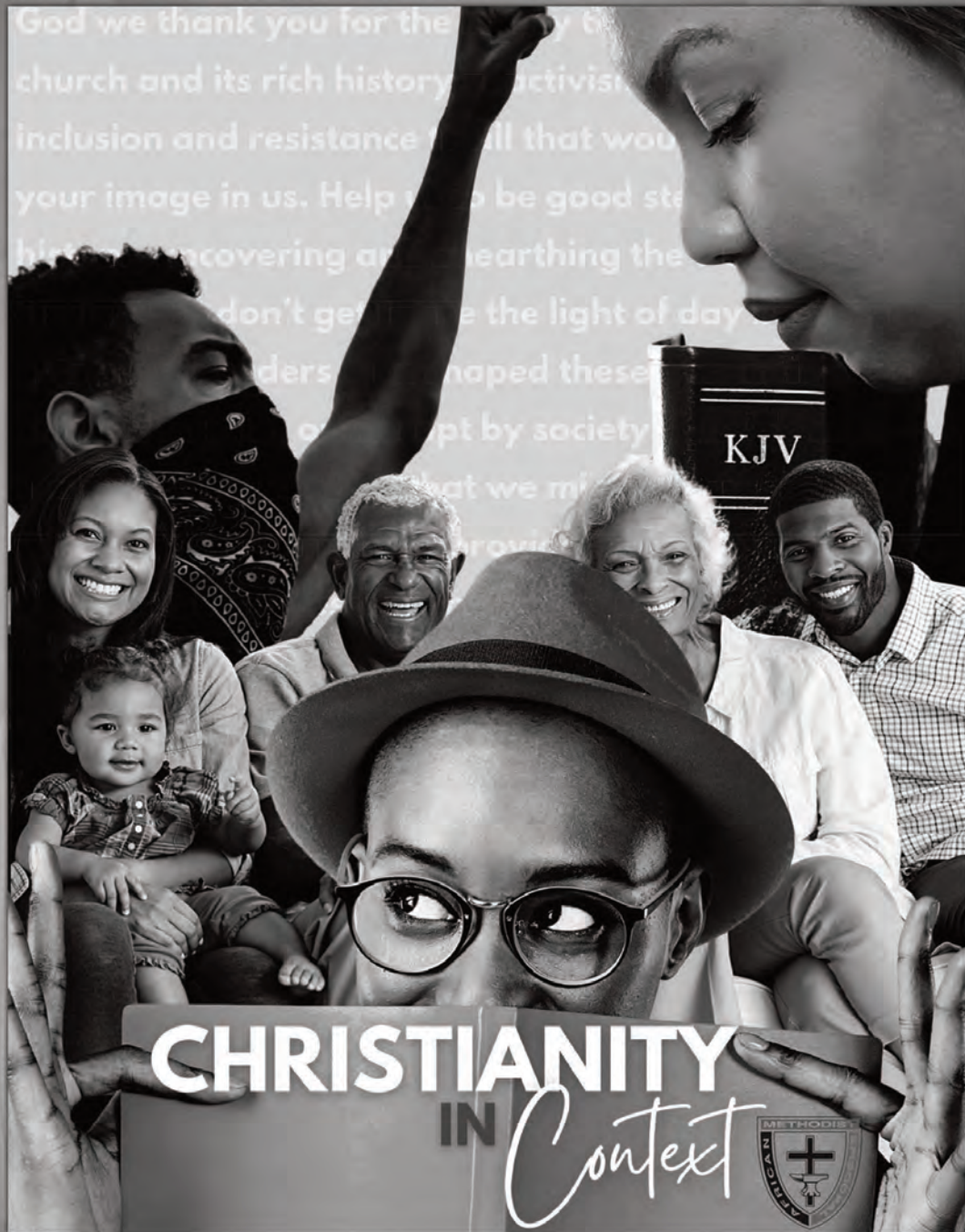
Review Activity

Before you pray, you will participate in a Kahoot review game based on Joshua 11:6-9 and 16-23. You will see questions about God's promise to Israel, Joshua's obedience, trusting God during difficult situations, and how faith helps us face challenges today.

PRAYER: *Dear God, thank you for being faithful to Your promises. Help us trust you even when we do not understand everything that happens around us. Give us courage to obey you, wisdom to make good choices, and faith to follow you each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



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