

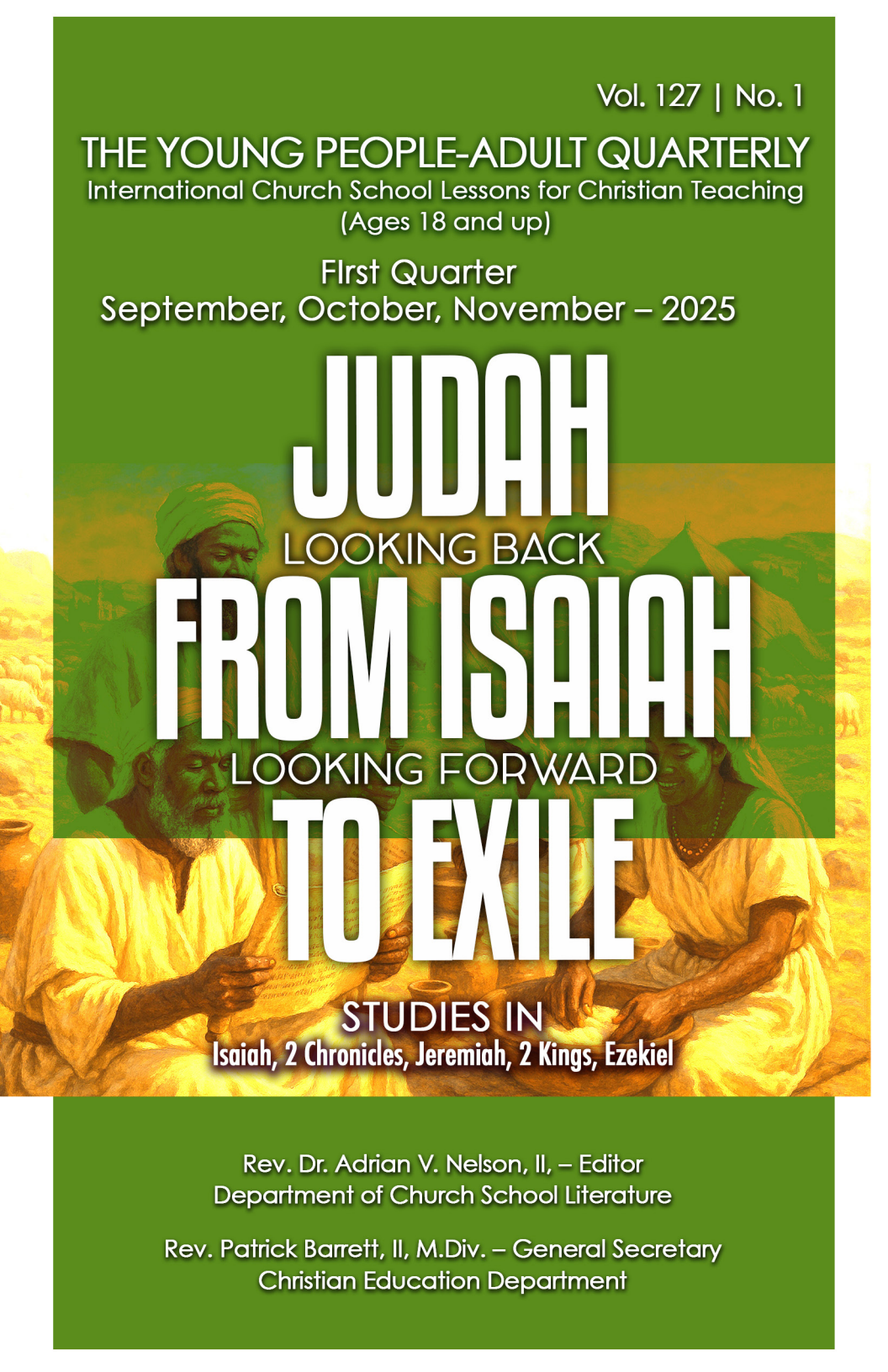
Vol. 127 | No. 1

THE YOUNG PEOPLE-ADULT QUARTERLY

International Church School Lessons for Christian Teaching
(Ages 18 and up)

First Quarter

September, October, November – 2025



JUDAH LOOKING BACK FROM ISAIAH LOOKING FORWARD TO EXILE

STUDIES IN
Isaiah, 2 Chronicles, Jeremiah, 2 Kings, Ezekiel

Rev. Dr. Adrian V. Nelson, II, – Editor
Department of Church School Literature

Rev. Patrick Barrett, II, M.Div. – General Secretary
Christian Education Department

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- ⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father
which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
- ¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is
in heaven.
- ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.
- ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
- ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
glory, for ever. Amen."

Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)

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 Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under the Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: The third day He rose 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 Ghost; The holy, catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting.

Amen.

**catholic means universal*



September, October, November 2025

WORSHIP PROGRAM

MUSICAL PRELUDE

September: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #80, or "Faithful Is Our God," by Hezekiah Walker,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTqIBTZix5w>.

October: "O God Our Help In Ages Past," AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #81, or "Trust in God," by Mark Gutierrez,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_iob6lOUOI.

November: "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah," AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #82, or "Grateful," by Hezekiah Walker,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEOW-kQyz6A>.

CALL TO WORSHIP

September: Led by the Sunday School Superintendent (1st Sunday); a clergy person (2nd Sunday); the Christian Education Director (3rd Sunday); and a missionary (4th Sunday).

Leader: "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream." (Psalm 126:1 NRSV)

All: "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things from them." (Psalm 126:2 NRSV)

October: Led by the pastor or a minister (1st Sunday); a senior (2nd Sunday); a lay person (3rd Sunday); and a youth (4th Sunday).

Leader: "The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced."
(Psalm 126:3 NRSV)

All: "Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in Negeb."
(Psalm 126:4 NRSV)

November: Led by a girl (1st Sunday); a boy (2nd Sunday); a woman (3rd Sunday); a man (4th Sunday); and a senior (5th Sunday).

Leader: "May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy." (Psalm 126:5 NRSV)

All: "Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves." (Psalm 126:6 NRSV)

CHORAL INVOCATION

(Sung Corporately)

"He Is Lord,"

(AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #689)

MORNING HYMN

September: "This Is the Day," (AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #42)

October: "To God Be the Glory," (AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #50)

November: "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" (AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal, #243)

RESPONSIVE READING

Jeremiah 31:1-6 NRSV

Leader: At that time, says the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

People: Thus says the Lord: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away.

Leader: I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

People: Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merry makers.

Leader: Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant, and shall enjoy the fruit.

All: For there shall be a day when sentinels will call in the hill country of Ephraim: "Come, let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God."

RALLY SONG

"Praise Him,"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtvBvVLU2v8>,
by Anthony Brown & Fellowship Chorale.

STUDY PERIOD

Learners study the lessons in their classes.

CLOSING ASSEMBLY

Class members will commit and dedicate themselves to discovering and appreciating how God gives us help and guidance so that we may come to see the hand of God in our own lives and all human affairs.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BENEDICTION

Sunday school is over for another day. Hear us, Heavenly Father, as to Thee we pray. Through the week be with us in our work and play; Make us kind and loving, help us to obey.

Amen.



ADULT UNIT I: Isaiah and the Renewal of the Temple
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Ministry of Isaiah
ADULT TOPIC: Here I Am! What Now?

LESSON 1

DATE: September 7, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 6:1-13; 7:1-7; 20:1-6; 38:1-22

PRINT PASSAGES: Isaiah 6:1-8; 38:1-5

Home Daily Bible Reading

Sept. 1	M	Mark 1:1-8	<i>God Sends a Messenger</i>
Sept. 2	T	Isaiah 7:1-7	<i>God Defends the Chosen People</i>
Sept. 3	W	Isaiah 20:1-6	<i>God Warns of Coming Disaster</i>
Sept. 4	Th	Matthew 11:1-6	<i>God Fulfills God's Promises</i>
Sept. 5	F	Matthew 11:7-15	<i>God Works through Unexpected Vessels</i>
Sept. 6	Sa	Psalms 145:1-12	<i>God Is Gracious and Merciful</i>
Sept. 7	Su	Isaiah 6:1-8; 38:1-5	<i>God Strengthens Those God Calls</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” #81 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Isaiah 6:1-8; 38:1-5 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

A Vision of God in the Temple

¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

Hezekiah’s Illness

¹ In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.”

² Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord: ³ “Remember now, O Lord, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart and have done what is good in your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

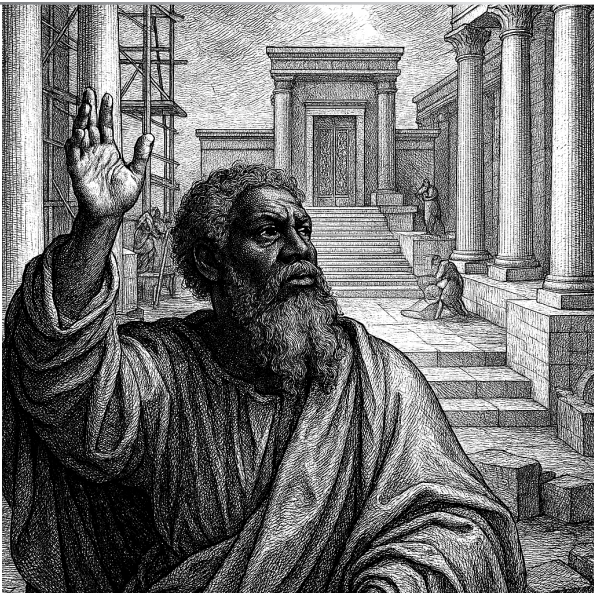
⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: ⁵ “Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life.

Affirmation – In the face of a crisis, if God sends me, I will work to stabilize my nation and/or community. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

The fall quarter invites us to discover and appreciate how God, through prophets and other leaders, gave help and guidance to the people of Judah so that we may come to see the hand of God in our own lives and all human affairs.

More specifically, Unit I, entitled “Isaiah and the Renewal of the Temple,” offers four lessons that recount the theological reasons for the decline of Israel seen mainly



through the prophetic ministry of Isaiah and two faithful kings. The Book of Isaiah is introduced, giving an overview of the prophet's call and the substance of his witness. The traditional delineation of First and Second (and Third) Isaiah helps frame the breadth of his influence in preexilic Jerusalem and in exilic Babylon. While most kings of Israel and Judah earn bad grades from the writers of Kings and Chronicles, two seventh-century kings of Judah are highlighted—Hezekiah and Josiah: the first, a passionate worshipper of YHWH, and the second, a by-the-book strategist. Both kings reformed Jerusalem's religion and removed idol worship. Second (and Third) Isaiah helps frame the breadth of his influence in preexilic Jerusalem and exilic Babylon.



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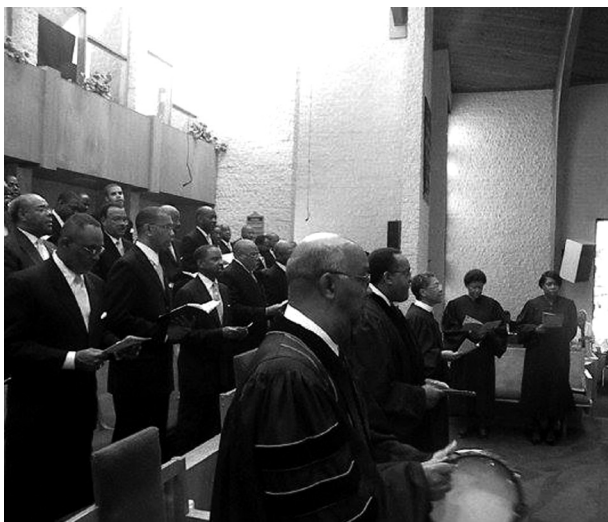
An idiom often heard, "Speak truth to power" does not specify whose truth? People that God chooses to carry his messages must hear from God and say exactly and accurately what God says. God's messengers may have inexplainable visions and glimpses of the Lord. While these visualizations magnify God's awesomeness, they are not given for one's own enjoyment or enlightenment. Instead, what matters most is that whatever message God gives you to say, you deliver it. Isaiah did this – he gave warnings, good news, and judgements because God's spirit was on him. Some questions to consider: 1. God's spirit lives in you, so what is it God is directing you to say? 2. In what ways is God speaking to his people today?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Isaiah 6:1-8: Isaiah believes this part of his prophecy happened during the time of King Uzziah's death. Some scholars think the events in Isaiah 6 happened before events in the first five chapters because it talks about Isaiah's call. The same year Uzziah, Judah's king, died, Isaiah says he saw the Lord. Uzziah was a good king, but his successes made him want to do things his

own way instead of following God's rules. Uzziah burned incense in the Temple - that was the priest's job. For this act, Uzziah was struck with leprosy, which he had until he died. Ironically, it was in the same temple where Uzziah sinned, that Isaiah saw God's glory. What Uzziah could not see with his natural eyes, Isaiah's spiritual eyes described in detail. Isaiah saw the Lord wearing a royal robe (about 180 feet long) so big that it filled Solomon's Temple. And seraphim, six-winged creatures with four faces, kept worshiping God. They repeatedly said, "Holy, holy, holy." This three-word phrase, called the trihagion in Judaism, means that God is completely holy. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). The seraphim's declaration of God's holiness was so powerful that the temple doors shook, and smoke filled the Temple because of the Lord's glory. After seeing God's incredible power, Isaiah realized how small and sinful he was. Isaiah admitted that his words were dirty. An angel with a burning coal from God's altar had the cure Isaiah needed. The burning coal purified Isaiah's speech. Now free from sin, Isaiah answered God's question, "Who will go for me?" with a "Yes!" So, God sent Isaiah to tell Israel to turn away from their sins. This dangerous mission, according to Jewish tradition, eventually led to Isaiah's death.

Isaiah 38:1-5: Hezekiah was a good king who did what was right in God's sight (2 Chronicles 29:2). Under his leadership, the priest and Levites cleansed and repaired the Temple. Aware that Judah's ancestors failed to follow the covenant and that these treacherous actions led to God's anger, Hezekiah renewed ritual worship. Priests offered purification and burnt offerings, and the Levites played cymbals, harps, and lyres based on directions given by Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet (2 Chronicles 29:25). And Hezekiah directed the Levites to sing praises. Going a step further, Hezekiah decided to reinstitute the Pass-over celebration for all of Israel. The celebration was so large there were not enough sanctified priests to present the burnt offerings. After the Passover, Judah continued to destroy idols. Priests and Levites were restored to their sacred duties, and offerings were made to the Lord. Despite all of Hezekiah's devotion and religious reforms, God allowed Sennacherib, king of Assyria, to invade Judah. Hezekiah



listened to wise counsel. He stopped the waters from flowing outside of Judah, rebuilt defense walls and towers, and appointed military officials. Convinced of God's protection, Hezekiah told the people to be strong, steadfast, and fearless. Sennacherib sent messengers to taunt Judah and instill fear; they spoke against God. Hezekiah and Isaiah led the nation in prayer and desperate pleas to God. God responded by sending an angel who destroyed the Assyrian army that was poised to attack Judah. Given Hezekiah's devotion to God and fidelity to the covenant, it seems surprising that Hezekiah became fatally ill. God told Hezekiah through Isaiah, 'Set your house in order, for you are going to die and not live' (2 Kings 20:1b NASB). But true to previous interactions with God, Hezekiah cried out in prayer, "Please, Lord, just remember how I have walked before You wholeheartedly and in truth and have done what is good in Your sight!" (2 Kings 20:3 NASB). Hearing Hezekiah's prayer, God directed Isaiah to return to the king's chamber and tell him, "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I am going to heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. And I will add fifteen years to your life (2 Kings 20:5b-6a NASB). During this 15-year extended life period, Hezekiah became the father of his successor-- a son-- Manasseh, an evil king who undid his father's reforms and restored idol worship.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Prophetic voices still speak long past the life of the person who uttered the words. Isaiah dates the time of his prophecy to the sixth century BC. His words are still read, memorized, and shared to this day. Looking back on Isaiah's words reminds us of God's power over life and death.

What would you do if you knew exactly how much longer you would live? Why do you think children develop different religious beliefs than their parents? Can you identify at least one thing you have said that will resonate with your children or others after you have passed on?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. What prophetic voices exist today? (This is not future telling. Israel's prophets speak to the people about God and to God about the people)
2. How do you envision God?
3. Where did you see Jesus in this lesson?
4. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" Isaiah 6:8

ADULT UNIT I: Isaiah and the Renewal of the Temple
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Hezekiah Leads the People
Back to God
ADULT TOPIC: Celebrating the Past

LESSON 2
DATE: September 14, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 1
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 2 Chronicles 30:1-27
PRINT PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 30:1-9, 26-27

Home Daily Bible Reading

Sept. 8	M	Psalm 145:13-21	<i>An Everlasting Kingdom</i>
Sept. 9	T	Matthew 3:4-12	<i>A Call to Bear Good Fruit</i>
Sept. 10	W	Acts 3:12-20	<i>A Summons to Repent</i>
Sept. 11	Th	James 5:12-18	<i>A Ministry of Care and Comfort</i>
Sept. 12	F	Exodus 12:3-14	<i>A Feast of Remembrance</i>
Sept. 13	Sa	Deuteronomy 12:5-12	<i>A Dwelling for God's Name</i>
Sept. 14	Su	2 Chronicles 30:1-9, 26-27	<i>An Act of Repentance and Renewal</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – *“I Am Thine O Lord”* - #433 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – 2 Chronicles 30:1-9, 26-27 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

The Great Passover

¹ Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the Lord the God of Israel. ² For the king and his officials and all the assembly in Jerusalem had taken counsel to keep the Passover in the second month ³ (for they could not keep it at its proper time because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem). ⁴ The plan seemed right to the king and all the assembly. ⁵ So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the Passover to the Lord the God

of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not kept it in great numbers as prescribed. ⁶ So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials, as the king had commanded, saying, “O people of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷ Do not be like your ancestors and your kindred, who were faithless to the Lord God of their ancestors, so that he made them a desolation, as you see. ⁸ Do not now be stiff-necked as your ancestors were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve the Lord your God, so that his fierce anger may turn away from you. ⁹ For as you return to the Lord, your kindred and your children will find compassion with their captors and return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him.”

²⁶ There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of King David of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. ²⁷ Then the priests and the Levites stood up and blessed the people, and their voice was heard; their prayer came to his holy dwelling in heaven.

Affirmation – In times of instability, I will encourage others to make worship a priority. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

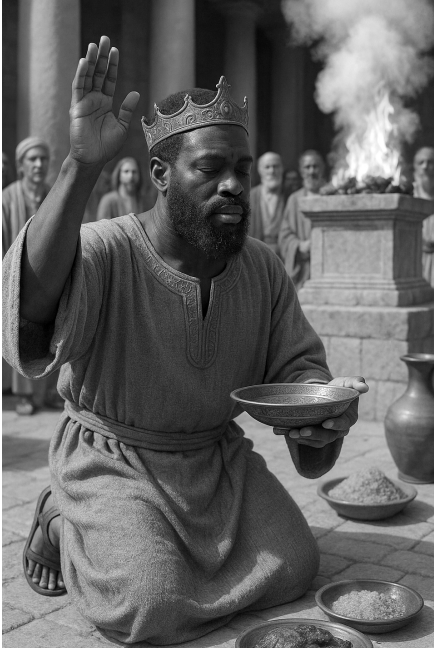
ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Celebrations have significance. The church calendar has seasons, i.e., Advent, Lent, and Pentecost. Each year, Christians have the opportunity to remember what God has done, is doing, and will do in building the Lord’s kingdom. Too often, like Israel, God’s holidays have lost their significance. Christmas trees, wreaths, and gifts, Easter eggs and baskets, and for some turkey, gravy, and cranberry sauce have shifted the focus from God to things. Hezekiah reminds us of the need for reform. Our Christian festivals should serve as reminders that we should praise and thank God. 1. What is your favorite holiday? Why is it your favorite. 2. What, if anything, would your reform about your favorite holiday to make it more meaningful?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

2 Chronicles 30:1-9: When Hezekiah was twenty-five, he became Judah’s, the southern kingdom’s king. Unlike Ahaz, his father, Hezekiah, was not a wicked king. Maybe Hezekiah’s remembrance of his father’s deeds, and the consequences (continued Assyrian attacks against Judah) that followed, led him to

act differently. In the letter he wrote inviting all Israel to the Passover he says, ""Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were unfaithful to the Lord God of their fathers, so that He made them a horror, as you see. Now, do not stiffen your neck like your fathers, but yield to the Lord and enter His sanctuary, which He has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, that His burning anger may turn away from you (2 Chronicle 30:7-8). Under Ahaz' rule, the Jerusalem temple was remodeled to resemble the Damascus temple in Assyria (2 Kings 16:10-20). Once the remodeled Temple was complete, Ahaz



had offered burnt, grain, drink, and fellowship offerings. He had ordered Uriah, the priest to offer everyone's offering on that newly created pagan altar; and Ahaz relegated the Lords' altar to a lesser place. Not only did Hezekiah have his father's example, but he also saw what had happened to the northern kingdom. In 722 BC, the Assyrians defeated the northern kingdom, demolishing their cities and deporting the people (2 Kings 17). These examples from Ahaz's reign greatly influenced Hezekiah, resulting in his religious reforms. Hezekiah knew disobedience's cost, so Hezekiah's reforms began upon his ascendancy to the throne.

Extensive changes were required. After cleansing the Temple, Hezekiah wanted all

the Israelites, including those left in the Northern Kingdom following its captivity, to rededicate themselves to Yahweh (2 Chronicles 30:1-9). Hezekiah issued a decree proclaiming that Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan (i.e., all of Israel 1 Samuel 3:20) should come to Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover. Not only did people living in Judah come, but many came from Israel, the northern kingdom that had been destroyed by Assyria. Many in Israel had no interest in doing this (2 Chronicles 30:10), but some responded positively, as did many of the people in Judah. It was impossible to complete the cleansing of the temple until the fourteenth day of the first month (2 Chronicles 29:17). It was, therefore, decided to defer the Passover celebration to the 14th day of the second month. This postponement allowed time for the priests to purify themselves, and for the Passover festival's proclamation to be made throughout all Israel.

This wonderful invitation from Hezekiah is a remarkable testimony. It came following the fall of the Northern Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C., a disaster that

Hezekiah attributed to their forsaking the true worship of God in Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 30: 26-27: Solomon's Passover celebration had set a high standard. Hezekiah's decreed Passover reminded the people that joy results from remembering the Exodus – remembering how God set them free from bondage. Hezekiah left a legacy. After the Passover, Judah continued reform efforts that involved destroying idols – restoring priests and Levites to their sacred duties, -- making offerings and giving sacrifices to the Lord. Priests prayed God's special favor over Israel. And their prayers -- reached heaven, God's dwelling place. Cleansing the temple, annihilating idols, decreeing a Passover celebration proved much easier than changing people's hearts and minds. Sadly, Hezekiah despite all of his reforms could not save Israel from destruction (Jeremiah 26:18-19). According to the Biblical record, God who knew Hezekiah best, says, "He (Hezekiah) trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel; and after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those who came before him" (2 Kings 18:5).

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

God instituted annual religious festivals for Israel. During these celebrations Israel would remember the Exodus or thank God for provision (deliverance) and guidance (journey to the promise land). Although the Passover had not been celebrated in many years, after Hezekiah's religious reforms, the southern and northern kingdoms joined in the Passover festival. 1. For you, what is the significance of the Lord's Supper? 2. Is there a way that you can make the Lord's Supper more significant for you and others? 3. What is the purpose of baptism? 4. What significance should baptism have in a Christian community of faith?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. What special days does the church celebrate? How important is it to participate in these celebrations?
2. What celebrations remind Christians of the freedom Jesus offers? (so, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed, John 8:36)
3. Why do you think after praise and worship celebrations people turn from God?
4. Where do you see Jesus in today's lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of King David of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles 30:26

ADULT UNIT I: Isaiah and the Renewal of the Temple
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: What Hilkiah Found in the Temple
ADULT TOPIC: Finders Keepers!

LESSON 3
DATE: September 21, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Romans 7:7-12
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 2 Chronicles 33:1-33
PRINT PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 34:15-22, 26-27

Home Daily Bible Reading

Sept. 15	M	Matthew 22:36-40	The Command to Love
Sept. 16	T	Romans 2:9-16	Keep God's Laws and Do Good
Sept. 17	W	Deuteronomy 30:1-10	Promised Restoration
Sept. 18	Th	Deut. 30:11-21	Choose Life
Sept. 19	F	Hebrews 1:13-2:4	A Greater Message
Sept. 20	Sa	Matthew 13:44-52	Hidden Treasure
Sept. 21	Su	2 Chron. 34:15-22, 26-27	Sorrow Leads to Joy

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” - #80 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – 2 Chronicles 34:15-22, 26-27 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

¹⁵ Hilkiah said to the secretary Shaphan, “I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord,” and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. ¹⁶ Shaphan brought the book to the king and further reported to the king, “All that was committed to your servants they are doing. ¹⁷ They have emptied out the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workers.” ¹⁸ The secretary Shaphan informed the king, “The priest Hilkiah has given me a book.” Shaphan then read it aloud to the king.

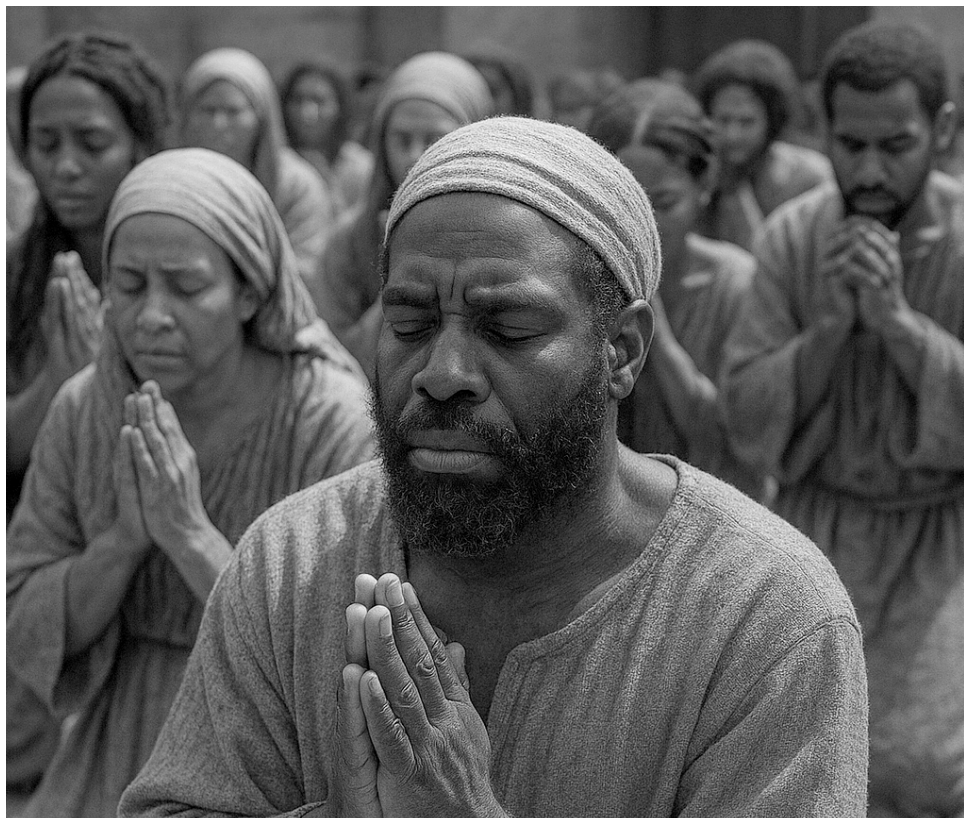
¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes. ²⁰ Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, the secretary Shaphan, and the king’s servant Asaiah, ²¹ “Go, inquire

of the Lord for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found, for the wrath of the Lord that is poured out on us is great, because our ancestors did not keep the word of the Lord, to act in accordance with all that is written in this book.”

The Prophet Huldah Consulted

²² So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent went to the prophet Huldah, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (who lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter) and spoke to her to that effect.

²⁶ But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall you say to him: Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Regarding the words that you have heard, ²⁷ because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the Lord.



Affirmation – In uncertain times, I will share with others reasons why worship is necessary. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

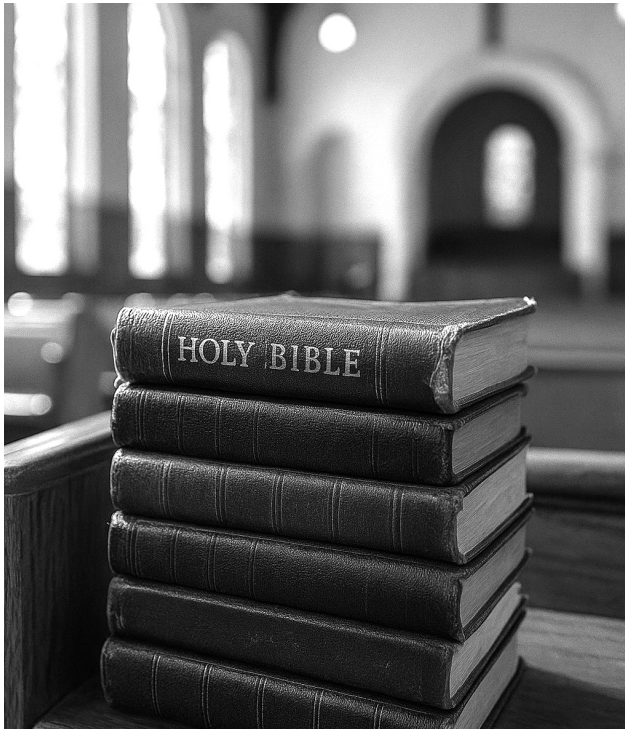
Age does not determine a person's commitment to following God. And age does not decide if a person can lead others in worship and spiritual revival. To quote the Lord in Jeremiah's call, "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak. (Jeremiah 1:7) Josiah gives an example that God calls whoever is needed whenever that person is needed – and that is not age dependent. Questions to consider: 1. Does anything hinder you from speaking God's word? If so, what? 2. How can we free ourselves of demographic constraints that keep us from speaking what 'thus sayeth the Lord'?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

2 Chronicles 34:15-22, 26-27: Josiah, Amon's son and Manasseh's grandson, unlike his fathers, did what was right in God's eyes (2 Kings 22:1). He sought God. During the 18th year of his reign, he ordered restoration of the Temple. Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant, often led by idolatrous kings, resulted in neglect of the temple. Funds were raised for materials placed in the Temple such as timber and stone to repair roofs and wall openings. According to 2 Chronicles 34:11, the carpenters and the builders received these monies to purchase whatever was needed to repair the Temple. Sometime during the repair work, Hilkiah found the Book of the Law. Whether Hilkiah found the Torah or just one book, remains unclear. Also unclear is how Moses' Book of the Law was misplaced. Whatever scroll or scroll portions were discovered or when the lost occurred matters little compared to unearthing this incredible find.

Shaphan, the scribe, told King Josiah the Book of the Law was found. Before reading the book, Shaphan gave an account of the workers' progress -- they were faithful completing all assigned tasks. After being given an account of the work, Josiah then listened as Shaphan read the scroll aloud. Convicted of God's anger due to Israel's sin, Josiah tore his clothes (a sign of grief and repentance). His grief may be related to the command in Deuteronomy 17:18-20, "When he (the king) sits on the throne as king, he must copy for himself this body of instruction on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. He must always keep that copy with him and read it daily as long as he lives. That way he will learn to fear the Lord his God by obeying all the terms of these instructions and decrees. This regular reading will prevent him from becoming proud and acting

as if he is above his fellow citizens. It will also prevent him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way. And it will ensure that he and his descendants will reign for many generations in Israel.” Directed by Josiah, Hilkiah led a five-person delegation to inquire of Huldah (female prophet). Huldah told of Judah’s impending doom. Because of their idolatry, God’s anger could not be extinguished. However, the good news for Josiah, his humility and repentance would spare him from God’s anger. Josiah would not see Judah’s calamity, instead he would go to his grave in peace.



ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Josiah, the descendant of evil kings, became Judah’s king when he was eight years old. Ten years later after the discovery of the law of Moses, at the age of 18, Josiah led the nation in religious reform. Because of his devotion to the Torah and fidelity to God, Josiah did not see Judah’s demise and the Temple’s destruction. 1. How does your church maintain its building? 2. Where are Bibles kept in your church? 3. What does Josiah’s kingship teach us about young people’s role as leaders?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. In this age of electronics, what is the role of hard-copy Bibles?
2. How long are you willing to listen to Bible readings?
3. What value is there in reading the Bible aloud?

KEY VERSE: Hilkiah said to the secretary Shaphan, “I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord”; and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. 2 Chronicles 34:15

ADULT UNIT I: Isaiah and the Renewal of the Temple
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Suffering Servant of the Lord
ADULT TOPIC: How Do You Spell "Relief"?

LESSON 4
DATE: September 28, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 12:14-21
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 52:13-53:12
PRINT PASSAGE: Isaiah 53:1-7

Home Daily Bible Reading

Sept. 22	M	Philippians 2:5-10	<i>The Humble Servant Exalted by God</i>
Sept. 23	T	Isaiah 42:1-7	<i>The Faithful Servant</i>
Sept. 24	W	Acts 2:25-31	<i>The Resurrected and Glorified Servant</i>
Sept. 25	Th	Acts 13:44-49	<i>A Light for the World</i>
Sept. 26	F	Psalms 84	<i>A Doorkeeper in God's House</i>
Sept. 27	Sa	Isaiah 50:4-9	<i>God's Servant Obeys</i>
Sept. 28	Su	Isaiah 53:1-7	<i>The Suffering Servant</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “The Lord Is My Shepherd” - #74 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Isaiah 53:1-7 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

¹ Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? ² For he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity, and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.

⁴ Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases, yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵ 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.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Affirmation – Yes, at times we mess up! But when we “fess” up, God is faithful to forgive us and God will still bless us. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

The promised Messiah’s return can seem far off. How long before Jesus returns is not an issue. What does matter is that the Messiah will return. He may not look like what you expect or do what you expect. Because God promised the Messiah’s return, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What Isaiah prophesized happened. God gifted you to spread the word like Isaiah did -- a new king is coming, and he will rule over God’s kingdom. In the midst of the world’s challenges, people need to hear this word of hope from you. Questions to consider: 1. How can the church be more intentional in regards to witnessing? 2. How can you be more intentional in regards to your witnessing?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Judah found themselves in difficulty. Assyria war efforts had expanded. Intent upon dominating nations to their west, Assyria had conquered Israel, the northern kingdom, and exiled its inhabitants. Under constant Assyrian assault, Judah had few war resources. Military aid from other countries was nonexistent; and though the Assyrian kingdom had diminished, the Babylon empire’s war machine had begun to rise. Things seem to be going from bad to worst. After succession of several idolatrous kings, Judah was beginning to see God’s anger manifested in the natural. Babylon placed Judah under seize. Israel’s turn to Egypt for military assistance proved futile. Their only hope rested in the belief that Messiah would come and save them. Maybe now that Jerusalem was sacked, and the temple was destroyed – maybe now God would send the Messianic king. Beginning in Isaiah 49, a description of the coming king is offered. Instead of a mighty warrior, Israel learns a suffering servant is coming. And according to Isaiah this suffering servant would usher in a new kingdom where God reigns. Some Jewish scholars identify the suffering servant as Isaiah, or King Cyrus, or King Hezekiah, or King Josiah, or Ezekiel, or Jeremiah, or Moses, or Job. Other rabbis believe that the suffering servant is Jesus. Isaiah’s depiction eliminates the former possibilities. Against the backdrop of Isaiah’s description, it should not be surprising that some believed that he was describing a human figure. What deliverer would be a tender plant? Can you imagine a savior likened to a frail green twig? Because this tender shoot is a young delicate plant, it could easily die. One chariot wheel or one sandal stepping on it, could

easily kill this tender shoot. Further, as an agrarian society, Israel knew that a tender plant needed water and would have trouble surviving in dry ground. No wonder Isaiah began by giving a disclaimer, asking a rhetorical question, “Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Isaiah 53:1). Isaiah goes further, not only is the Messiah a weak person, e.g., tender shoot, but he will also be viewed as worthless and lacking qualities one would think a conquering king needs. His looks, unlike those of Saul and David, would attract no one to him. However, the servant felt deep grief and sorrow (Matthew 23:37-39, Luke 19:41-44). Even God seemingly does not hold him in high favor, as God humbled him and allowed him to be wounded and bruise. What becomes evident, the wounds and stripes occur because people rejected God. The servant’s suffering was decreed. Since Israel (because we) missed the mark, turned to other gods, did whatever they wanted, healing was needed. Ancient Israel knew how to slaughter sheep. They understood that slaughter was a bloody and painful undertaking. Only God could have devised such an exhaustive and seemingly impossible means of bringing restoration from exile, return to the promised land, and, ultimately, spiritual and physical healing. Past tense of the word healed does not indicate that the salvific work is complete – total healing happens after Jesus’ second coming. This passage demonstrates that God’s ways are not our ways and God’s thoughts are not our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). Isaiah’s message continues to bring hope and promises that God will send the Messiah. God’s kingdom will come on earth as it in heaven; however, it is at an extremely high cost.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Isaiah restores hope and gives assurance that God’s promised Messiah will come. However, the picture he paints is not what most people would anticipate. God uses unlikely circumstances to bring the incredible to pass. Who can believe this report of a suffering Messiah? Even now people have difficulty understanding God’s eternal life plan. 1. Do you ever think about the plan/story that God set in place to redeem the world? Are there any particular parts of God’s plan of salvation that amaze, perplex, or concern you? 3. At present, where are we in God’s plan?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How do you envision Jesus’ return to earth?
2. How would you explain Isaiah 53 to a non-believer?
3. Why do you think believers fall away from the faith?
4. Where do you see Jesus in today’s lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

ADULT UNIT II: Jeremiah and the Promise of Renewal
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Early Ministry of Jeremiah
ADULT TOPIC: Who? Me?

LESSON 5
DATE: October 5, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Jeremiah 1:11-19
**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 1:1-10; 6:10-11; 8:18; 9:2;
26:1-24**
PRINT PASSAGES: Jeremiah 1:6-10; 26:8-9, 12-15

Home Daily Bible Reading

Sept. 29	M	2 Chronicles 34:1-7	Passion for God's Laws
Sept. 30	T	Hebrews 4:12-16	The Piercing Word of God
Oct. 1	W	Jeremiah 3:12-19	Return to the Father
Oct. 2	Th	Jeremiah 4:5-14	Cleanse Yourselves and Be Saved
Oct. 3	F	Hebrews 12:3-17	God's Discipline Proves God's Love
Oct. 4	Sa	Hebrews 12:18-29	God Is a Consuming Fire
Oct. 5	Su	Jeremiah 1:6-10; 26:8-9, 12-15	A Defiant Prophet

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – *“I Will Trust in the Lord”* - #75 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Jeremiah 1:6-10; 26:8-9, 12-15 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

⁶ Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” ⁷ But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a boy,’ for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you.” ⁸ Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.”

⁹ Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, “Now I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁰ See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.”

⁸ And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You shall die! ⁹ Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, ‘This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant’?” And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

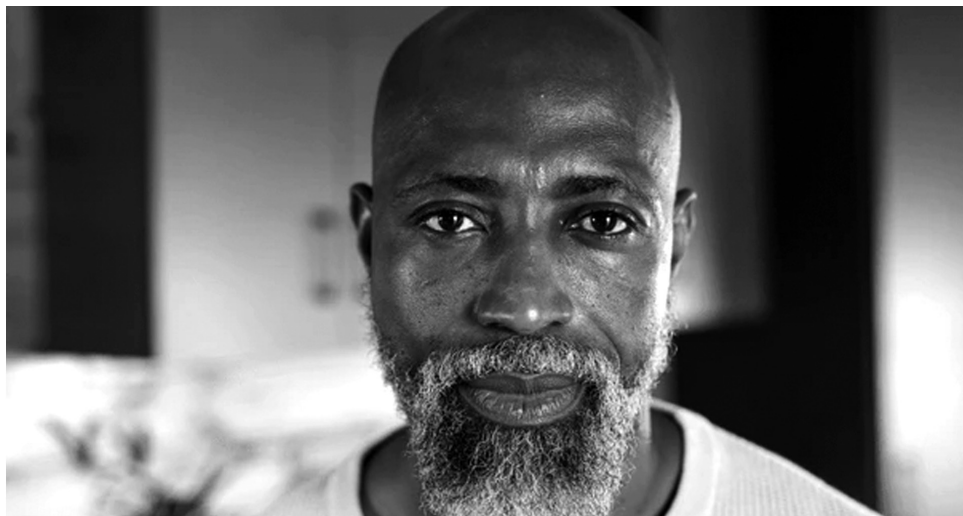
¹² Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, “It is the Lord who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. ¹³ Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you. ¹⁴ But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. ¹⁵ Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the Lord sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears.”

Affirmation – When God calls us to lead, we won’t give God excuses. We will trust in the Lord to empower us! (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)



God places gifts in each person. These gifts for God’s glory, which used by people, may have unanticipated consequences. While it would be considered a blessing, to be applauded and praised, God intends your works to point people to Jesus. Your footsteps may send you to unexpected places. You may have a difficult assignment which you believe you cannot do. However, today’s lesson teaches that whatever God calls you to do, you can do. While you may believe that you are too young or too inexperienced, your responsibility is to do what God has asked. Why –



because God does not want your excuses, God wants your obedience. 1. What are some, if any, consequences have you experienced operating in your gifts? 2. Why do you think God calls the 'unqualified'? 3. How have you seen God assist the 'unqualified'? 4. How does obedience strengthen our relationship with God?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Jeremiah 1:6-10: Jeremiah lived during a time of great upheaval. Judah was under constant attack – the people did not adhere to covenantal commands; they spurned the prophets; injustice prevailed, and most abhorrent they worshiped idols. God remained true to the promise, that if you (Israel) fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all God's commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth (Deut. 28:1 NIV). Fortunately, those blessings were not dependent on Israel's obedience because, unfortunately, Israel did not remain faithful. Because God still desired to bless Israel, the Lord sent prophets admonishing and encouraging a return to God. Jeremiah was one of these prophets; he admonished and warned Israel continuously about impending destruction and death. But the people did not listen; rather, they mocked, imprisoned, and beat the God-sent prophets. Jeremiah, born into a priestly family seemed to wonder if his age was an impediment – perhaps he was too young. God's view and Jeremiah's assessment were at odds. From God's perspective, Jeremiah was equipped – prior to his birth when God formed Jeremiah in his mother's womb, God dedicated Jeremiah as a prophet to the nations. God told Jeremiah not to fear. Why? Because words coming from Jeremiah's lips would belong to God. These were not ordinary words – they were powerful, and they could uproot and tear down nations along with their rulers.

Jeremiah 26:8-9, 12-15: God's words spoken through Jeremiah unsettled Judah. But Jeremiah's terse warnings predicting imminent doom did not have God's desired effect. Judah did not repent. Jeremiah went to the temple, speaking warning after warning. Through repetition, God shared that if Judah would change their ways, then disaster could be averted. The Lord said, "Perhaps they will listen, and each will turn from their evil ways. Then I will relent and not inflict on them the disaster I was planning because of the evil they have done" (Jeremiah 26:3 NIV). Repeated warnings only made the people angry. When Jeremiah said that failure to obey God would result in Jerusalem becoming a curse, the people were incensed. Led by the priests and prophets, the people grabbed Jeremiah with the intent of killing him. Having been sentenced to death, Jeremiah gave his only sensible defense – "The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the things you have heard" (Jeremiah 26:12 NRSVUE). After being threatened with death, it seems Jeremiah remembered God's words given at the beginning of his ministry – do not fear. His response to death threats was for the people to do whatever they wanted to him. What they would do to Jeremiah made little difference to him as he continued reproaching Judah. He added that killing him would bring innocent blood onto them. Jeremiah was sure God had sent him and whether they liked what he said or not, his message would not change. 1. Has the church changed its message to appease people? If so, how? 2. When someone brings to your attention your sins, how do you react?

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Before Jeremiah was born, God decided to place the necessary characteristics prophets needed in Jeremiah. Even when Jeremiah protested that he was too young, God did not accept self-doubt. Instead, God reminded Jeremiah before birth he was endowed and chosen.

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How old should a person be before assuming a leadership position in the church—clergy? lay?
2. What gifts do you think God gave you before you were born?
3. What is the hardest thing God has asked you to do?
4. Where did you see Jesus in today's lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned today?

KEY VERSE: The Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you." Jeremiah 1:7

ADULT UNIT II: Jeremiah and the Promise of Renewal
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Jeremiah Calls the People to Obedience
ADULT TOPIC: Walk the Talk

LESSON 6
DATE: October 12, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Luke 6:40-46
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 7:1-26
PRINT PASSAGE: Jeremiah 7:1-11, 21-23

Home Daily Bible Reading

Oct. 6	M	Mark 13:1-13	<i>Endure to the End</i>
Oct. 7	T	Mark 13:14-27	<i>God Will Protect God's People</i>
Oct. 8	W	1 Samuel 15:20-26	<i>To Obey Is Better than Sacrifice</i>
Oct. 9	Th	John 14:12-17	<i>Keep Christ's Commandments</i>
Oct. 10	F	John 2:12-22	<i>An Indestructible Temple</i>
Oct. 11	Sa	Psalms 51:15-19	<i>The Sacrifice That Pleases God</i>
Oct. 12	Su	Jer. 7:1-11, 21-23	<i>Amend Your Ways!</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Take My Life, and Let it Be” - #470 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Jeremiah 7:1-11, 21-23 (Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.)

Jeremiah Proclaims God's Judgment on the Nation

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah, you who enter these gates to worship the Lord. ³ Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in these deceptive words: “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.”

⁵ For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, ⁶ if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the

widow or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt,⁷ then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave to your ancestors forever and ever.

⁸ Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known ¹⁰ and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, “We are safe!”—only to go on doing all these abominations? ¹¹ Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? I, too, am watching, says the Lord.

²¹ Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. ²² For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to them or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³ But this command I gave them, “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.”

Affirmation – I will be consistent in my walk and talk. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Churches often use the mantra “speak truth to power.” Much of the church’s power lies in its members. Congregations are tasked to do the greater work, to be one with God, and to make disciples. This is dangerous work. According to Scripture, the church is sent out like sheep among wolves (Matthew 10:16). Following Jesus means being like him; you will have enemies and persecutors. In short, staying focused on God requires tenacity. Maybe this is why the modern-day church, like Judah, prefers not to hear prophetic voices that remind us to follow God’s commandments. It is easier to talk about whether one goes to church rather than the temptations that result so easily in sin. 1. What does it mean to “be like Jesus”? 2. How can you avoid temptation?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Jeremiah 7:1-11: Jeremiah stands at the temple gate delivering God’s message. Surely, people entering the Temple would recognize God’s prophetic plea. After all, these people were coming to worship; wouldn’t they expect God to speak? Perhaps they did not realize it was God because of Jeremiah’s message. Instead of being praised because they were worshippers, Judah hears God’s rebuke. How could God ask them to amend their ways; weren’t they com-

ing to the temple? From Judah's perspective, they did not need to amend their ways. From their perspective, Temple worship, as required in the laws should have been enough to satisfy God. Jeremiah's warnings seemed empty. They remembered Solomon's prayer that affirmed God's commitment to this temple, "May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place." (1Kings 8:29 NIV) Surely, there was no way that God would destroy the place which contained the Lord's name. It was logical for Judah to trust deceptive words rather than believe the truth. Three times false prophets declared "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" as though repetition made their words a safeguard. Scholars offer several reasons that this phrase was repeated three times. A plausible explanation for the repetition is the requirement for males to assemble at the temple three times a year (Deuteronomy 16:16; Exodus 23:14-17). Whatever the reason, repetition gives emphasis, which may account for Judah believing in these false words. Besides what Jeremiah proposed was difficult to believe; it was easier to trust lies. Jeremiah demanded self-examination reflected in changed hearts – changed behaviors – changed beliefs. Referencing portion of the ten commandments, Jeremiah reminded Judah not to have other gods, not to steal, kill, commit adultery, or lie – at least not if they expect to stand in God's house. Judah had lost sight of the temple's purpose. God's house no longer served as the site for worship, rather it was a place for lawbreakers to engage in evil activities—a den of thieves. Jesus used these same words to describe God's house when he expelled the merchants and money changers (Matthew 21:13, Jeremiah stands at the temple gate delivering God's message. Surely, people entering the Temple would recognize God's prophetic plea. After all, these people were coming to worship; wouldn't they expect God to speak? Perhaps they did not realize it was God because of Jeremiah's message. Instead of being praised because they were worshippers, Judah hears God's rebuke. How could God ask them to amend their ways; weren't they coming to the temple? From Judah's perspective, they did not need to amend their ways. From their perspective, Temple worship, as required in the laws should have been enough to satisfy God. Jeremiah's warnings seemed empty. They remembered Solomon's prayer that affirmed God's commitment to this temple, "May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place." (1Kings 8:29 NIV) Surely, there was no way that God would destroy the place which contained the Lord's name. It was logical for Judah to trust deceptive words rather than believe the truth. Three times false prophets declared "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" as though repetition made their words a safeguard. Scholars offer several reasons that this phrase was repeated three times. A plausible explanation for the repetition is the requirement for males to assemble at the temple three times a year (Deuteronomy 16:16; Exodus 23:14-17). Whatever the reason, repetition gives emphasis, which may account for Judah believing in these false

words. Besides what Jeremiah proposed was difficult to believe; it was easier to trust lies. Jeremiah demanded self-examination reflected in changed hearts – changed behaviors – changed beliefs. Referencing portion of the ten commandments, Jeremiah reminded Judah not to have other gods, not to steal, kill, commit adultery, or lie – at least not if they expect to stand in God’s house. Judah had lost sight of the temple’s purpose. God’s house no longer served as the site for worship, rather it was a place for lawbreakers to engage in evil activities—a den of thieves. Jesus used these same words to describe God’s house when he expelled the merchants and money changers (Matthew 21:13, Jeremiah 7: 21-23).

More important than sacrifices and burnt offerings was listening to God’s voice. When God spoke to Israel, they were commanded to keep the Passover and to teach their children about God’s deliverance. At Mount Sinai, God gave the commandments detailing how they should reverence the Lord and how they should live as a community. Commands about burnt offering and eating meat were given after Israel had agreed to the covenant. Listening to God was paramount. Obedience is better than sacrifice as it reflects one’s heart. Unfortunately, Judah made external things such as the temple and offerings their most critical pursuits.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

God sent Jeremiah to preach a difficult message. Judah preferred good news rather than warnings about impending doom. They believe the Temple’s location in Jerusalem protected them from God’s wrath. What they failed to recognize was God cannot be contained in a building. God wanted internal, loving fidelity not reliance on a man-made building. 1. Today, do congregations prefer encouraging or convicting sermons? 2. Are churches that preach and teach on difficult topics more or less likely to grow? 3. Identify some growing churches/ministries and share your opinion about the general type of message preached in these growing churches/ministries.

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. Which ways are our current churches like a den of thieves?
2. Why do some people prefer to believe lies?
3. How easy/difficult is it to change beliefs and behaviors?
4. Where do you see Jesus in today’s lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: This command I gave them: “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.” Jeremiah 7:23

ADULT UNIT II: Jeremiah and the Promise of Renewal
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Story of the Rechabites
ADULT TOPIC: Promises, Promises

LESSON 7

DATE: October 19, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:4

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 35:1-19

PRINT PASSAGE: Jeremiah 35:5-11

Home Daily Bible Reading

Oct. 13	M	Proverbs 23:29-35	<i>The Dangers of Strong Drink</i>
Oct. 14	T	Ecclesiastes 9:4-10	<i>Keep Earthly Pleasures in Perspective</i>
Oct. 15	W	Ephesians 5:11-19	<i>Be Filled with the Spirit</i>
Oct. 16	Th	Numbers 6:1-8	<i>The Nazirite Vow</i>
Oct. 17	F	1 Thessalonians 4:1-7	<i>Called to Holiness</i>
Oct. 18	Sa	1 Thess. 5:1-10	<i>Keep Awake!</i>
Oct. 19	Su	Jeremiah 35:5-11	<i>A Vow of Holiness</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Take Time to Be Holy” - #467 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Jeremiah 35:5-11 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

⁵ Then I set before the Rechabites pitchers full of wine and cups, and I said to them, “Have some wine.” ⁶ But they answered, “We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us, ‘You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children,’ ⁷ nor shall you ever build a house or sow seed, nor shall you plant a vineyard or even own one, but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you reside.’” ⁸ We have obeyed the charge of our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, ⁹ and not to build houses to live in. We have no vineyard or field or seed, ¹⁰ but we have lived in tents and have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. ¹¹ But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon

came up against the land, we said, 'Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans.' That is why we are living in Jerusalem."

Affirmation – I won't give lip service to living holy, I will practice holy living. I pledge to practice holy living by regularly participating in the means of grace. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

There are people who provide examples on how to live an obedient life. Some religious groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, or Mormons canvas door-to-door. Though Christians may disagree with their messages, these groups' faithfulness to evangelism cannot be denied. Perhaps they present an example to the church. Instead of inviting people to come to Annual Days and special services, the church can follow these groups' example. Jesus' directive to the church was "go." (Matthew 28:19) The church could learn obedience from the Rechabites' example. They did what was commanded. Questions to ponder: 1. Why is it sometimes difficult to remain obedient to God's commands? 2. When we know that the message we follow is correct, why do we not share it more? 3. Do you witness?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Jeremiah 35:5-6: God instructed Jeremiah to go and bring the Rechabites to a chamber in the Lord's house. This invitation may have seemed inexplicable. God's chambers housed Levites (1 Chronicles 9:33) who were Jews consecrated for Temple service, and the Rechabites were not Jewish. Once they arrived in the chambers, God told Jeremiah to offer them wine to drink. The Rechabites, also known as Kenites, were descendants of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. Jehonadab, the Rechabites' forefather, had given strict orders that no Rechabite could ever drink wine. When Jeremiah offered the Rechabites wine, citing Jehonadab's command, they refused to drink it. Their response reflected Jehonadab's previous behaviors. He opposed Baal worship and helped annihilate Ahab, a wicked king who led Israel in Baal worship. (2 Kings 10:15-31)

Jeremiah 35:7-9: The Rechabites followed other prohibitions imposed by Jehonadab. Loyalty to the restrictions made the Rechabites a nomadic people. They built no houses and planted no vineyards or crops. They lived in tents travelling from one place to another for many years. After the Babylonian attacks, the Rechabites were forced to Jerusalem to ensure their safety and protection.

Jeremiah 35:10-11: Unlike the Rechabites, Judah was not obedient. God gave Judah a living example of fidelity. Judah in covenant relationship with God, the great I Am, proved less devoted than the Rechabites were to Jehonadab, a human. Judah received their just reward for disobedience – the cities and the temple were destroyed, and they went into Babylonian captivity. The Rechabites were also rewarded. God gave this word to them: “Then Jeremiah said to the family of the Rechabites, ‘this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘You have obeyed the command of your forefather Jehonadab and have followed all his instructions and have done everything he ordered. Therefore, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘Jehonadab, son of Rekab will never fail to have a descendant to serve me’” (Jeremiah 35:18 – 19 NIV). Judah should have learned lessons from their history. Every time they disobeyed God, prophets warned them of impending doom. Israel, the northern kingdom, was destroyed and now Judah, the southern kingdom, was in danger of meeting the same fate.



ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Jewish ancestors’ cycle of obedience and disobedience could have taught Israel invaluable lessons. Israel had God’s law and the prophets’ words as rules for living. Unlike the faithful Rekabites who were obedient, Judah was disobedient. Their unfaithfulness would eventually lead to their downfall. The Rekabites, because of faithfulness, were blessed. 1. Are you aware of a church/ministry that was disobedient to God and suffered consequences as a result? 2. Are you aware of a church/ministry that was obedient in a difficult situation and God blessed the church/ministry?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. What is the meaning of wine served during communion?
2. Which lessons should we learn from other groups/families/neighbors?
3. Where did you see Jesus in today’s lesson?
4. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: They drink [no wine] to this day, for they have obeyed their ancestor’s command. Jeremiah 35:14b

ADULT UNIT II: Jeremiah and the Promise of Renewal
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: God's Law in the Heart
ADULT TOPIC: The Heart Wants What the Heart Wants

LESSON 8
DATE: October 26, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 103:17-22
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 31:1-40; John 1:17;
Hebrews 8:7-13
PRINT PASSAGES: Jeremiah 31:29-34; John 1:17

Home Daily Bible Reading

Oct. 20	M	Joel 2:28-32	<i>A New Salvation</i>
Oct. 21	T	Ezekiel 36:25-35	<i>A New Heart</i>
Oct. 22	W	Deut. 10:12-21	<i>The Law's Essence</i>
Oct. 23	Th	2 Corinthians 3:1-6	<i>A New Covenant</i>
Oct. 24	F	2 Corinthians 3:7-11	<i>A New Spirit</i>
Oct. 25	Sa	2 Corinthians 3:12-17	<i>A New Freedom</i>
Oct. 26	Su	Jeremiah 31:27-34	<i>A New Relationship with God</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Give Me a Clean Heart” - #461 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Jeremiah 31:29-34; John 1:17 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

²⁹ In those days they shall no longer say: “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” ³⁰ But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of the one who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge.

A New Covenant

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will

put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

17 The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Affirmation— I will allow God's laws to be more than words on a page, but alive in my heart. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Generational curses expound the belief that parents' sins fall upon their children. This term often banted about seems to explain how parents' behavior can negatively affect future generations. However, Jeremiah's message does not support this contemporary notion. God does not determine children's future based upon things their ancestors did. God's mercy and grace extend to future generations based upon that person's belief in Jesus. In this new covenant God's words will be written on people's hearts. Consider this: 1. What does 'written on our heart' mean? 2. How can we increase our faith in Jesus?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Jeremiah 31:29-30: Proverbs, which are short sayings that express truths, pass from one generation to the next. One of Judah's sayings "'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge,'" according to Jeremiah would no longer apply. This proverb (also in Ezekiel 18:2) implied that Israel's current punishment was attributable to their forefathers' sins. Contrary to belief among Israelites, children are not held accountable for their ancestors' actions. God holds people responsible for their choices.

What are some proverbs passed down by church mothers and fathers? Should parents be held accountable for their children's actions? Why/Why not?

Jeremiah 31:31-34: God says a new covenant will be made with Judah and Israel. This is not the first time that God has entered into covenant with his people. Previous covenants include the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3), The Mosaic or Sinai Covenant (Exodus 19), and The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7). But this covenant with Judah was drastically different than previous covenants. Unlike the previous covenant written on stone, God promises to place this one on people's minds and to write it on their hearts. Why change

the covenant from its external location? Obviously, the previous one resulted in one failure after the next. When Israel was delivered from Egypt, they became God's people – where God was their husband. Despite this closeness, loyalty was lost as Israel worshipped other gods. Maybe if God's love were inside, Israel would be less inclined to turn away. Even if Israel broke the covenant, the new covenant's emphasis would be on forgiveness not punishment. People would gain a new understanding of who God is – because of a handwritten note on their hearts.

John 1:17: Differences between Moses law and Jesus' ministry reveal each covenants' unique qualities. Moses gave Israel God's Tarya, the Mosaic Law. Some portions of the Tarya (613 commands) were positive (248), but most were prohibitive (365) i.e., thou shall not. Fortunately, the new covenant given by Jesus gave two laws as preeminent: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself' (Matthew 22:37-40 NIV). Every message God sent by the prophets and every commandment Moses gave depended upon these two laws. Love God, neighbor, and self. When love resides in a person's heart, their actions will reflect God's commands. This love in action was visibly seen in Jesus as God established the new covenant.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Throughout Israel's history, they vacillated between obedience and disobedience. Extended periods of idol worship and injustice led to curses fulfilled (Deut. 28:15-68) and God's wrath. It seemed that the vicious cycle would never end. Jeremiah let's Israel know there will be a new covenant that changed hearts, and that each person will be accountable for whatever that individual did, not for what their parents had done previously. 1. Is it difficult to abide by a law that you don't agree with? 2. Is it easier to abide by a law that benefits you or others?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. What lessons have you learned from your ancestors?
2. How do parents' behaviors influence their children?
3. What are the differences between God's old and new covenants?
4. What did you learn about Jesus in today's lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:33b

ADULT UNIT II: Jeremiah and the Promise of Renewal
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Later Experiences of Jeremiah
ADULT TOPIC: Well? That's a Deep Subject!

LESSON 9

DATE: November 2, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Romans 13:1-10

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 20:1-6; 37:1-38:28; 43:1-7

PRINT PASSAGE: Jeremiah 38:7-13

Home Daily Bible Reading

Oct. 27	M	Matthew 10:16-27	<i>Speak as the Spirit Leads</i>
Oct. 28	T	Matthew 10:28-42	<i>Do Not Fear Mortal Powers</i>
Oct. 29	W	Psalms 37:1-13	<i>Wait Patiently for the Lord</i>
Oct. 30	Th	Psa. 37:25-28, 35-40	<i>God Never Forsakes the Righteous</i>
Oct. 31	F	Romans 12:12-21	<i>Overcome Evil with Good</i>
Nov. 1	Sa	Jeremiah 38:1-6	<i>Speak Even When the Message Stings</i>
Nov. 2	Su	Jeremiah 38:7-13	<i>An Advocate Pleads for Justice</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Learner

Celebration – “*Rise Up, O Men of God!*” - #682 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Jeremiah 38:7-13 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

Jeremiah Is Rescued by Ebed-melech

⁷ Ebed-melech the Cushite, a eunuch in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. The king happened to be sitting at the Benjamin Gate, ⁸ So Ebed-melech left the king's house and spoke to the king, ⁹ “My lord king, these men have acted wickedly in all they did to the prophet Jeremiah by throwing him into the cistern to die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city.” ¹⁰ Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Cushite, “Take three men with you from here, and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before he dies.” ¹¹ So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a wardrobe of the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. ¹² Then Ebed-melech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, “Just put the rags and clothes

between your armpits and the ropes.” Jeremiah did so. ¹³ Then they drew Jeremiah up by the ropes and pulled him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

Affirmation – With the help of God, I will stand with those who have been mistreated. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Unfortunately, innocent people have spent years in jail or have been executed. Speaking out to correct injustices takes courage. Silence cannot right wrongs. Vocal challenges accompanied by corrective action reflect God’s justice. Ebed-melech shows how one person moved by compassion can save the life of another. When people are imprisoned unjustly, an opportunity arises. The choice to act depends upon each of you. Questions to ponder: 1. Will you stand idly by knowing that an innocent person was incarcerated? 2. Or will you support efforts for that individual’s release? 3. Why or why not?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Jeremiah 38:7-13: Jeremiah had a message for Israel: surrender to the Babylonians. If they did, they would be exiled to Babylon, but they would live. But if they refused, they would die. This news did not sit well with some of Zedekiah’s officers. They thought Jeremiah’s words were treasonous. They probably believed that Jeremiah’s words would scare the army and decrease their morale. So, they reported him to the king and wanted him punished severely. When Zedekiah heard about the officers’ complaint and their desire to kill Jeremiah, he said, “Here he is; you can do whatever you want to him. The king can’t stop you.” (NRSVUE) Now, whether Zedekiah was really powerless is up for debate. Maybe he was just a puppet king controlled by Nebuchadnezzar and was afraid of what Babylon would do to him. Or maybe he was just weak-willed. Whatever the case, his feeble response led to Jeremiah being thrown into the mud of Malchiah’s (Zedekiah’s son) dry well. Instead of killing him right away, they lowered Jeremiah into the well, which would slowly kill him as he sank into the mud.

Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch and a member of King Zedekiah’s court, found out what had happened to Jeremiah. According to the Mosaic law, since Ebed-melech was castrated, he could not enter the Israelite assembly. But luckily, when Ebed-melech heard about Jeremiah’s fate, King Zedekiah was sitting outside the Benjamin Gate. Jeremiah’s daily bread ration, which had been his only source of food, had stopped. So, Ebed-melech told the king that Jeremiah was going to starve to death. Zedekiah said that Jeremiah could be freed from



the cistern. Thirty men accompanied Ebed-melech as they pulled Jeremiah out of the cistern. They wrapped rags around Jeremiah's arms to protect him from rope burns. They carefully pulled Jeremiah up, but he was not set free from imprisonment. He was still kept in the court of the guards.

God promised Ebed-melech that he would be saved from the Babylonian invasion that would destroy Israel. (Jeremiah 39:15-18) This promise to Ebed-melech was in line with Isaiah 56:3-5. "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever." (NIV)

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Jeremiah was imprisoned because of his prophetic message. God gave Zedekiah, another of Judah's kings, a warning of impending doom. Because of what he said, Jeremiah was put in a cistern where he could have died. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian appealed to the king. Permission was granted for Ebed-melech to pull Jeremiah up from the cistern, which saved his life. 1. Today, are there examples of people who have been unjustly imprisoned because of they shared a difficult message given to them by God? 2. Where have all the prophets gone?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How can the church help people who are unfairly imprisoned?
2. How can the church become involved in sentencing decisions?
3. Where did you see Jesus in today's lesson?
4. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: The king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, "Take three men with you from here, and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before he dies." Jeremiah 38:10

ADULT UNIT III: Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Judah Taken Captive
ADULT TOPIC: We've Fallen and We Can't Get Up!

LESSON 10
DATE: November 9, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Lamentations 1:18-22
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 2 Kings 23:1-25:21
PRINT PASSAGE: 2 Kings 24:18-25:9

Home Daily Bible Reading

Nov. 3	M	Luke 12:42-48	<i>The Master Is Coming Soon</i>
Nov. 4	T	Luke 12:49-53	<i>The Purifying Fire of Change</i>
Nov. 5	W	Lamentations 2:17-22	<i>The Lord's Purifying Purpose</i>
Nov. 6	Th	Lamentations 3:21-36	<i>Hope in the Lord</i>
Nov. 7	F	1 Peter 1:1-12	<i>Faith Tested by Fire</i>
Nov. 8	Sa	1 Peter 1:13-25	<i>Prepare for Action</i>
Nov. 9	Su	2 Kings 24:18-25:9	<i>God's Judgment Is Sure</i>

EXALT!

Invocation— Teacher or Leaner

Celebration— “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” - #681 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration— 2 Kings 24:18-25:9 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

Zedekiah Reigns over Judah

¹⁸ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ¹⁹ He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, just as Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so angered the Lord that he expelled them from his presence.

The Fall and Captivity of Judah

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ¹ And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and laid siege to it; they built siegeworks against it all around. ² So the city

was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ³ On the ninth day of the fourth month, the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. ⁴ Then a breach was made in the city wall; the king with all the soldiers fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the King's Garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah. ⁵ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; all his army was scattered, deserting him. ⁶ Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence on him. ⁷ They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, then put out the eyes of Zedekiah; they bound him in fetters and took him to Babylon.

⁸ In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down.

Affirmation— WWhen we disobey God and exile results, God goes with us into exile. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

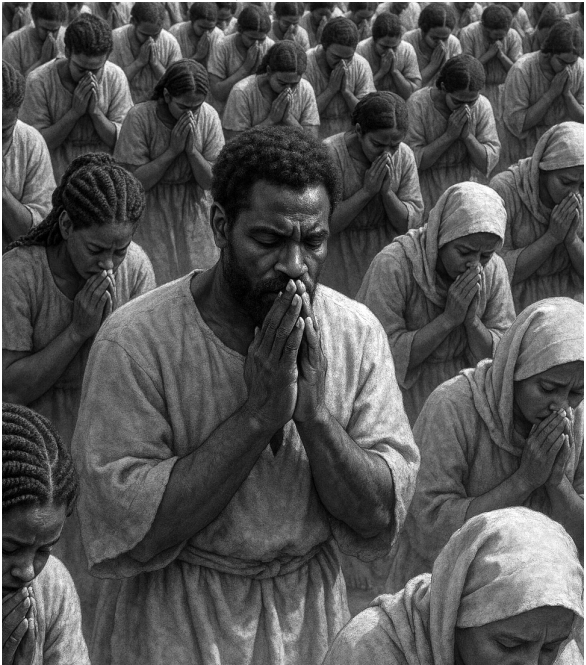


Unit III, themed “Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah,” consists of four lessons recount the fall of Judah and Ezekiel’s prophetic messages to the people in exile. The 2 Kings account of the last days of the kingdom of Judah is hard to read, as it is full of violence and desperation. Into that environment, the priest Ezekiel, in Babylon among the first exiles, reports

the devastation in Jerusalem. His prophecies are replete with visions, signs, and symbolic actions, testifying to the utter ruin of the homeland and later incredible promises of renewal. He keeps the promise of a return and the building of another temple alive. In so doing, Ezekiel helps transform the fallen nation of Israel into the remnant of YHWH, who find a renewed orientation for hope in the promises of God.

Christianity is the official religion in only fifteen of the 195 nations. Ironically, there seems to be an expectation that God will bestow special blessings on every country. This anticipated blessing is based upon God’s promise to Abraham: “In your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice (Genesis 22:18 ESV). While God’s word is true, God does have some expectations. God expects people to worship, believe, obey, fear, and love YHWH (Jehovah) the God who is the great “I Am.” Though God is merciful and compassionate, God’s raises up and brings down nations (Job 12:23). Instead of assuming God will bless your country, why not become the prophetic voice reminding people to repent and turn to God? Questions to ponder:

1. Have you ever lost hope? If so, is your hope renewed?
2. How can we renew hope to the world in which we live?



EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

2 Kings 24:18-20: Zedekiah became king in 597 BC after Jehoiachin, his nephew and predecessor to the throne, was deported to Babylon. His named was changed from Mattaniah to Zedekiah when Nebuchadnezzar made him a vassal king. Because of his vassal status, Zedekiah vowed allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar. Listening to his officers and citizens, Zedekiah gave in to pressure and agreed to attempt a coup against Babylon. Perhaps Zedekiah thought that the ongoing conflict between Babylon and Egypt had weakened Babylon’s military might. Obviously, he had forgotten Jeremiah’s prophecy that Jerusalem would be defeated by Babylon (Jeremiah 34:1-7). Whatever his thinking, Ze-

dekiah united with Moab, Edom, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon (all previous enemies of Israel) in a failed rebellion. This rebellion resulted in Babylon’s army laying siege to Jerusalem. Angered, God allowed Judah’s defeat, and the nation was cast out of the Promised Land.

2 Kings 25:1-4a: Although Zedekiah had promised not to rebel, he did not keep his word. Zedekiah seemed to forget that the promise he gave Nebuchadnezzar was on behalf of God. In response, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon led his army against Judah. Since Judah would not surrender as per God’s instruction through Jeremiah, the people became entrapped in Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar laid a siege wall all around. The people in Jerusalem had no way in or out of the city because of the siege wall. No food was available, and food became more scarce as Babylon’s siege wall prevented all trade. Finally, unable to withstand Babylon’s assault, Zedekiah and his soldiers broke through the wall in an attempted escape. This nighttime attempt to slip past the Chaldeans seemed a good idea; however, it was doomed from the start. Although they were able to reach Jericho, the Chaldean army caught Zedekiah ironically at the very place where Israel first entered the Promise Land. (2 Kings 25:5)

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

God designated and distributed land to different nations. Wars have resulted in displacements as people either flee or are exiled from their country. When refugees need a new place to stay, they must live in other people’s countries. For Judah and Israel, their disobedience resulted in God expelling them from their land. 1. What is your understanding of the reason for the Gaza conflict between Israel and Hamas that began in October 2023? 2. What role, if any, should the Christian/AME Zion Church play as it relates to the Gaza conflict? 3. Should countries welcome immigrants who are fleeing conflicts in their countries of origin?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How can the church assist the millions of people displaced from their homeland?
2. How do you think God expresses displeasure with people today?
3. What did you learn about Jesus in today’s lesson?
4. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: Jerusalem and Judah so angered the Lord that he expelled them from his presence. 2 Kings 24:20

ADULT UNIT III: Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: The Story of Ezekiel
ADULT TOPIC: The Medium Is the Message

LESSON 11

DATE: November 16, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: 2 Corinthians 1:2-6

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:1-3:27; 8:1-4;
11:22-25; 24:15-24; 33:30-33**

PRINT PASSAGES: Ezekiel 3:10-11; 24:15-24, 27

Home Daily Bible Reading

Nov. 10	M	1 Peter 3:8-17	<i>With Righteousness Comes Suffering</i>
Nov. 11	T	1 Peter 3:18-22	<i>Christ Exalted through Suffering</i>
Nov. 12	W	Psalms 34:6-19	<i>God Rescues Us from Our Afflictions</i>
Nov. 13	Th	Matthew 5:3-12	<i>Comfort for the Brokenhearted</i>
Nov. 14	F	Ezekiel 3:4-11	<i>Speak if People Listen or Not</i>
Nov. 15	Sa	2 Thessalonians 1:1-4	<i>Steadfastness and Faith amid Persecution</i>
Nov. 16	Su	Ezekiel 24:15-27	<i>Unspeakable Grief</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Is Your All on the Altar?” - #527 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Ezekiel 3:10-11; 24:15-24, 27 (Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.)

¹⁰ He said to me, “Mortal, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart and hear with your ears; ¹¹ then go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God,’ whether they hear or refuse to hear.”

Ezekiel’s Bereavement

¹⁵ The word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁶ Mortal, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes, yet you shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. ¹⁷ Groan quietly; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners. ¹⁸ So I spoke to

the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded.

¹⁹ Then the people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these things mean for us, that you are acting this way?” ²⁰ Then I said to them, “The word of the Lord came to me: ²¹ Say to the house of Israel: Thus says the Lord God: I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and your heart’s desire, and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. ²² And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners.[b] ²³ Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you shall not mourn or weep, but you shall pine away in your iniquities and groan to one another. ²⁴ Thus Ezekiel shall be a sign to you; you shall do just as he has done. When this comes, then you shall know that I am the Lord God.”

²⁷ On that day your mouth shall be opened to the one who has escaped, and you shall speak and no longer be silent. So you shall be a sign to them, and they shall know that I am the Lord.

Affirmation – Our sacrifices can serve as powerful messages to others. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Tears can signal immense grief when a loved one dies. Christian’s grieving should reflect their beliefs. Scripture challenges Christians to display their grief differently than those who do not believe in Jesus. “...we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope”

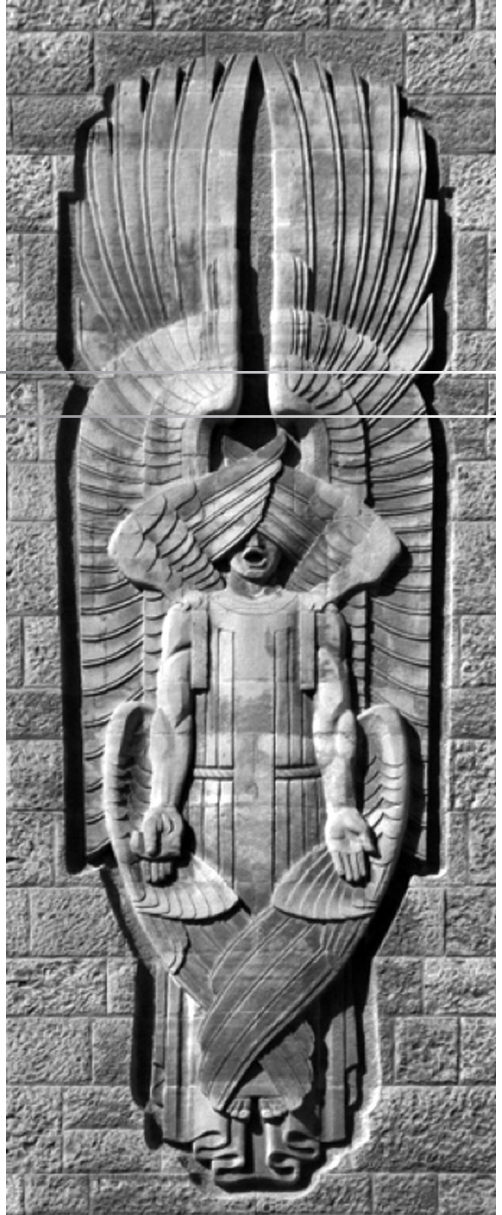


(1 Thessalonians 4:13 NRSVUE). Ezekiel, born before this verse was written, exemplified obedience to God. When his wife died, Ezekiel demonstrated that breaching the relationship with God should cause grief more than the loss of a loved one. Perhaps when you encounter death in addition to missing your loved one, you may also pray for those who no longer have a relationship with God or have never had a relationship with the Lord. Your thoughts: 1. How does God comfort you through the loss of a loved one? 2. How does obedience allow us to maintain a relationship with God?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Ezekiel 3:10-11: God called and sent Ezekiel to the Babylonian exiles. Given Israel's history of ignoring God's prophets, it is not surprising they would continue that trend. Ezekiel was commanded to speak God's Word, regardless of how they would or would not be received. God had not given up on Israel. Even in exile, God continued sending prophetic messages. Once again, Israel had a choice. They could listen, which meant to adhere to or follow God's commands, or Judah could decide they did not want to hear what God said.

How do you respond when you are talking, and people are not listening to you? Where has God told you to go and deliver messages about the Lord?



Ezekiel 24:15-24, 27: Being God's prophet required great sacrifice. Their personal life often gave messages to Israel. Ezekiel was no different. God informed Ezekiel that the woman he loved, his wife, would die. Some commen-

tators speculate that she died from disease; whatever the cause, God took her life: I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke (Ezekiel 24:15:24 NIV). Not only did God take Ezekiel's wife, but God also commanded that Ezekiel not show any outward mourning signs. Even priests were allowed to grieve for close family members (Leviticus 21:1-4). In ancient Israel, a 30-day mourning period was customary. The aggrieved usually tore their clothes, wore sackcloth, sat in ashes, and wept. As a sign to Israel, Ezekiel did none of these things. All that Ezekiel could do was sigh inwardly. On the very next morning after his wife's death, Ezekiel spoke to the exiles. Wondering why Ezekiel was not mourning, the exiles asked him what sign he was showing them. His response was probably shocking and disturbing. Ezekiel told them that God would destroy the temple and Jerusalem. Many opted not to believe Ezekiel. For Judah, the temple represented a good luck charm, something that assured them safety – that their nation would last forever. But this was a false belief. Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army had already seized Judah. Their children were destined to die, and Judah would be decimated. The exiles would not mourn. Why? Maybe the exiles still could not believe that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. Or perhaps the Babylonians restricted the exiles' mourning at such a great Babylonian victory. Whatever the reason, once again, Judah would see God's might. After Ezekiel received word of this destruction as God had promised, the tone of Ezekiel's prophetic words would become more hopeful.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Israel's disobedience escalated despite repeated prophetic warnings. Even though they had experienced famine, invasions, cannibalism, and their nation was in danger of the Temple's destruction, Israel continued to disbelieve. God used Ezekiel's wife's inevitable death as an example of the inevitable death Israel would experience. Judah should not mourn; instead, they had to come to know the one speaking through Ezekiel, their true Lord God. How do you respond when a loved one dies? What things give people false hope?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How does the church mourn over people who turn from Jesus?
2. What did you learn about Jesus from this lesson?
3. How will you apply today's lessons to your life?

KEY VERSE: [The Lord God] said to me, Mortal, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart and hear with your ears. Ezekiel 3:10

ADULT UNIT III: Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Ezekiel Teaches Personal Responsibility
ADULT TOPIC: To Everything Turn, Turn, Turn

LESSON 12
DATE: November 23, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: Jeremiah 17:5-10
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Ezekiel 18:1-32; 33:1-20
PRINT PASSAGE: Ezekiel 33:7-16a

Home Daily Bible Reading

Nov. 17	M	1 Peter 4:1-11	<i>Love Others Despite Suffering</i>
Nov. 18	T	1 Peter 4:12-19	<i>Rejoice to Share Christ's Sufferings</i>
Nov. 19	W	Ezekiel 18:1-9	<i>Each Will Answer for His or Her Sin</i>
Nov. 20	Th	Psalms 38:1-2, 10-22	<i>I Confess My Iniquity</i>
Nov. 21	F	Galatians 6:1-10	<i>Restore One Another in Gentleness</i>
Nov. 22	Sa	Matthew 7:1-6	<i>See to Your Own Sins First</i>
Nov. 23	Su	Ezekiel 33:7-16a	<i>Let the Wicked Repent</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “*Christian! Dost Thou See Them*” - #517 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Ezekiel 33:7-16a (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

⁷ So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸ If I say to the wicked, “O wicked ones, you shall surely die,” and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹ But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

God's Justice and Mercy

¹⁰ Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel: Thus you have said: “Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because

of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹ Say to them: As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? ¹² And you, mortal, say to your people: The righteousness of the righteous shall not save them when they transgress, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, it shall not make them stumble when they turn from their wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by their righteousness when they sin. ¹³ Though I say to the righteous that they shall surely live, yet if they trust in their righteousness and commit iniquity, none of their righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ¹⁴ Again, though I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die," yet if they turn from their sin and do what is lawful and right— ¹⁵ if the wicked restore the pledge, give back what they have taken by robbery, and walk in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity—they shall surely live; they shall not die. ¹⁶ None of the sins that they have committed shall be remembered against them; they have done what is lawful and right; they shall surely live.

Affirmation— I have a responsibility to watch out for those things that will spiritually harm those in my circle of influence. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Today's lesson demonstrates the importance of teaching and preaching about sin and repentance. Church members, clergy and lay, are charged with a challenging message – repent or face death. However, the church has good news. God desires all people to live. The choice of living or dying belongs to individuals. Those living righteous lives must continue on that path not assuming that previous holy deeds protect them from death. Those who live lives full of evil must turn away from wickedness and obey God; and they, like the righteous, will not die. Questions: 1. Why does the threat of death not change people's behaviors? 2. Who are modern day prophets? 3. What is their message?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Ezekiel 33:7-16a: Watchmen served a crucial role in Judah. Every city built several towers in proximity to one another. These towers were staffed by watchmen who constantly looked out for threats. The watch towers were close enough for one watchman to see from his assigned tower to the watchman assigned to the next tower. Signals were sent from the watch person in the farthest tower to the watch person in the next closest tower. This process of relaying communication from one tower to the next continued until the message reached the tower closest to the city. Once the signal reached the city, the lead-

ers would receive warning of impending danger. Notified of the danger afforded leaders opportunity to prepare for the threat. Failure to inform leadership of danger could have disastrous effects because the city would not be prepared to defend itself. Therefore, a watchman who failed to signal danger was guilty of exposing Judah to invasion and destruction. However, if the watchman gave the warning and Judah ignored it, the bloodshed would not be held on the watchman's account.

God made Ezekiel a watchman for Judah. Like the watchmen in the tower, Ezekiel was responsible for relaying a message. His means of conveying the message though similar to that of the watchmen in the tower differed. Unlike Judah's watchmen Ezekiel's warning was not about a physical invasion or threat, instead he spoke about a spiritual problem. Everyone needed to repent and return their hearts to God. If a righteous person began doing evil, repentance was required – since previous righteous acts could not save that person from death. In fact, Ezekiel's message advised that God would forget all of their previous righteous acts. On the other hand, if a person engaged in wicked acts but repented, paid restitution, and continued to obey God that person would live. God would not remember their previous sin-filled life. Notably, God did not say the people would die. Judah had a choice. Repent or face death--an end that God did not desire. – however, without repentance death was a possibility.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

God sends Ezekiel to guide Judah. What an awesome responsibility to point out to people when they are wrong and encourage them to engage in righteous behavior. Failure to carry God's message made Ezekiel responsible for what Judah did. But if Ezekiel delivered God's message and the people ignored it, then responsibility for their death was squarely on their shoulders. Being God's watch person represents a tremendous obligation. 1. Have you ever been given by God a difficult message to share with others? 2. If yes, what happened when you share the message, or when you did not share the message? 3. How can we find the courage to share difficult messages with others?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. What makes teaching or preaching about sin a challenge?
2. How would you correct someone who was not obeying God's law?
3. What impact do warnings of impending doom have on people?
4. What did you learn about Jesus in today's lesson?
5. How will you apply what you learned to your life?

KEY VERSE: You, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. Ezekiel 33:7

ADULT UNIT III: Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah
ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Ezekiel's Vision of Hope
ADULT TOPIC: Hope Floats

LESSON 13

DATE: November 30, 2025 (First Sunday of Advent)

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 7:9-17
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Ezekiel 47:1-12
PRINT PASSAGE: Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12

Home Daily Bible Reading

Nov. 24	M	Ezekiel 37:1-7	<i>God Breathes New Life</i>
Nov. 25	T	Ezekiel 37:8-14	<i>A Resurrection of Hope</i>
Nov. 26	W	Isaiah 55:1-9	<i>The Thirsty Will Be Refreshed</i>
Nov. 27	Th	John 7:2-10, 37-39	<i>Rivers of Living Water</i>
Nov. 28	F	Revelation 21:1-7	<i>Hope for God's New Creation</i>
Nov. 29	Sa	Revelation 22:1-5	<i>The Tree of Life</i>
Nov. 30	Su	Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12	<i>The River of Life</i>

EXALT!

Invocation – Teacher or Leaner

Celebration – “Surely the Presence of the Lord” - #222 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration – Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12 (*Read together by class, by a volunteer or responsively.*)

Water Flowing from the Temple

¹ Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there water was flowing from below the entryway of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east), and the water was flowing down from below the south side of the temple, south of the altar. ² Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east, and the water was trickling out on the south side.

³ Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep.

⁴ Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was up to the waist. ⁵ Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. ⁶ He said to me, "Mortal, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back along the bank of the river. ⁷ As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. ⁸ He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. ⁹ Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish once these waters reach there. It will become fresh, and everything will live where the river goes.

¹² On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

Affirmation— When God shows his presence in our lives and the land, I will pay attention to the signs of hope that God sends. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Churches have a responsibility to care for the environment and to share the world's resources. Living water flowed from the temple out to all of the world. As members evangelize, it would be helpful to organize a plant and garden beautification project in your church and community. Because so many people need water, each person can conserve water, or dig wells, or distribute water to the thirsty. Church members can educate themselves and the community on plant conservation and eating healthy green plants that promote healing. Thoughts to ponder: 1. What can we do to promote healthy living in our churches and in our communities? 2. Is there an interest in the church for a community garden? If so, how would you start? 3. Discuss the imagery Ezekiel describes and its implications for the community.

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Ezekiel continued a guided tour that had begun in chapter 40. Twenty-five years after Judah's exile and 14 years after Jerusalem's destruction, God gave



Ezekiel a vision for a renewed and restored Israel. In Ezekiel's vision "there was a man standing in the (temple's) gateway whose appearance shone like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. This man took Ezekiel on a visionary tour and instructed him to share the vision with Israel. Ezekiel was shown a new temple including its' nave, doorposts, chambers, walls, altar, weights, and measures, and, most importantly, the Divine Glory's return to the temple. Ezekiel was given regulations about how people should enter and exit the temple. "When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed festivals, whoever enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate, and whoever enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: they shall not return by way of the gate by which they entered but shall go out straight ahead" (46:9 ESV). Instructions were given about the proper method to present festival offerings (46:11-21). After the guide shared these things, Ezekiel returned to the Temple's entrance.

Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12: Standing at the temple's entrance, Ezekiel sees a strange vision -- water flowing

from the temple. Only God could provide water to Israel, a land locked country. Amazingly, the amount of water kept increasing. Initially, he saw the water trickling out toward the east. Why water flow began from the east is not certain. Since the Hebrew word qedem (east) means "the direction of the rising sun," water flowing from the east may indicate that God initiated this water flow. The water kept getting deeper, moving from Ezekiel's ankles to his knees, to his waist, and then over his head. Because God started the flow, it is no won-

der that healing becomes available. Trees that always bear fruit are on either side of the water providing food and healing. Once the Temple waters emptied into stagnated water, they became fresh. Moreover, everywhere the river went, swarming creatures that were there would live. In fact, wherever the river flowed, life would be there. Ezekiel's vision prophesized that after so much death, God would give life.

On the bank of the river, Ezekiel saw a vision of people fishing. "People will stand fishing beside the sea from En-gedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea" (v. 10). During this first Sunday in Advent that focuses on hope, fishing beside the sea should remind us of Jesus' words. He made the disciples fishers of people and one of his last interactions resulted in the disciples' miraculous catch of 153 fish. When talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus offered her living water (John 4). Like the water in Ezekiel's vision, the water Jesus offered brought healing. During this Advent season, may Ezekiel's vision of God's water spreading from the temple bring hope for restoration.

ELEVATE: (10 min.)

Judah, expelled from Jerusalem, had witnessed death, Jerusalem's decimation, and the temple's destruction; they needed hope. What was to become of their Promised Land? How could the temple be restored? Since Judah would live in Babylon, expelled from the land for 70 years, they could think God had abandoned them. Ezekiel's vision assured Judah that God would restore their fortunes. Further, God would expand the Lord's covenant to Gentile nations. Nothing could stop God's kingdom expansion plan. 1. Are there signs in our own land that God is trying to show us? 2. What messages from God do you see in our land? 3. How should the church respond to the messages that God is giving to us?

iTHINK: (5 – 7 min.)

1. How can churches promote environmental justice?
2. What does water symbolize in the church?
3. How can you conserve water?

KEY VERSE: On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing. Ezekiel 47:12

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.
6. You shalt not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

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