

Reflections on Moses
Kelly Akambi - Delivered June 28 2020

What comes to mind when you hear the name Moses... Do you think of the baby who was hidden in a basket in the Nile River by his mother? Do you think of the man who had a conversation with God in front of a burning bush? The man who was used in parting the red sea or do you think of the man who gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments from God? Moses had all those experiences, and much more. So it's no surprise why he is looked up to and respected by so many whether Christians, Jews or Muslims. I picked Moses because he was a great prophet, he allowed God to use him in extraordinary ways and he overcame problems and challenges that he encountered successfully. Moses was a human being with "feelings just like ours" (James 5:17) He was imperfect and he expressed the same emotions that we all feel like sadness, anger, disappointment, frustration and so on. Moses is truly a very special character because he centered his life on God's promises and had strong faith in him, no matter the difficulties or obstacles he came across, he never lost faith and never allowed his emotions or even others to stop him from doing what God asked him to do.

Although Moses was given the opportunity to live a luxurious life, instead he chose "to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin." (Hebrew 11:25) And no matter what, he never regretted any of the choices that he made. Moses also sought to strengthen others' faith in God; for example when he was on the long journey with the Israelites, they were stuck between the pharaoh's army and the red sea. Moses was confident that God would save his people and not allow anything to happen to them despite not even knowing what exactly God was going to do. He said to the Israelites "do not be afraid, stand firm and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will perform for you today." (Exodus 14:13) By saying this, Moses was able to strengthen the people's faith and they were less terrified. In no time, God parted the red sea and the Israelites and Moses "passed through it as on dry land" (Hebrews 11:29) So Moses faith not only benefited him but all those who learned from it as well.

There are so many lessons that we can take away from Moses. Important lessons like always striving to help others grow in faith and centering our life on God's promises. For example, helping children learn about God, who he is and what he has done for us at a young age because by doing that we are gradually building their faith. Putting God first and as our utmost priority is very important too, especially in this crazy world that we live in, we have so many distractions stopping us from getting close to God and building a relationship with him. But as God promised us, "I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5) meaning that if we put him first in our lives, focus on our worship and relationship with God, then he will continue to provide for us, and stick by our sides forever.

Reflections on Ezra
Prince Akum - Delivered June 28 2020

Ezra was a religious leader of the Jews who returned from exile in Babylon. His name means HELP, and his whole life was dedicated to God and to his people.

I picked Ezra because he is a unique character and I do not really hear people talk about him a lot.

So, me picking him means I get to learn more about him.

Ezra was a priest; he was also a scribe who was skilled in the law. He represented the position of stricter Babylonian Jews who are upset by reports of loyalty in Judah.

Ezra main purpose was to inquire into the deteriorating religious conditions of the Jewish community in Judah as this can be read in Ezra 1:3. Ezra was to help rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem

Ezra was sent to Jerusalem to teach the laws of God to people who did not know them.

Once that was done, he read the law of Moses to the Israelites, and the priest and entered a covenant to keep God's law and separate themselves from other people.

There are horrible results for not studying Gods words.

The ignorance of the scripture lead to captivity in Babylon which Ezra leads a return.

If we do not read our bible, we are just causing grief and struggle to ourselves.

So, ask yourself this question, have you been reading and studying your bible daily, or have you forgotten to let God speak to you?

Reflections on Esther
Delivered by Taryn Cook - June 28, 2020

Good morning Congregation!

Today I am going to be talking about Esther.

Esther, the Queen of Persia, used to be called Hadassah, meaning to hide or conceal, before she changed it to Esther, which means star, to hide her Jewish identity from the King.

I chose Esther because I see myself in her in one main way: To me God works in my life by using other people.

The same can be said for Esther as God's name isn't mentioned once in the book, but his influence is definitely there.

That is also one of the many reasons that the book of Esther is so special. Esther is one of two books in the Bible named after and speaks purely about women, the other one being the book of Ruth.

In the 10 chapters that make up the book of Esther, there is a very important lesson that we all need to hear: God ALWAYS has a plan.

In Jeremiah 29:11 the Lord declares "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

And boy, did God have a plan in store to save the Jewish people during this time:

1. The Jewish people needed to be saved, so God gave them Esther
2. Mordecai helps Esther realize that using her God-given beauty and royal position as queen can save her people
3. God gifted Esther with her number 1 virtue: Courage

- a. Esther made the decision that revealing Haman’s plan to destroy the Jews was important enough that she goes to the King without requesting an audience with him
 - b. “I will go to the King even though it’s against the law. And if I perish, I perish (Esther 4:16)
4. It works! The Jewish people were saved!

In the end, what we can learn from Esther can be summed up as follows:

To have courage to not hide but to be a star and go against the flow because God always has a plan and if you have a part to play in it, then you are ready. God would not give you something that you can’t overcome.

Reflections on Ruth
Ava Johnson - Delivered June 28, 2020

The Old Testament character I have chosen is Ruth.

The book of Ruth is a story of relationship, rescue, and love.

Ruth was a young woman from Moab who helps her mother-in-law Naomi, find the goodness and greatness of God.

In the beginning of Ruth, Naomi has lost her husband and two sons.

Through her grief of her family's loss she has decided to blame God as the cause of their deaths.

Sometimes we can be like Naomi in this situation, when something bad happens in our lives we say that it is God's fault.

But God is not to be blamed for our problems, instead He is praised for His goodness for God uses Ruth in this situation by getting her to help Naomi.

With Ruth by her side they create a strong relationship together where their greatest bond was their faith in God.

Ruth and Naomi came to Bethlehem as poor widows but became prosperous through Ruth's marriage to Boaz.

And yet the greatest blessing was not material; it was the quality of love and respect between Ruth and Naomi.

I picked Ruth because she is seen as an inspiration to people as she stayed faithful to God.

She is a great example in the Bible of love and loyalty.

Ruth is special in her faithfulness, kindness, integrity, and prosperity.

For her strength in her character and determination to God.

We learn from Ruth the greatness of true friends that can make us thank God with joy for the goodness in our lives today.

The relationships that God makes possible for us are one of His most special blessings.

God's living presence in a relationship has the ability to overcome differences that can create division, for God wants to be a part of all of our friendships in our life.

For He never leaves, He is always there by our side.

Reflections on Abraham
Ambang Kuchambi - Delivered June 28, 2020

Who is my character? – My character is Abraham.

Why did I pick this character? – I chose Abraham because he was the first person to be chosen by God for a role in the plan of redemption. I also chose Abraham because when God presented him with difficult challenges he still managed to stay strong and have faith in God.

Why is this character special? – Abraham is special because he always trusted in God even when it was difficult. He always kept faith and trusted in God's will for his life.

What were the character's virtues? – Obedience and faith were the greatest virtues in Abraham's life.

How did God use this character? – God used Abraham to be the father of many nations, He called Abraham to leave his old lifestyle of sin and to start a new life so that God would be able to bless him and bless others (the world) through him.

What lessons can we learn from this character? – Something we learn from Abraham is to leave our old lives of sin and allow God to change our lives. In order to receive God's blessings we need to deny ourselves and take up the cross. We need to allow him to take control of our lives and change it in ways we could never imagine. Another thing we can learn from Abraham is to listen to God's voice and do what he asks us to do, even though it might be difficult we always need to be obedient and have faith in God's will for our lives.

Reflections on Samuel

Georgie Kweindjeu – Delivered June 28 2020

TALKING POINTS:

Good morning congregation.

My character reflection is on Samuel.

I picked this character because for me he has a cool story with God.

And his story with God should be told

This character is special because

- He has an interaction with God since he was a youth.
- The interactions with God continued through his life
- From this relationship Samuel becomes a strong prophet.
- He was obedient and respectful to God.
- He is the model for the young person that is just discovering God.
- God uses Samuel to bring the people from where they were back to Him.

We can learn from Samuel that we should

- Always believe in God
- Time is no obstacle for God

Amen

Reflections on Job

Brittney Moti – Delivered June 28 2020

The person from the Bible I'm going to be talking about is Job.

I picked Job because, first it is to me one of the most interesting books I've read in the Bible.

Second, it's easily understood, and third it has so many lessons to teach.

I consider Job to be special for many reasons because he feared God, he walked with God throughout his life and he had a good relationship with God.

He displayed strength and perseverance even while being faced with hardships such as the death of all his children, his properties, his wealth and his livestock.

I consider Job to be special for many reasons because he feared God, he walked with God throughout his life and he had a good relationship with God.

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I find this to be really special about Job because despite all these calamities, he refuses to blame God or fall into sin, which provoked Satan to bring more sufferings to Job.

Meanwhile many people in his position will turn away from God, curse at him and turn to bad behaviors thinking it will wipe away their sufferings.

Even though when Job had enough, he didn't curse God, instead he cursed the day he was born.

Job's virtues were; he was righteous, blameless and upright, he was fearful of God, he was patient, he persevered, he was faithful and loyal, and he never gave up.

God used Job by permitting Satan to test Job and cause suffering but not permitting him to kill Job, as Satan argued that Job is only faithful to God because

of his wealth and that if his wealth is taken away from him, he will turn away from God.

God wanted to prove to Satan that Job is faithful to him no matter the condition he is in and that he is God.

Throughout the book of Job, there are many lessons we can learn from Job.

Some of them which I think are very important are:

- Trust God, no matter the circumstances
- Righteousness will be rewarded
- Suffering is temporary
- Faithfulness is forever,
- Righteous people suffer even if they haven't done anything wrong,
- Worship God even in your hard times, do not give up and when you doubt everything around you, don't doubt God.

Amen.

Reflections on Joseph

Bryanna Moti – Delivered June 28 2020

My biblical character is Joseph son of Jacob.

I picked Joseph because I grew up knowing about him, his story, and life.

His story is very interesting because he went from nothing to something

Joseph is very special because first, he could interpret dreams.

Secondly, he was born to his father Jacob in his old age.

He walked with God all the way and had a great relationship with him.

Joseph's biggest moral virtue was trusting and believing in God, even though Joseph stayed in prison for so many years he never gave up once.

Another virtue is forgiving.

I would easily suggest Joseph's ease of forgiving his own brothers for selling him into slavery must be considered one of the greatest human acts of kindness ever.

The suffering of Joseph – physical, mental and emotional agonies had been allowed by God's plan to save many lives.

As Joseph responded to suffering with faith, meekness and humility God molded and shaped him.

God used him to interpret dreams, save the day and even the whole of Egypt from famine.

The lesson that I have learned throughout Joseph's story is waiting on the Lord is always worth it.

Waiting is one of the most difficult parts of a Christian life, but it can also be one of the most rewarding because it is in the wait that our faith is truly exercised.

Every day that passed with Joseph still in prison he worked towards building his faith in God and our waiting can do the same for us if we let it.

Another lesson I learned is that even when others are done with us, God is not.

Joseph's brothers had given up on him; they wanted nothing to do with him.

But God had other plans.

Even when it seems as if the world is turning against you, remember that we serve a God who sees and who cares, who doesn't turn his back on us and will never stop writing our story.

Amen.

Reflections on Joshua

Jayden Tanwani – Delivered June 28 2020

Good morning church.

Today I'll be talking about the book of Joshua and why I have chosen him.

My first question for this presentation is

Who is Joshua?

Joshua was the leader of the Israelite tribes after the death of Moses, who conquered the land of Canaan and distributed it's land to the twelve tribes.

Why did I pick Joshua?

I picked Joshua because he's an example of a strong leader.

You must be ready and listen and move quickly when God instructs us.

Once Joshua had God's instructions he carried them out diligently.

Strong leaders are led by God.

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Strong leaders are led by God.

Why is Joshua special?

Joshua is special because out of over a million people Joshua was one of the few people who left Egypt and entered the Promised Land.

God commanded him to take his people across the Jordan and into the Promised Land.

God promised success wherever he went as long as he and the people kept the Lord's word.

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What were some of Joshua's virtues?

Joshua was an obedient, responsible, good and righteous leader.

With the context of God's covenant with Israel established with Moses, obedience was required for the blessings God promised.

In Joshua 1:7-8 it shows how God told the people not to neglect the laws that Moses had gave them and to see them wherever they went.

Joshua told the people to obey the law.

Overall Joshua was prepared to take responsibility after Moses' death.

How did God use Joshua?

God used Joshua to guide and lead the Israelites after Moses death.

Joshua 1:2-3 shows how God commanded Joshua to lead the people to the Promised Land while under his guidance.

What lesson can we learn from Joshua?

One lesson we can learn from Joshua is that God encouraged all His chosen leaders to be strong, brave, and obedient.

Joshua demonstrated his faith in God as he took up the challenge to lead the nation.

As Christians we must obey God's word and He will give us the strength and courage we need to face any challenge that may come our way.

Thank you.

Amen.

Challenge to the Congregation – Pastor Anita

We are all extremely proud of our High School youth! They have presented very compelling people from the scriptures. I hope today that you will take a moment to call, text, or WhatsApp, and reach out to our young people and their parents and let them know how much you appreciated their messages.

As you go through the week think about the examples each of the lessons you received from the sermonettes have impacted you.

Ask yourself am I like Moses? Do I put God as a first and utmost priority in my life? When we come to difficult moments in our lives will we turn around or will we stand firm and watch as God parts our Red Sea and allow us and others to pass through on dry land?

Am I like Ezra? He understood that the people had suffered horrible results from not studying God's words. Ezra is the constant reminder that we must read, meditate upon, and study our Bibles daily.

Am I like Esther the young queen "born for such a time as this"? She risked her life to see the plan of God furthered. Do you have the courage to not hide from God's plan for your life, but to walk with courage to fulfill it?

Am I like Ruth? Ruth allowed God to use her and her faith to bless her relationship with Naomi, and it changes their fortunes. The greatest blessing was not material, it was the quality of the women's relationships with one another and with God. Love and loyalty are the hallmarks of Ruth.

Ask yourself, am I like Abraham? Do I respond in faith and trust in God's plan for my life? Am I willing to leave my old life and allow God to change me and fashion a new life for myself?

Am I like Samuel? Am I obedient and respectful to God? Do I walk with God daily and is the impact of my relationship with God visible to the people around me?

Am I like Job? From Job we learn to trust God even in difficult circumstances, remembering that suffering is temporary, but God's faithfulness is forever. Can I remember to worship God in hard times, not give up and when I doubt everything around me not to doubt God.

Am I like Joseph son of Jacob? Can I remember that when the world seems to be turning against you, I should remember that I serve a God who sees and who cares and who doesn't turn his back on us and who never stops writing our story

And finally, am I like Joshua, who showed us that we must be ready and listen and move quickly when God instructs? Ask yourself; am I willing to demonstrate my faith in God by putting that faith into the action of obedience to God?

Remember God designed each of us for a time 'such as this'. As Christians we are to fully embrace God's call upon, and movement in, our lives. God desires to do wonderful and marvelous things for us, but we have to be serious about our relationship with Him.

God's word challenges each of us to ask ourselves; "*Am I living the life I've been given like God's presence in my life makes a difference?*"

Amen

Pastor Anita