The Promise of Proven Proclamation

Preached by: Bishop Aaron L. Harris Sr.
Text Focus: *Deuteronomy 8; Matthew 3:16–4:11*

1. God's Proclamation Over Your Life

God speaks a word over His children — a **proclamation** — and that word is **proven** through testing.
Jesus models this in the wilderness, where He stands firm on Scripture and corrects Israel's failures.

Key Insight:

"Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord."

Biblical Foundations

- **Deuteronomy 8:** God humbles, tests, feeds, preserves, and fathers His people.
- **Matthew 3–4:** Jesus is affirmed as the beloved Son, then immediately tested in the wilderness.

Jesus' Three Temptations

1. **Stones to bread** — physical need
2. **Pinnacle of the temple** — presumption
3. **Kingdoms of the world** — idolatry

Jesus answers each with **Deuteronomy**, showing Scripture as the believer's weapon.

2. The Wilderness: Preparation, Not Punishment

The wilderness is God's classroom — the place where identity, trust, and obedience are formed.

Purpose of the Wilderness

- To humble and test
- To reveal what's in the heart
- To teach dependence on God
- To prepare for promise

302-983-2372 aharris.sr79@gmail.com

Testing vs. Temptation

- **Temptation** (from the enemy): aims at failure
- **Testing** (from God): reveals growth and strengthens faith

God nominates those He trusts — like Job — because He knows they can pass.

3. Identity Under Attack

The enemy's question: **"If You are the Son of God..."**
Not questioning *whether* Jesus is the Son — but *what kind* of Son He will be.

Application:
The enemy challenges believers the same way, especially in hardship.

The Devil = The Accuser He contests God's proclamation:
"You're not blessed... not healed... not favored... not enough."
But believers answer with **the Word**, the only offensive weapon in the armor of God.

4. Israel's Failures vs. Jesus' Fulfillment

Israel's Journey

- Delivered from Egypt
- Fed with manna
- Guided by cloud and fire
- Given water from rocks
- Protected from serpents
- Battles fought by God

Yet they murmured, complained, and turned a **40-day journey into 40 years**.

Jesus Corrects the Pattern Where Israel failed, Jesus obeyed.
Where Israel complained, Jesus trusted.
Where Israel doubted, Jesus stood on the Word.

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5. Holding to God's Proclamation

God's word is a **launching pad** — but it becomes *proven* only when tested by:

- Sickness
- Difficulty
- Abandonment
- Overwhelm
- Storms
- Pain

Encouragements from Scripture

- You are the head and not the tail
- Above only and not beneath
- Fearfully and wonderfully made
- By His stripes you are healed
- He will never leave nor forsake you
- Greater is He that is in you
- The Lord delivers from all afflictions

6. Identity, Dignity & Black History Reflection

The sermon acknowledges the contradiction between America's founding ideals and the historical dehumanization of Black people.
Yet God's proclamation restores dignity beyond societal labels.

Truth for All Peoples:
African American, Irish, Italian, Middle Eastern, Asian — all are made in the **imago Dei**, children of the King.

7. Practical Posture for Believers

- Repentance and humility
- Prayer for a clean heart and right spirit

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- Praise instead of murmuring
- Gratitude for life, limbs, and breath
- Walking in obedience
- Reading "the manual" — Scripture

Declaration:
Today is brighter than yesterday, and tomorrow will be brighter than today.

Assignments for the Week

1. Read **Deuteronomy 8**; list reasons for wilderness testing and personal parallels.
2. Study **Matthew 3:16–4:11**; memorize Jesus' responses.
3. Start a **Proven Proclamation Journal**.
4. Replace murmuring with gratitude for 30 days.
5. Word study: **accuser**, **devil**, and the **armor of God**.
6. Write a one-page identity statement in Christ.
7. Read a historical account of slavery's contradiction to American ideals; reflect on God-given dignity.

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