



DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONALS

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On Sunday, we explored the story of Joshua's encounter with the Commander of the Lord's army before the battle of Jericho. This divine encounter transformed Joshua's understanding, as he realized that God's presence was not about taking sides in human conflicts but about aligning with God's sovereign will. Through humble submission, Joshua experienced the miraculous collapse of Jericho's walls, demonstrating the power of faith and obedience to God's commands. This message challenged us to reflect on our own lives, asking whether we are genuinely seeking to align ourselves with God's will or merely seeking His endorsement for our own plans and desires.

Monday: Encountering the Divine Authority

Scripture Reading:

"When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, 'Are you for us, or for our adversaries?' And he said, 'No; but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come.' And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, 'What does my lord say to his servant?' And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, 'Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.' And Joshua did so." - Joshua 5:13-15 (ESV)

Devotional:

Joshua's encounter with the Commander of the Lord's army was a moment of divine revelation. The question, "Are you for us, or for our adversaries?" was met with an answer that transcended human conflicts: "Neither." This encounter highlighted that God's presence is not about endorsing our sides but about inviting us to align with His divine purposes.

In our own lives, we often seek God's endorsement of our plans. We desire His blessings on our endeavors, asking Him to support our ambitions. However, this passage reminds us that God calls us to a higher perspective. Rather than asking God to take our side, we should seek to align ourselves with His

will. True discipleship is about submission to God's authority and recognizing His sovereign plans for our lives.

Joshua's response to the divine Commander was one of humility and worship. By falling on his face and removing his sandals, Joshua acknowledged the sacredness of the moment and his need to submit to God's authority. Similarly, we are called to approach God with a heart of reverence and humility, seeking to discern His will rather than imposing our own. Are we willing to bow down, remove our "sandals," and acknowledge that we are on holy ground, in the presence of the Almighty?

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Joshua's response to the divine Commander teach us about humility and worship?
2. How can we seek to align our lives with God's will rather than asking God to endorse our plans?
3. In what ways can we recognize and respond to God's authority in our daily decisions?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we acknowledge Your sovereignty and authority over our lives. Help us to seek Your will above our own and to recognize the sacredness of Your presence. Grant us humility to submit to Your plans and guidance in all that we do. May our lives be a reflection of Your purposes, and may we walk in obedience to Your divine will. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Tuesday: Holy Ground

Scripture Reading:

"Then he said, 'Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.'" Exodus 3:5 (ESV)

Devotional:

The command to remove sandals as a sign of reverence appears both in Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush and Joshua's encounter with the Commander of the Lord's army. In both instances, the removal of sandals symbolized recognition of God's holiness and the sacredness of His presence. It was an act of submission and humility, acknowledging that the ground was holy because God was there.

As believers, we often forget that we are continually in God's presence. Our lives are lived on holy ground because God is with us. This awareness should transform how we approach every aspect of our daily lives. Just as Moses and Joshua removed their sandals, we are called to lay down our pride, our distractions, and anything that stands between us and God. It is a reminder to treat every encounter with God as sacred and worthy of our utmost reverence.

The act of removing our sandals is not something to be literally applied today, but it symbolizes the need to approach God with a heart stripped of pretense and self-sufficiency. Are we willing to take off our "sandals" of pride, anxiety, and control, recognizing that we are in the presence of a holy God? Let us take time to reflect on the sacredness of God's presence in our lives and respond with reverence and awe.

Discussion Questions:

1. What "sandals" do we need to remove in our own lives to acknowledge God's holy presence?
2. How can we cultivate a sense of reverence for God's presence in our daily routines?
3. What can we learn from Moses and Joshua about recognizing and responding to God's holiness?

Prayer:

Lord, we come before You in awe of Your holiness. Teach us to recognize the sacredness of Your presence in our lives. Help us to remove anything that hinders our relationship with You. May we approach You with hearts full of reverence, humility, and worship. Let our lives reflect the holiness of Your presence. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Wednesday: God's Plans, Not Ours

Scripture Reading:

"Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." Proverbs 19:21 (ESV)

Devotional:

Joshua's encounter with the Commander of the Lord's army challenged the common assumption that God exists to endorse our plans. Instead, it highlighted the truth that God's purposes are far greater and often different from our own. Joshua was prepared to lead a battle with human strategies, but God's plan involved marching around the city in silent faith.

In our lives, we often make plans, set goals, and pursue dreams, expecting God to bless them. However, God's purposes transcend our understanding. His plans are designed for His glory and our ultimate good. When we align our lives with God's will, we experience the peace and assurance that come from knowing we are walking in His purpose.

Are we willing to lay down our plans and trust in God's greater purpose? Are we open to the possibility that His ways may look different from our expectations? True faith involves surrendering our agendas and embracing God's will, knowing that His plans are perfect and will ultimately prevail.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we discern God's will when our plans differ from His?
2. In what ways can we learn to trust God's purposes even when they don't make sense to us?
3. How can we cultivate a heart that is willing to submit to God's plans?

Prayer:

Father, we acknowledge that Your ways are higher than our ways, and Your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Help us to trust in Your perfect plans for our lives. Give us the faith to lay down our own desires and embrace Your will. May we find peace in knowing that Your purpose will stand. Guide us, Lord, in all our decisions so that we may walk in alignment with Your divine purpose. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Thursday: Faith That Obeys

Scripture Reading

"By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days." Hebrews 11:30 (ESV)

Devotional:

The fall of Jericho's walls is a powerful testament to the faith and obedience of the Israelites. God's instructions to Joshua to march around the city, blow trumpets, and shout might have seemed irrational by human standards. Yet Joshua and the people obeyed God's commands without question, demonstrating their faith in His power to deliver.

Obedience to God is not always easy, especially when His instructions seem to defy logic or challenge our understanding. However, true faith is marked by a willingness to trust and obey God, even when it doesn't make sense to us. It is through such faith and obedience that we see God's power manifested in our lives.

The story of Jericho reminds us that the victory comes not from our strength but from our faith in God's promises. Are we willing to obey God's commands, even when they seem unconventional? Can we trust Him enough to follow His lead, knowing that He sees the bigger picture? Let us strive to cultivate a faith that is characterized by obedience, trusting that God's ways are always for our good and His glory.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some areas in your life where God is calling you to step out in faith and obedience?
2. How do you respond when God's instructions challenge your understanding or comfort zone?
3. How can the story of Jericho inspire you to trust and obey God in your own circumstances?

Prayer:

Lord, we thank You for the example of faith and obedience demonstrated by Joshua and the Israelites. Help us to cultivate a faith that trusts in Your promises and obeys Your commands, even when we don't understand. Give us the courage to follow where You lead, knowing that Your ways are perfect. May our lives be a testimony of Your power and faithfulness. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Friday: The Sound of Victory

Scripture Reading:

"Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!" - Psalm 47:1 (ESV)

Devotional:

When the Israelites shouted as the trumpets sounded, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the city was taken. This shout was not just a noise; it was an act of faith and a declaration of trust in God's power to deliver. Their shout signified their belief that God had given them the victory, even before the walls fell.

The act of shouting in faith is symbolic of proclaiming God's victory over our challenges and adversities. It is a declaration that we trust in God's promises and believe that He is able to overcome any obstacle. Our shouts of faith may not be literal, but they are the expressions of praise, prayer, and confidence in God's power at work in our lives.

Are we willing to raise our voices in faith, even before we see the walls fall? Can we proclaim God's victory over our circumstances, trusting that He is working for our good? Let us learn to praise God in the midst of our battles, believing that He has already secured the victory for us through Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some ways you can express your faith and trust in God's promises during challenging times?
2. How can the act of praising God impact your perspective on your circumstances?
3. In what ways can you declare God's victory in your life today?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we shout for joy and praise You for the victories You have won on our behalf. Help us to trust in Your power and proclaim Your goodness, even before we see the results. May our lives be filled with expressions of faith, knowing that You are working for our good. Teach us to praise You in all circumstances, confident in Your promise of victory. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Saturday: God's Mercy in Judgment

Scripture Reading:

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

Devotional:

The story of Rahab in the midst of Jericho's destruction is a powerful reminder of God's mercy. Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, chose to hide the Israelite spies and expressed faith in the God of Israel. In return, she and her family were spared when the city was destroyed. Rahab's story illustrates that God's grace is available to all who turn to Him in faith, regardless of their past.

Rahab's inclusion in the lineage of Jesus, as recorded in the genealogy of Matthew, emphasizes that God's grace can transform any life. Her faith was counted as righteousness, and she became an ancestor of the Savior. This demonstrates that no one is beyond the reach of God's mercy. Regardless of our past, when we come to God in faith, we find forgiveness and a new identity in Christ.

Rahab's story challenges us to embrace God's grace and extend it to others. Are there people in our lives whom we view as beyond redemption? Do we believe that God's grace is sufficient for all? Let us remember that salvation is a gift of grace through faith, not based on our works or merit. May we share this message of hope with those around us, proclaiming that God's mercy is available to all who believe.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Rahab's story challenge your understanding of God's grace and mercy?
2. In what ways can you demonstrate God's grace to others, regardless of their past?
3. How can we be more intentional in sharing the message of God's mercy with those who feel unworthy of His love?

Prayer:

Gracious God, we thank You for Your abundant mercy and grace. Like Rahab, we acknowledge that we are not worthy of Your love, yet You extend it to us freely. Help us to embrace Your grace and live in the freedom it brings. May we share the message of Your mercy with those around us, confident that no one is beyond Your saving power. Teach us to be vessels of Your love and grace in this world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.