

Spirituals and the Exodus: Soon I Will Be Done with the Troubles of this World

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: God Waits in the Chaos

Reading

Joshua 3:14-17 So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.

Devotional

The priests carrying the Ark stood firm in the middle of the Jordan River while the entire nation crossed safely. This wasn't efficiency; it was love. God didn't rush ahead, leaving stragglers behind. He positioned Himself in the center of chaos and waited.

Where are you experiencing chaos today? Financial uncertainty? Relational turmoil? Health struggles? God hasn't abandoned you to figure it out alone. He stands in the middle of your Jordan, holding back the waters, waiting patiently for you to cross safely. He won't move until you're through. His presence in your chaos isn't temporary—it's steadfast. Take courage today knowing God waits with you, not ahead of you.

Reflection

Where do you need to recognize God's patient presence in your current struggles?

Day 2: From Adam's Sin to Christ's Salvation

Reading

Romans 5:12-21 When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned. Yes, people sinned even before the law was given. But it was not counted as sin because there was not yet any law to break. Still, everyone died—from the time of Adam to the time of Moses—even those who did not disobey an explicit commandment of God, as Adam did. Now Adam is a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come.

But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous. God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Devotional

The Jordan's waters piled up at a town called Adam—the very name of the one who brought sin into the world. What a profound picture! The chaos and destruction that began with Adam's rebellion were held back so God's people could pass through safely.

But Adam's story isn't the final word. Paul reminds us that if one man brought death, how much more has one man—Jesus Christ—brought life! The waters of judgment that should have consumed us were absorbed by Christ on the cross. He didn't part the waves; He went under them for you. Today, you don't face the consequences of Adam's fall alone. You live under the abundance of grace through Jesus. Let that truth wash over you.

Reflection

How does understanding Christ's sacrifice change your perspective on your struggles today?

Day 3: Water Transformed

Reading

Titus 3:3-7 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Devotional

In the Old Testament, water represented chaos, death, and destruction. But something remarkable happened through Jesus—those same waters became instruments of healing and new life. The waters of baptism don't drown us; they cleanse us and mark us as God's beloved children.

This transformation mirrors what God does in every area touched by His grace. Your past failures? Transformed into testimonies. Your deepest shame? Washed clean. Your greatest fears? Turned into opportunities for faith. The same God who turned the threatening Jordan into safe passage transforms the threatening circumstances of your life into pathways of grace. What looks like chaos to you is simply the canvas where God paints His redemption story.

Reflection

What area of your life needs God's transforming touch today?

Day 4: The Promise of No More Tears

Reading

Revelation 21:1-7 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’^[b] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Devotional

"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain." John's vision of heaven isn't wishful thinking—it's our guaranteed future because of Jesus' resurrection.

When we pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we're asking for this reality to break into our present. While we wait for complete fulfillment, we can experience foretastes of heaven's peace today. God's kingdom advances every time love overcomes hate, forgiveness replaces bitterness, and hope defeats despair. You don't have to wait until eternity to experience God's comfort. He's wiping tears today, bringing glimpses of the "no more" that's coming. Hold onto this hope—it's anchored in resurrection reality.

Reflection

How can you live today in light of heaven's promised future?

Day 5: Soon I'll Be Done

Reading

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Devotional

"Soon I'll be done with the troubles of this world"—this isn't escapism, but confident hope. The enslaved who sang these words weren't giving up; they were holding on to the promise that their present suffering wasn't the final chapter.

Paul understood this. Though outwardly wasting away, he was inwardly renewed because he fixed his eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen and eternal. Your current troubles—whatever they may be—are temporary. The Jordan crossing awaits, and Jesus has already secured safe passage. This doesn't minimize your pain, but it does put it in perspective. One day you'll see loved ones again. One day the old order will pass away. Until then, you have a Joshua—Jesus—who saves, sustains, and promises to never leave you behind.

Reflection

What eternal truth do you need to fix your eyes on today to endure your temporary troubles?