

God Has No Blind Spots

By faith [Moses] left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible (Hebrews 11:27).

Scripture: Hebrews 11:23-31

Song: "By Faith"

The bay horse galloped toward the final jump. Its hooves thudded against the ground, sending up puffs of dirt. As its rider crouched low, the horse left the ground. Everyone cheered when the horse soared over the jump to land safely and win the prize. Once a horse takes off, it can no longer see the jump. Eyes on the sides of their heads give horses a wide-angle view to guard against predators, but they have blind spots in front and behind. Horses must trust their riders, who have gone ahead to check the jumps, and who go with them to guide them up and over to safety.

Perhaps Moses' feet sent up puffs of sand as he fled Egypt. Obstacles loomed ahead, and he couldn't see what lay beyond. But Moses chose to trust and follow God. He knew from experience that God went before him and would be with him to guide him to safety and his reward on the other side.

Many times we face obstacles that blind our way. But God has no blind spots, and we can trust Him to go before us in every situation and be with us through them all.

Father, help us trust You to guide us safely through every obstacle to our final reward with You. In Jesus' name, amen.

March 8–14. **Kathy O'Neill** lives in Colorado with her husband. She teaches art and Christian history and serves in local ministries.

Darkness to Light

Jesus asked [a man who was born blind], “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord, I want to see,” he replied.

Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you” (Luke 18:40-42).

Scripture: Luke 18:35-42

Song: “Fairest Lord Jesus!”

Claude Monet, the French impressionist who saw and painted how light changed the colors of meadows and cathedrals and water, was going blind as he was working on his last and most famous series, Water Lilies. As a young man, Monet said that it was as if a veil had fallen from his eyes when he first painted outside and saw the effects of changing light.

Though in the early 1900s cataract surgery was often dangerous, Monet had two operations so he could finish the water lily paintings and give their beauty to the world. As fair as those flowers are, though, when Jesus stopped in Jericho to miraculously take away the veil from a poor man’s physical and spiritual eyes, the first thing the man saw was fairer than any flower or work of art, for he saw the eternal beauty of his Savior.

Every person in the world is spiritually blind before Jesus removes the veil from their eyes. Each of us must, like the man in Luke 18, boldly call on Jesus and humbly ask Him to open our eyes to see His beauty and His salvation.

Father, thank You for changing our darkness into light so we may see the beauty of Jesus, our Savior. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Shadowy Thoughts

The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land (Joshua 5:12).

Scripture: Joshua 5:8-12

Song: “Still, My Soul, Be Still”

We were squished into one motel room, and everyone else was asleep—my husband, two children, and a large dog who twitched as she chased squirrels in a dream. But my thoughts kept chasing after recent events: the going-away party, loading the truck, and the first day on the road with excited children and an anxious dog. The adventure had begun, but as outside lights made shadows on the ceiling, worry made shadows in my mind. My husband’s salary had stopped. Could my teaching job alone support us while he attended seminary? Would God help us adjust from a rural town to city life and new schools?

The Israelites were moving, leaving the desert for the cities of the promised land. Excited men, women, children, and anxious animals had crossed the Jordan River on dry land and camped near Jericho. The adventure had begun; but within days the manna, the visible sign of God’s care and protection, stopped. Could they go forward to meet the challenges ahead with faith that God would fulfill His promises?

We go through many challenging transitions in life—new jobs, marrying, having children, retiring. We often worry, but the Lord reminds us of His faithful care in the past and urges us go forward to meet the challenges, confident that He will be faithful to fulfill His promises in the future too.

Father, thank You for Your faithfulness that never fails to guide us through all life’s transitions. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Haystack Prayers

On the second day [the seven priests and the armed men] marched around the city once and returned to the camp (Joshua 6:14).

Scripture: Joshua 6:6-14

Song: “Jesus Shall Reign”

In 1806, five Williams College students prayed in a meadow in western Massachusetts. One student, Samuel Mills, wanted Americans to take the gospel beyond America, but some believed other lands might need to be civilized or even conquered by armies first. A sudden thunderstorm drove the students to take shelter in a haystack. They prayed and continued praying for God to open the way for foreign missions. Four years later they persuaded New England ministers to form the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, which soon sent missionaries to India. Within 50 years it had sent out over 1,000 more missionaries. Praying under the shelter of a haystack may seem strange, but God used this beginning to launch worldwide American missions.

God’s strategy to take Jericho seemed strange too. March around Jericho for seven days, blowing trumpets without shooting a single arrow? But then, on the seventh day, God brought down the walls of Jericho and launched the conquest of the land.

Day after day, even year after year, we may pray for someone to accept Christ or for a difficult situation to change. If we see no result, we may question God’s wisdom. At those times we must remember the experiences of God’s people and trust that He knows the best way and time to answer our prayers.

Father, help us trust You to accomplish Your purposes. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Shelter in the Storm

“This oath . . . will not be binding . . . unless . . . you [Rahab] have tied this scarlet cord in the window” (Joshua 2:17-18).

Scripture: Joshua 2:15-24

Song: “A Shelter in the Time of Storm”

A Colorado blizzard raged outside. Wind plastered snow against our windows until only a gray light filtered through. Meteorologists had predicted the dangerous storm and warned people to stay home. But the day began with little indication of the coming storm, and many people went out to work or shop. By midday the pressure dropped rapidly, and the weather exploded into what is called a bomb cyclone. Snow and accidents blocked highways, stranding people in their vehicles. Thousands of frightened motorists had to be rescued and taken to shelters.

Outside Rahab’s house in Jericho, a battle raged. The day had begun like the past six, with the Israelites marching around the walls, but today the army circled seven times. And after a great shout, Jericho’s walls crumbled. Now sounds of clashing spears filled the streets, and frightened people found no safety. Rahab’s house, however, did provide safety because the scarlet cord identified it as a house where people trusted God for shelter, rather than manmade walls.

The walls of our Colorado house stood firm through the blizzard, but manmade walls do sometimes crumble. The promises of Christ’s protection will never crumble, though; they will stand firm through every storm. When we shelter under the cross of Christ, we can be confident God will watch over us through whatever life brings.

Father, thank You for sheltering us through the storms of life. In Jesus’ name, amen.

True Hope

Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring her out . . . in accordance with your oath to her” (Joshua 6:22).

Scripture: Joshua 6:22-25

Song: “Jesus Paid It All”

Emma Whittmore, a wealthy socialite, attended an evangelistic meeting at a city mission in New York City’s slums. There she committed her life to serving God and began helping in the mission. Still, when Emma felt called to ministry among prostitutes, she asked God for some other, any other, calling. She soon asked His forgiveness and began work that often broke her heart but also brought blessings to her and many women. In 1890, Emma opened her first Door of Hope home so women could leave the streets and find hope in Christ for a changed life. More homes soon opened around the world.

In Jericho God did not wait for Rahab to become “good enough” before changing her heart to believe in Him. Her faith led her to defy danger to help the Israelite spies. And when they returned to rescue her, she knew it was in fulfillment of God’s promise to open a door to her future as part of His family.

Over and over, God shows us that no one is too sinful to be saved. He can open the heart of even the worst sinner to believe in Christ’s sacrifice and be saved. Jesus is the door of hope that leads to a changed life.

Father, thank You for rescuing us and opening the door so we may live for You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Safe Harbor

Then the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands” (Joshua 6:2).

Scripture: Joshua 5:13–6:5, 15-16, 20

Song: “Hallelujah, What a Savior!”

At tremendous cost, the D-Day invasion established a beachhead, but without supplies the armies couldn't advance far. Hitler had heavily fortified northern Europe's ports, so the Allies built artificial harbors and assembled one off Arromanches, a small beach town on Normandy's coast. Right after D-Day, engineers sank old ships as a breakwater and assembled miles of floating docks and roadways that stretched from the beach out to deep water so large ships could unload men and supplies. This safe harbor allowed Allied soldiers to penetrate Hitler's Atlantic Wall and liberate Europe.

The Israelites crossed the Jordan, but could go no farther without taking Jericho, which guarded the passes into Canaan. But a direct assault on the heavily fortified city was almost impossible, and a siege would dangerously slow their advance. The Lord gave Joshua a specific battle plan and also gave Jericho into his hand. The Israelites could miraculously penetrate Jericho's walls and enter the promised land to find a safe harbor from their enemies.

Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection won the battle over sin and death and opened the way for all who believe in Him to enter an eternal promised land, where there is no more sin or disease or death. There we will find a safe and restful harbor for our souls.

Father, thank You for sending Jesus so we may put our faith in Him and receive eternal life through His victory over death. In Jesus' name, amen.