



Standard LESSON RESOURCES®

DEVOTIONS

FALL 2026

DIGITAL EDITION

DEVOTIONS®

Daily Devotions for September—November 2026

“Again the Israelites cried out to the LORD,
and he gave them a deliverer.”
(Judges 3:15)

Devotions® is published quarterly by Standard Publishing, an imprint of David C Cook, DavidCCook.org. © 2026 by David C Cook, 4050 Lee Vance Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918, U.S.A. Standard Lesson Quarterly® Curriculum and David C Cook and its related logo are registered trademarks of David C Cook. All rights reserved. ISBN 978-0-784-74020-0. Large Print ISBN 978-0-784-74067-5. Printed in South Korea. All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked (KJV) are taken from the King James Version. Lessons and/or Readings are based on the *Uniform Series International Sunday School Lessons International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching* Copyright © 2022 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Digital products are subject to the End User License Agreement (EULA) found at DavidCCook.org/eula/ and any additional terms or restrictions that may accompany the product. Digital products cannot be returned, sold, or relicensed. This product license is good for 6 months. After 6 months, you must purchase another license.

Editor: Karen Cain

Cover Design: Jon Middel

Design & Production: Dale Meyers

Vol. 70, No. 1

Generations: From Canaan to Jerusalem

The title of this quarter almost lends itself to a *Netflix* series—the Israelites sure give us plenty to talk about. We look at their story and mentally scream from thousands of years away, “*WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!*” The Creator of the universe chooses them to be His set-apart people. He promises a sacred relationship with Him, a land flowing with milk and honey, protection against their enemies, and His provision for everything they could ever need, want, or ask for. In return, He expects first place in their hearts.

Simple, right? We look at these chapters in history and wonder why the Israelites can’t get it right. With everything at stake, why do they make it so hard? The idols, the doubts, the egos, the longing for the one thing they don’t have . . . can they not see that God has a plan?

Hello, Pot. Meet Kettle.

It’s tempting to look at the Israelites as if somehow we would make entirely different, morally correct, God-honoring, respectable, perfect choices 100% of the time. And yet, we don’t—at least I don’t. Not today, not yesterday, and not tomorrow. I trip up on the same things as the Israelites. I don’t always trust that God has it under control. I get scared that He’s forgotten me. I think that maybe I should just do things my way to be sure they get done on my timetable. I decide that sometimes there’s a better way than what I know to be His. Just this once, at least. How about you?

My prayer is that these Scriptures and daily devotions remind you of two vitally important truths: 1) God will never give up on

you; and 2) His plan to deliver and redeem you is flawless—and complete. Over and over (and over), the Israelites fail. But when they call out to God, He is always there. This is true for us as well. We are never so far gone that He won't hear us and come running. In fact, He's already there. His plan to save us has been in place since the beginning of time, and all we have to do is cry out to Him.

Will we struggle? Yep. Will we wander away? For sure. Will we doubt and panic and do stupid things out of fear? Absolutely. Will God always be there? Will He still demand first place? Will He lead us back and let us try again when we fall short? Undoubtedly and forever. So, let's give the Israelites a break and learn to see ourselves in their story. The meantime is a little messy, but our promised land is heaven, and our victory song was written on the cross.

May His mercy, grace, and peace be yours.

Karen

Approach Each Day with a Heavenly Perspective

Using these devotions, you'll read the recommended text of the Bible, consider how its message applies to your life, then use the brief prayer to begin a conversation with God.

If you follow the ISSL Series, you'll likely notice that these devotions align with the ISSL Home Daily Bible Readings. Every day you pick up this devotional, countless people around the world are reading and studying the same verses as you. Opening the Bible each day invites us to a deeper fellowship with Christ as we apply God's Word to our lives.

See What God Has Promised

So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD (Genesis 13:18).

Scripture: Genesis 13:14–18

Song: “Standing on the Promises”

Promises are at the center of public life and everyday experience. Politicians offer promises to convince voters to support them. Most of us regularly sign contracts binding companies to deliver what they’ve promised, and we make a promise when we initiate a lease or take out a mortgage. Lawyers build careers, and court dockets are filled with disputes over promises made and broken.

But no one is suing God for breach of contract. The Scripture record as well as history confirm that God kept the promise in today’s passage. Seeing that gives us confidence to believe He will keep the myriads of promises sprinkled throughout the Bible. Reading one of them after another gives us courage to face life another day.

We may find it difficult to believe some of God’s promises. When that happens, we can imagine how Abram felt when he heard the words we’re reading today. God was prophesying something that seemed impossible to Abram. We do well to remember him when we doubt whether God’s promises can come true in our lives too.

Father, thank You for Your faithfulness to deliver on all You’ve promised. Encourage me as I choose to believe what You’ve told me is true. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

September 1–6. **Mark A. Taylor** retired from a lifetime career in Christian publishing and continues to write from his home north of Cincinnati, Ohio. He tells his story of Alzheimer’s caregiving at www.unchosenjourney.com.

The Promised Land Revealed

Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have let you see it with your eyes” (Deuteronomy 34:4).

Scripture: Deuteronomy 34:1–12

Song: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

When I think of promises made to me, two categories stand out. One is the set of promises my wife made when she married me. She stuck with me “for better, for worse, in sickness and in health.” Despite tough times and disappointments, hospital trips and sick bed vigils, she stood beside me. A close second are the promises made by employers and the government to pay me what they said they would. Long before payday, I could count on what I would receive. And when it came time to claim the promise made to me for decades by the government, my Social Security checks arrived on schedule month after month after month.

When God showed Moses the promised land, He was proving how He would keep the promise made to Abraham and his heirs centuries earlier. Imagine what Moses must have been thinking when all he could see before him would soon belong to his people. God keeps His promises!

The biblical record convinces us that God will ever be faithful. “Be content with what you have,” the Hebrews writer advises, “because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5).

Father, thank You for all the signs I see that You are keeping Your promises to me. Be with me today. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

God's Promised Rest

Anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his (Hebrews 4:10).

Scripture: Hebrews 4:1–10

Song: “There Is a Balm in Gilead”

When I came down with COVID-19, I had no choice: I had to rest, and this was good. Of course, I did not enjoy the runny nose and aggravating cough. For a couple of days, I had the worst sore throat I've ever experienced. I cancelled my haircut and skipped my weekly Bible study. I didn't visit my wife living in a memory care center. I stayed in bed in the mornings and curled up under a blanket in the afternoons. I shamelessly watched hours of TV; I had no energy for anything more. I was very tired, and so I rested. After five days of isolation, I was ready to get back into the world, but I'll admit I enjoyed all the time I'd had with no obligation besides taking care of myself.

But too often we feel guilty or lazy when we rest. People are counting on us. Our long list of goals and duties contains many items not yet handled.

We do well to remember God ordained rest. Who could be more powerful than God? Who could accomplish more? But He rested, which means taking a break is holy obedience, not selfish indulgence. Sometimes a nap may be the most God-honoring pastime we could pursue!

Father, thank You for giving the command and setting the example for us to rest. Help me to feel Your presence close the next time I take a break. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

God's New Covenant

For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy (Hebrews 10:14).

Scripture: Hebrews 10:14–18

Song: “Jesus Paid It All”

When someone close to me made an appointment to visit, I was pretty sure I knew what he wanted. But when he arrived and asked me to forgive him “for everything,” I melted. In just a moment, years of resentment were washed away with my tears. But then he wanted to know what he should do next. He said he owed me restitution, although that thought had not occurred to me. Over the next year he sent me thousands of dollars to repay me for bills he decided he should have covered. Today I wonder if he felt he needed to earn my forgiveness.

And I wonder how many of us feel the same way about God. Do we feel a need to sacrifice to God, work for God, or tell others about God—all to be “good enough” for the forgiveness we know we need from Him? If so, today’s Scripture is a good reminder. The only necessary sacrifice has already been offered. Jesus paid the price we owe.

Gratitude for forgiveness received will always spur deeper devotion than fear of forgiveness unearned. Breathing freely the sweet oxygen of God’s grace, we worship and obey Him not to earn His forgiveness but to thank Him for it.

Father, thank You for providing the ultimate sacrifice to take the punishment I deserve. Help me remember it will always be enough and that You couldn’t love me more than You already do. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Whom Shall I Fear?

Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me (Psalm 27:7).

Scripture: Psalm 27

Song: “I Need Thee Every Hour”

My wife is afraid of spiders and snakes, but my fear is vermin. I hate to admit it, but once when we found a mouse in the garage, my wife called me later at work to tell me she had caught it. I don't even like to see squirrels scurrying along the fence in my backyard. They remind me of rats. And when I thought I heard mice in the attic above my bedroom, I couldn't sleep. With long breaths punctuating my prayer, I repeated a phrase adapted from Psalm 3:5, 6: “I will . . . not fear . . . for God . . . is with me.”

But the issues the psalmist confronts in today's passage are much bigger than household pests. He's facing an army of enemies. Maybe even his parents are against him. And he knows his only strength will come from God.

Whatever our fear, there's much to help us in today's psalm. Not only will God be with us, but He can lift us above the thing we fear. We can live holier, more obedient lives, as we turn to God in the face of our oppression. And in the shadows of the night, we can cope with our fears by breathing deeply and repeating these words: “Hear my . . . voice when . . . I call, Lord.”

Father, help me to see how You are protecting me today from the consequences of what I fear most. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Be Strong and Courageous

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

Scripture: Joshua 1:1–11

Song: “Same God”

Do a Google search for “locker room pep talk,” and you’ll find dozens of them, almost all sharing common attributes. They’re energetic. They remind the team of what they’ve accomplished, all they’ve learned in practice, and how they’ve overcome other excellent teams. They challenge players to depend on their teammates and to find in themselves the strength to win.

Today’s Scripture is a pep talk of another kind, directly from God, and it’s not at all about depending on yourself or any other person. Here God tells Joshua, again and again, to be strong and courageous—not because of his people or himself, but because God’s strong arm will support him, and God’s sure Word will direct him. Joshua does not need athletic prowess but humble obedience to accomplish the daunting tasks God has set before him. God will be the source of his victory.

That same God is available today for every believer. When we study God’s Word and embrace His will, we can obey with confidence that He will not fail us. God can be just as present with us as He was with Joshua. When you’re as committed to His purposes as Joshua was, “The Lord your God will be with you.”

Father, give me grace to rely on You instead of myself and to seek and see the strength You’ve promised to those who depend on You. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Hold Fast to the Teachings

So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:13–17

Song: “Basics of Life”

Whether it’s working on a church day when I don’t *have* to, being too insecure to speak up when I should, or simply skipping daily Bible reading because I’m too tired, there are countless times I’ve been tempted to hide my beliefs or “ease up” on my spiritual practices. And Christians of old likely faced similar temptations.

It’s easy for doctrine to become a religion without feeling. But the guidelines Jesus gave Paul were intended to fuel our faith while keeping us steady. When society’s morals shift, instead of questioning our own stances, these beliefs of right and wrong guide us back to the straight and narrow path Jesus knew few would choose.

The world is always going to want us to compromise and bend “the rules” to make life more convenient. But Christianity isn’t about convenience. We are called to be set apart, just as Israel was expected to act differently than all other nations. We are called to hold fast, unchanging, to God’s never-changing Word.

Father, keep me constant and faithful when I am tempted to give into the world’s ideals. Guide me today and always in Your truth. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

September 7–13. **Anissa Kennedy’s** writing career blossomed in college, where she co-created the university’s first journalism club and maintained the weekly “Spiritually Speaking” column. She is still an active writer, and you can find more of her work at therelevant Rambler.com.