

**Joshua 5:13-6:2**

<sup>13</sup> Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

<sup>14</sup> "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord<sup>[e]</sup> have for his servant?"

<sup>15</sup> The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so...

<sup>1</sup> Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

<sup>2</sup> Then the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. NIV

1. God is in no way \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ our prayers \_\_\_\_\_ to our \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The most important question to ask is, "Are \_\_\_\_\_ God's \_\_\_\_\_?"
3. God's greatest \_\_\_\_\_ is our \_\_\_\_\_.

A private writing of Lincoln's, Sept., 1862, a difficult time in the war:

"The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God can not be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party—and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect His purpose. I am almost ready to say this is probably true—that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere quiet power, on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds."

**Matthew 18:7**

<sup>7</sup> Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come! NIV

**Psalms 19:9**

<sup>9</sup> The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. KJV

An excerpt from Lincoln's second inaugural address (Scripture in italics, Mt.18:7, Ps.19:9):

"Neither [side] anticipated that the cause of the conflict [i.e., slavery] might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. *'Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!'* If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, *'the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'* "