

## HOLD ON TO THE SCARLET THREAD

**Joshua 2:18** *Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.*

Rahab was called a harlot. In ancient times, harlots were also innkeepers engaged in the business of lodging and not prostitution necessarily. This information is important because the Israeli spies were not in the land for lust and physical pleasures, but on a holy mission. An inn (modern day motels/hotels) were public spaces where the spies could gather important information, hence a strategic location. However, these spies clearly were not professional or discrete enough because their cover was blown. “And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country” (Joshua 2:2). Here is where the great faith of Rahab is triggered. Firstly, we need to understand that, along with all the inhabitants of Jericho, was well informed about the mighty acts of the God of Israel.

**Joshua 2:10** *For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.*

**Joshua 2:11** *And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.*

The difference between Rahab and her people was the fact that while her people decided to put up resistance, she had faith in the mercy of the God of Israel, and decided to take side with him and his people. Rahab had the kind of faith that James applauds: “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:20). “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:26). She knew that she and her family would perish in Jericho if she did not act on her faith. It is a tragedy that while we speak there are people who actually believe in the saving work of Jesus Christ and his message, but have not acted upon their faith for fear of loss of reputation, income or influence. Rahab had nothing to lose – as a harlot she already had a reputation that was damaged beyond repair. Perhaps we need to first pray that God will reveal our true reputations or status as he sees us.

**Isaiah 64:6** *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

**Romans 3:10** *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.*

**Matthew 9:13** *But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Rahab hid the spies from Israel and risked her life. Significantly, she saved the lives of the 2 spies by letting them down from her house with a scarlet chord. “Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall” (Joshua 2:15). We know this chord was scarlet because later, the spies instructed her to let the **same** scarlet chord hang out of her window as part of the covenant they entered into with her. “Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee” (Joshua 2:18). The scarlet chord points to none other than the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. To begin with, we escape the corruption of a world that is doomed to destruction through the identity and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as the spies escaped Jericho through the scarlet chord.

**2Peter 1:4** *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Next, the spies Rahab that she too would escape the coming destruction in the same manner as they did. There is only one way for all people to escape the coming destruction – through the identity and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God himself was manifested in the flesh (I Tim 3:16) and died on the Cross of Calvary to atone for our sins. He rose up from the dead the third day, commands us to be baptized in his name for the forgiveness of sins, and fills and seals us with his own Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). This is the scarlet chord of Rahab. We are all Rahab today – we confess that we are sinners whose reputations are depraved beyond repair in the sight of God. This is why Jesus came. Just as the scarlet chord pointed to a way through the window, and out into freedom, the blood of Jesus points the soul to the way out of the corruption of this world and into heaven. Come let us hold fast onto the scarlet chord everyday and follow it to the window of heaven. Ultimately, the blood of the animals brought for sacrifice ended up in a vessel in the hands of the High Priest who took it carefully and prayerfully into the Holy of Holies. Hallelujah!

**Lev 16:15** *Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat.*

Similarly, the scarlet thread could only lead to freedom in Jesus name. The spies were inspired to make this covenant guided by the Spirit of God and the experience of their parents in Egypt. Their parents shared the incredible story of the deliverance from Egypt through the blood-stained doorposts in every Israelite home. I can imagine these children wondering wide-eyed about the blood-stained doorposts. They must have many questions about that fateful night when they were delivered because of the covenant of the blood. Now, they extended this covenant by faith to a Canaanite woman, a harlot. God is gracious – he does not hate the Canaanites, just their sins. But where he found faith, such as Rahab's, he blessed her.

Imagine how closely and diligently Rahab watched the scarlet thread every day! She must have checked regularly to see if the chord had slipped out of the window. What if someone stole it? Perhaps a stray dog may have begun chewing and pulling at it – the fear was palpable. The covenant was clear – ensure the scarlet chord is visible when Joshua will come. Not only did she diligently attend to the condition of the scarlet chord, but she also persuaded her entire family to stay indoors when Joshua came. Consider how difficult this must have been when people were screaming and dying outside. “Do not leave the house”, was the constant refrain from Rahab. She had to have enough faith for the entire family. May God grant us the faith of Rahab to daily ensure that our salvation is intact and thriving. Let us persuade our families to stay indoors in the church where the blood is. The covenant we have with our Joshua (Jesus and Joshua are the same name) is the same – ensure that his blood is visible on your soul when Jesus returns.

**Hab 2:3** *For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

**Heb 10:37** *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

I said earlier that Rahab was a harlot and a Canaanite. At face value, these are two very damning credentials, but the faith of Rahab changed her destiny. She became the mother of Boaz, the husband and ancestor of none other than King David. “And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse” (Matthew 1:5). Rahab also saved her entire family. Take care of your faith in Jesus Christ; it will propel you to heights of blessing that we cannot begin to contemplate. Hold on tight to the scarlet chord, people of God!