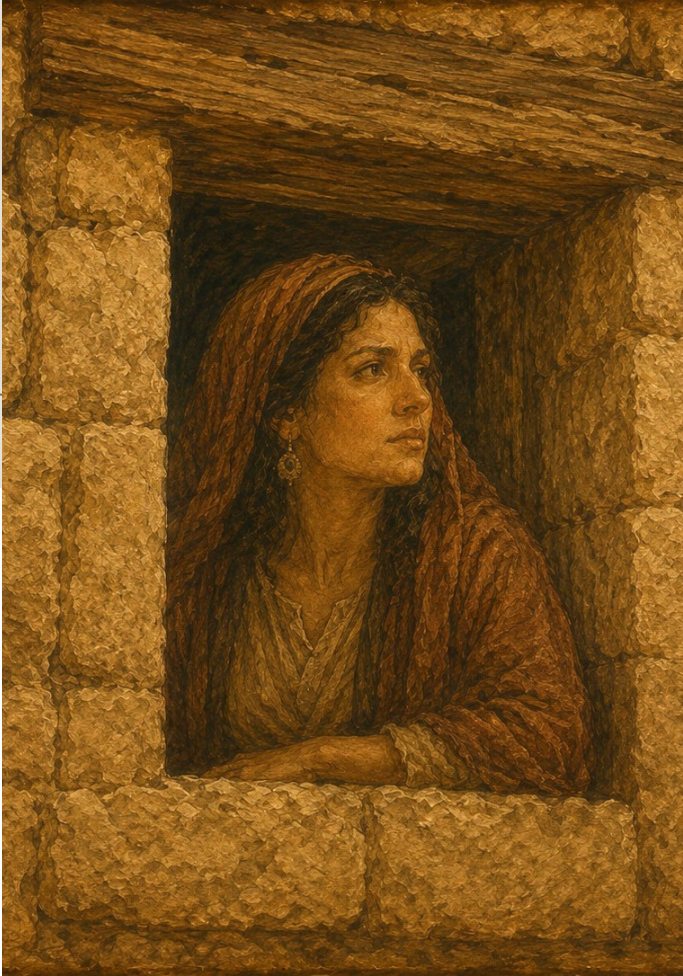



RAHAB



JOSHUA 2, 6:17-23

Of Cords and Courage



NAME : **Rahab** Derived from the Hebrew word rachab, meaning "spacious" or "broad."

RAHAB

Some scholars interpret this symbolically as "opening oneself"

ABOUT: Rahab, we are told, was a prostitute, an innkeeper, and perhaps made linen or at least the fibres for it. Her story is one of resourcefulness, courage and quick thinking. Joshua has sent spies over the Jordan to scout out the promised land, which they will soon be taking possession of. Jericho was a walled city, the walls around 4 mtrs high with a natural spring, fresh water sources in this arid place, which meant the ability to grow food and support communities. Rahab lived on the edge of the city, with a window in the wall looking out over Canaan. When the spies enter the city incognito, she saves their lives and negotiates a similar favour for herself and her family in return. The ruins of Jericho are there today, and one piece of the wall is still standing. Many have doubted the dates and events here, but no one can doubt the truth that praise and faith bring down walls.

Scripture.

2 Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

2 The king of Jericho was told, "Look, some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." **3** So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land."

4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. **5** At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, they left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them." **6** (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.) **7** So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

THREADS OF REDEMPTION

Rahab it seems, made a snap decision who she was going to side with. She hadn't had any formation or firsthand experience of the Hebrew God, but the second-hand stories were enough for her to risk everything and go all in. The need for God and freedom is so deeply written into us that we just need grace and courage to seize it. Rahab was underestimated by the king's men, It was easy for them to believe she was oblivious. They didn't even check the piles of flax on her roof. Flax is a fibrous plant that was soaked and then left to dry to create the raw fibres for weaving into Linen. Linen was used for priestly garments, the tabernacle curtains, and, of course, burial shrouds. We are in the early days of the story of Salvation; the flax here wasn't yet at its fullness or finished product, as was the case for Rahab, but it still served a purpose, God was still able to use it and her to protect and save. Perhaps these sacred fibres reached their purpose in the hem of a garment grasped some 1400 years later, worn by a long awaited descendant of Rahab.



Small group questions

1. We are all a work in progress, perhaps till the day of our earthly death. Have you ever felt you have to be in a place of perfection before God can use you powerfully?
2. The desire for freedom and truth is written into our very DNA. Is there a part of your faith life that feels like maintenance rather than fulfillment or freedom?
3. What would true freedom look like to you?
4. Rahab was resourceful but had perhaps been forced into a state of self-sufficiency. How easy do you find it to ask for help?

HANGING BY A THREAD



Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof and said to them, “I know that the Lord has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone’s courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

“Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them and that you will save us from death.”

“Our lives for your lives!” the men assured her. “If you don’t tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the Lord gives us the land.” So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. She said to them, “Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way”.

Reflection -The scarlet cord is a symbol of salvation. From the Passover when the blood of the lamb on the doorposts saved them from destruction, so too does this red cord save Rahab and her family. And looking forward it foretells of Christ’s blood, pouring from his side on the cross, ensuring our own salvation. The window representing the wound in His side. In Hebrew the word Tikvah (תִּקְוָה) means rope or cord and is the same word for Hope.

Small group questions

1. When you feel scared, threatened or in danger, what helps you to cling to Jesus?
2. Rahab gathered her family into the place of safety. What can we practically do to bring those we know and love into this freedom?
3. The cord was made from many threads, beaten and thrashed (called scutching and hackling) before being woven together to give it strength; the colour came from crushed scale insects called Kermes Ilicis. How have your times of trial made you stronger? What or who was woven into your story to make you strong enough to survive?

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION



Scripture

¹⁵ On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times. ¹⁶ The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the army, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city! ¹⁷ The city and all that is in it are to be devoted^[a] to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent.

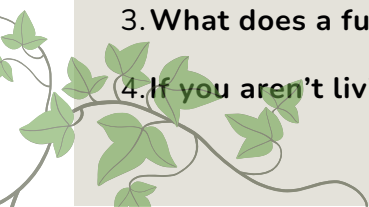
²⁰ When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city....

²⁵ But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho—and she lives among the Israelites to this day.

Reflection

The walls of Jericho are brought down merely through praise and worship of God, what probably felt like it was going to be a fierce battle and required courage turned out to be as simple as lifting their hearts to the Lord in praise. He was able to do the work when their hearts were given over to Him. Is there a battle you are facing? Perhaps the Lord is calling you to simply worship in love and trust so He can overcome it for you.

Questions

1. Where in my life is the Lord asking me to allow a wall to come down?
 2. Is there somewhere that feels like safety but is actually holding me back from fulfillment?
 3. What does a fulfilled, God-filled life look like to me?
 4. If you aren't living one, what is keeping you from grasping it?
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TAKING IT TO PRAYER

FROM PSALM 18 AND
THE ANIMA CHRISTI

I love you, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; My God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,

All: Let my voice always praise you

My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and I have been saved from my enemies.

All: Let my heart always praise you

It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he causes me to stand on the heights. He trains my hands for battle;

All: Let my soul always praise you

Sing...

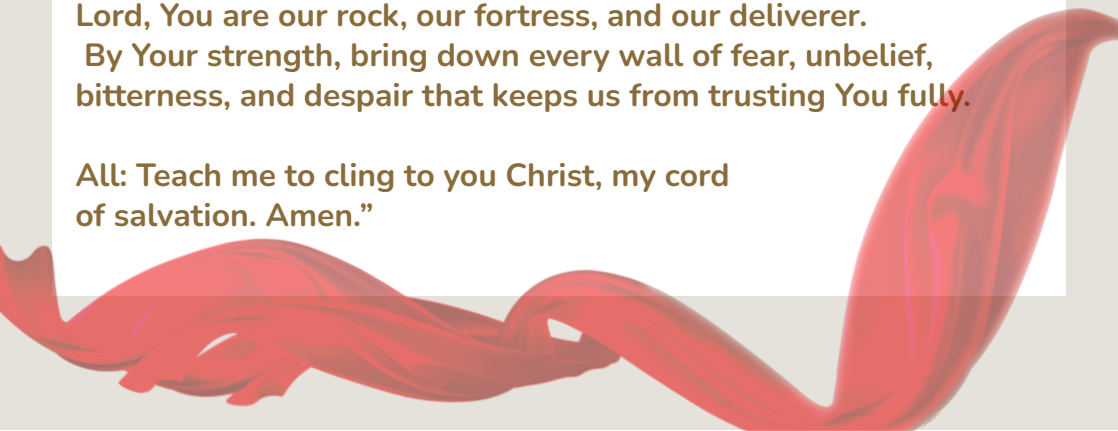
Soul of my saviour, sanctify my breast, body of Christ be thou my saving guest. Blood of my saviour, bathe me in thy tide, wash me with water flowing from thy side.

Strength and protection, may thy passion be: O blessed Jesus, hear and answer me. Deep in thy wounds Lord, Hide and shelter me: So shall I never, never part from thee.

Lord, You are our rock, our fortress, and our deliverer.

By Your strength, bring down every wall of fear, unbelief, bitterness, and despair that keeps us from trusting You fully.

All: Teach me to cling to you Christ, my cord of salvation. Amen."



WORKS OF MERCY - Visit the imprisoned

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.- Galatians 3:28

Human trafficking is more prevalent in the world than we would ever like to think. What can you do to help? Here is a link to a website with indicators to look out for and the right questions to ask if you suspect. Being informed helps. There are many other ways you can encourage awareness. It is everybody's responsibility, not just law and border enforcement's job. Check out and share the link. Tear Fund is a good charity if you wish to financially support this effort

<https://www.state.gov/identify-and-assist-a-trafficking-victim/>

PRAISE OPENS PRISONS

Why is worship important?

We aren't asked to worship God to appease some ego-driven master. It isn't transactional either; we aren't given deeper or better graces because we worship Him. We aren't even loved more because of it.

Our worship doesn't change God at all; we are called to worship because of the change that it brings about in us. God knows, always knew, that this is the way we become formed into his image and reflection.

It shifts our focus from self to Him, the source of love and mercy. We are influenced by those we spend time with; in worship, we spend time with God, and this worship shapes our character.

Worship helps us to put things in the correct order. By giving time to worship, we give God His rightful place in our lives. This helps us to remain humble and open to His work in us.



WAYS TO PRAISE

Participate fully in the Holy Mass

The Mass is the highest form of worship because it makes present Christ's one sacrifice on Calvary. By praying, singing, listening to Scripture, and receiving the Eucharist worthily, you join your praise to that of the whole Church.

Spend time in Eucharistic Adoration

Sitting quietly before the Blessed Sacrament is a beautiful act of worship. You can praise God through silence, Scripture, spontaneous prayer, or simply by being present with Jesus.

You might pray: "Jesus, I adore You, I thank You, I trust in You, and I love You."

Pray the Liturgy of the Hours or with the Psalms

Also called the Divine Office, this is the official prayer of the Church. Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are especially filled with psalms of praise and thanksgiving. By praying them, you unite your voice with Catholics throughout the world.

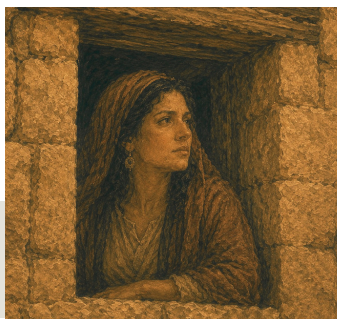
Praise God through thanksgiving in daily life

Worship extends beyond church walls. Offering thanks for blessings, recognising God's hand in ordinary moments, and dedicating your work, joys, and sufferings to Him are all acts of praise.

Sing!

Hymns and praise and worship songs, in the car, in the bath, anywhere you are, lift your heart to Him with your voice, give it all you've got. St. Augustine says:

"He who sings prays twice."



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