

SERMON: The Blood Never Loses Its Power

GOOD Morning OIC & Welcome to Father's House

In my last Message in Joshua, I closed with the following comments:

“Jesus is calling on us, like Joshua, to conquer new territory here in Osaka. He also is asking us to work, and believe God for a more splendid Church in the days ahead.

I, your pastor, **believe this will be OIC's FINEST HOUR. I see God's love flowing down from Heaven upon us at OIC until it bursts out our doors to reach a dying city, Osaka. Let us continue and at the same time start anew. God is not discouraged by our challenges. We were delivered from bondage of our Egypt of sin by Jesus. It is time to build anew, remembering that the Spirit who brought us out of our Egypt is still right here! We must not let fear drive faith out of our hearts of love towards Jesus. God's faithfulness is spoken: in (Haggai 2.5) My Spirit remains among you, just as I promised when you came out of Egypt. So do not be afraid.** Yes, Life shrinks and expands according to our courage! This is by His Spirit who remains in the hearts of God's People. Let's ask for courage and believe together!”

This week we will follow Joshua as he leads God's people into the *Promised Land, Canaan*. I titled this Message: **The Blood Never Loses Its Power** to connect Rahab's Scarlet Thread with the Blood of Jesus.

(Joshua 1.10) *Joshua then commanded the officers of Israel, 11 “Go through the camp and tell the people to get their provisions ready. In three days you will cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you.”* Joshua instructs the families of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh to stay on this side of the Jordan, but all their men to advance across the Jordan to fight. The people express total commitment to Joshua as their new leader after Moses' death. For in **(Joshua 1.16-18)** *16 They answered Joshua, “We will do whatever you command us, and we will go wherever you send us. 17 We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses. And may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. 18 Anyone who rebels against your orders and does not obey your words and everything you command will be put to death. So be strong and courageous!”* It is worth noting that the people now say to Joshua, *So be strong and courageous!*” This is the same call for courage and encouragement that God gave him

already in **(Joshua 1.9)** *This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*”

TAKEAWAY#1

When Leaders and Followers agree in God's work, the unity includes a sense that it is God, not man, who is the Leader.

(Joshua 2.1) *Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia Grove. He instructed them, “Scout out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho.” So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night.*

We recall how Moses sent spies into Canaan many years before. Those men, except Caleb and Joshua, let *fear* not *faith* rule in their hearts. We read in **(Numbers 13.30-32)** *30 But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. “Let’s go at once to take the land,” he said. “We can certainly conquer it!” 31 But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. “We can’t go up against them! They are stronger than we are!” 32 So they spread this bad report about the land among the Israelites: “The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge.*

TAKEAWAY #2

Now at the edge Jordan River the Courage God gave to Joshua was caught by these spies. Yes caught, like a *good disease*. The opposite of catching a bad disease like COVID. **Faith and courage affect everyone around you. As the Apostle Paul wrote in (Hebrews 10.24) Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. Having faith and courage motivates other Christians.**

TAKEAWAY#3

In taking new territory for God there will be opposition. **(Joshua 2.2-7)** *2 But someone told the king of Jericho, “Some Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land.” 3 So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: “Bring out the men who have come into your house, for they have come here to spy out the whole land.” 4 Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, “Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn’t know where they were from. 5 They left the town at dusk, as the gates were about to close. I don’t know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them.” 6 (Actually, she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath bundles of flax she had laid out.) 7 So the king’s men went looking for the spies along the road leading to the*

shallow crossings of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king's men had left, the gate of Jericho was shut.

Now we see the glorious faith confession by the prostitute, Rahab. The Bible discards all claims of righteousness in any sinner who receives the gift of faith in God onto eternal life. Prostitute or prestigious or famous citizen, *all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God.* In **(Romans 3.23)** What the New Testament says for Christians is true also in the Older Testament. In **(Ephesians 2.8)** *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.* Reading Rahab's salvation testimony according to God's standards in the Older Testament in **(Joshua 2.8-11)** **8** *Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went up on the roof to talk with them. 9 "I know the LORD has given you this land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror. 10 For we have heard how the LORD made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. 11 No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the LORD your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.*

Rahab's Faith was courageous. She chose to disobey the King of Jericho for she had a better King, the God of Israel. In **(Joshua 2.3-4)** **3** *So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: "Bring out the men who have come into your house, for they have come here to spy out the whole land." 4 Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, "Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from.*

Now Rahab, after expressing her heart faith in God, gets bold and courageous with God's spies.

(Joshua 2.12-14) **12** *"Now swear to me by the LORD that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that 13 when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families."*

14 *"We offer our own lives as a guarantee for your safety," the men agreed. "If you don't betray us, we will keep our promise and be kind to you when the LORD gives us the land." The spies, men of courage and faith, heard Rahab's confession of faith, and accepted her to be true. Her sinful past meant nothing to them. They pledged their own lives to her.*

(Joshua 2.15-21) **15** *Then, since Rahab's house was built into the town wall, she let them down by a rope through the window. 16 "Escape to the hill country," she told them. "Hide there for three days from the men searching for you. Then, when they have returned, you can go on your way."*

17 *Before they left, the men told her, "We will be bound by the oath we have taken only if you follow these instructions. 18 When we come into the land, you must leave this scarlet rope hanging from*

the window through which you let us down. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house. 19 If they go out into the street and are killed, it will not be our fault. But if anyone lays a hand on people inside this house, we will accept the responsibility for their death. 20 If you betray us, however, we are not bound by this oath in any way.” 21 “I accept your terms,” she replied. And she sent them on their way, leaving the scarlet rope hanging from the window.

POWER OF JESUS' BLOOD

The Bible tells us in **(Hebrews 9.22)**... *For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.* The Book of Romans makes it clear that Man's Sin Problem is only solved by the Death and Blood Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross. Our Lord Jesus is the Word of God. That He appears throughout the whole Bible is true. A foreshadowing of His Blood Sacrifice was illustrated in the sign that the Israelite spies set to protect Rahab and her Family during the Battle against Jericho. The spies chose a scarlet thread for Rahab to hang out her window for protection as Israel soldiers entered Jericho to destroy all inhabitants. *The scarlet thread is a metaphor or likeness to the scarlet blood that Jesus' shed for our sins on His Cross. It is our safety against all enemies, natural or spiritual.*

JESUS' BLOOD BOUGHT US

We read the Apostle Peter's instruction to Christians in **(1 Peter 1.17-20)** *17 And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as “temporary residents.” 18 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. 19 It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. 20 God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake.*

JESUS' BLOOD KEEPS US, DAY BY DAY

(Hebrews 10.12) *But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. And in (Hebrews 12.24) You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks of forgiveness* Jesus is at God's Right Hand. There He interceded in prayer and power for us to be Born Again. He also spiritually applies the new covenant of His Blood day by day to cleanse Christians of sins they confess. Therefore He also mediates our forgiveness by His sprinkled Blood to keep us safe and give us power day by day.

JESUS' BLOOD HUMBLER US IN SUCCESS

God rejoices with our successes in our lives as we walk with Jesus. We can have confidence in our relationship with Him. Yet we must always remember our utter dependence on Him. As He said in **(John 15.5)** *“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.* The Apostle Paul expressed this also in **(Galatians 6.14)** *As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world’s interest in me has also died.*

JESUS' BLOOD ENCOURAGES US IN VALLEYS OF SADNESS

Our final peace and safety for our eternal life in Glory with Jesus rests completely on His perfect obedience to God as the Blood Sacrifice for our sins. We cannot add to that work, nor do our failures take away from it. He exclaimed this for us on His Cross in His Last Breath in Death in **(John 19.28 - 30)** *28 Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, “I am thirsty.” 29 A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. 30 When Jesus had tasted it, he said, “It is finished!” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

RAHAB OUR EXAMPLE FOR FAITH

We might wonder was Rahab making a confession of Faith just to please the spies, or truly Faith in God. But we see she not only is recorded in the Older Testament, but in the Newer...even as in the Family Line of Jesus our Lord, to Joseph the husband of Mary. .

Reading in **(Matthew 1.4-6):**

Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).

Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).

Obed was the father of Jesse.

6 Jesse was the father of King David. Now skipping forward many generations: we read in

(Matthew 1.16) *Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.*

Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

Rahab kept following the true God for Holy Spirit put her in the List of Bible heroes of the Faith in **(Hebrews 11.31)** *It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute was not destroyed with the people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.”*

Rahab had courage as she put her faith in the true God of Israel and His Promise by His Spies. She put her faith in the *Scarlet Thread*. Christians put their faith in the Blood of Jesus, their *Scarlet Thread of life*. Rahab's faith saved her and her family from destruction. Our faith saves us from God's Judgment and eternal destruction. Rahab's faith led to a new life: from prostitute to living a godly life which led to her great great greatgrandson, Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Our faith in Jesus' Blood leads to our being New Creations in Christ, and an abundant life.

SCARLET THREADS AND JESUS' BLOOD TODAY

Rahab risked passerby's noticing the obvious *red scarlet thread*. It was hanging from her window! It would be well for me if my life makes the effect of Jesus' Blood Atonement noticeable to all onlookers. What is there to be ashamed of? Let men and devils gaze if they will, the Blood of Jesus is our boast and our song! Be encouraged, dear Christians. For there is One who will see the Scarlet Line, Jesus' Blood, even when from weakness of faith we cannot see it ourselves. God the Judge will see it when destruction comes. When Jericho fell literally, the walls fell supernaturally. We see this in **(Joshua 6.20)** *20When the people heard the sound of the rams' horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the town and captured it. But one wall did not fall! The wall where Rahab lived. It stood firm holding the scarlet thread for her and her family's protection. Only family members inside the home with the Blood of Christ applied are safe. Our nature is built into the wall of humanity. Yet when destruction strikes the human race, we Christians shall be secure. Dear OIC Church, Let us all tie the Scarlet Thread of Jesus Blood afresh in our windows and Rest in Peace.*

Let Us Pray,

REFERENCES

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