

Joshua 2:12-24 – Dominion Starts in the Family

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Before we can make an impact in the world for Jesus Christ, we have to be strong and united in our homes! For us to be strong and united in our homes we have to have a uniting force – a person or a principle that unites us. That force is a covenant faith in Jesus Christ. When many strong and united families join together in the church we can then set our sights on the world - to bring the world under the dominion of Jesus Christ. God frowns 看不慣 on detached parties in war. So it was not surprising to see that covenant sister Rahab, united with the Jews, wanted to work for expanding the kingdom – and she started with her family. This is what God will teach you today.

Our headings are:

Rahab Requests Protection for her Family,

Rahab was Required to live faithfully for her family's protection,

Rahab's Family was Required to live faithfully to receive protection.

Our goals are: That **you will learn to plead for and work for covenant blessings to come on those who are closest to you, knowing that a strong family can accomplish more for Christ's kingdom into which you were graciously brought.**

Rahab Requests Protection of her Family

12 "Now therefore, I beg you, **swear** to me **by the LORD**, since I have shown you kindness, that **you also will show kindness to my father's house**, and give me a true token, 13 "and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

1. Rahab had established her faith with her new found blood brothers. Based on that unity of faith, she then pleaded for covenant blessings upon her family. She had already confirmed that she knew the covenant God – Jehovah – and that he was the God of heaven and earth, and that he had given the Jews Canaan, and that Abram's Seed would bring blessings on all the nations of the earth, and that none could stop him, so it is understandable that she wanted those covenant blessings for her family.

Acts 2:39 "For the **promise is to you and to your children**, and to all **who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call."

She knew that covenant blessings came through family members.

1Corinthians 7:14 For the **unbelieving husband is sanctified** 圣洁 **by the wife**, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; **otherwise your children would be unclean**, but now they are holy.

Notice how even Rahab's language changed. These were not the words of a harlot 妓女. She asked the spies to swear by Jehovah – not some generic non-existent pagan 异教徒 god. And **Rahab did not simply have a desire for her family's physical life.** What a good daughter and sister!

2. And isn't this for what you plead as well? Isn't this how you pray for your boys and girls? Isn't praying for your parents' salvation the most incredible way to honor your parents? Do you not pray that your brothers and sisters will always walk with the Lord? Don't you pray that they might enjoy that covenant promise of eternal life in that heavenly Canaan?

1John 2:25 And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

Dominion begins in the family.

3. And notice how different this is from today when children are trained to think selfishly. As I mentioned last week, how easy it is to dump 抛弃 old parents and grandparents in a nursing home so they won't bother you in your work. And because grown children are busy with many other personal things, they find it hard to pick up a phone and call their parents. Faith is shown by love. Love is not a feeling. Love is an act of good will toward God and your neighbor.

James 2:18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.** 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

Rahab was Required to Live Faithfully for her Family's protection

14 So the men answered her, "**Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours.** And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you." 15 **Then she let them down by a rope through the window,** for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. 16 And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." 20 "And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear."

1. The spies then made an oath to bring in Rahab's family into the covenant family and offered protection to them. And note the **strength of the language of the oath that they used:** our lives for yours...we will give our lives as a guarantee for your life...They would rather die than break a promise they made to a covenant child. But their **oath was conditional.** Christians do not make unconditional covenants. **There were 3 conditions.**

2. First, Rahab was required to help protect them in their war against the 7 nations of Canaan by keeping their work secret. She could not hinder 阻碍 the war effort by causing the Canaanites to set an ambush for Israel. John Calvin believed that this requirement to keep this secret was for her own protection...that if she told anyone she would be killed. I believe that was for protecting Israel and Rahab.

You are your brother's keeper. Bear one another's burden. This is what you vow when a child is being baptized or a new member joins the church. If you don't want to be involved in the life and work of the church, how are you contributing to the kingdom?

17 So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, 18 "unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of **scarlet cord** 朱红线绳 in the window through which you let us down, and unless

you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home.

3. Second, Rahab had to hang a scarlet cord hanging down from her window. There is no proof why they chose a scarlet (red) cord (other colors might have been more visible), but we can make some reasonable conclusions.

It is not unreasonable to see how similar this was to **blood of the Passover lamb** that was brushed upon the doors of the Jews in Egypt – **a blood which protected them from death.**

Exodus 12:23 "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel 过梁 and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike *you*."

It is not unreasonable to see how this was a picture of the **blood that flowed down from the Lord's side when he was on the cross**, a blood that saved anyone who looks to it. Scarlet was constantly associated with the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament and pictured the cleansing from sin. Leviticus 14:4,6,51; Numbers 19:6. And was not the Lord, as your sacrifice, covered in a scarlet robe.

Matthew 27:28 And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.

Certainly the cord down the window was to show the distinction between the covenant people and the non-covenant people. Even though her family might not have been believers, because they were in the covenant, they enjoyed some of the blessings of the covenant.

You have 2 similar tokens today. **We have the red wine that we share in the Lord's Supper. We do not share it with those who don't submit to the Lord. In doing this we distinguish ourselves from them. We also have baptism that distinguishes us from non-believers,** though God has changed our **baptism from blood** to water, as Jesus instructed. Those who reject Christ and therefore cannot have the Lord's Supper and the Lord's baptism do so at their own peril 冒险. And to enjoy these benefits, **you make a profession of faith** – a witness to your Christian brothers that you belong to Jesus Christ as well and **entitled to all his protection!**

4. Third, Rahab had to make sure that her family remained in the "covenant" house to receive the benefits from it. She could not force them, but she was to urge them to her fullest ability to remain in the covenant community.
You too have a covenant obligation to work to convince your relatives by your lives and testimony that there is not safety in eternity without Jesus.

5. Rahab's 1st act following the oath of the two spies was to deceive the Canaanites and make them think that the spies were not near Canaan, and sending the spies to the mountains to hide. In the mountain of the Lord is safety. (Verse 16) Did they hide from lack of faith? No. Faith does not remove the responsibility to work. This old woman of questionable reputation was used by God to play an important part in the war effort. She had to live faithfully in order for her and her family to live in safety.

This old woman became one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ.

Rahab's Family was required to live faithfully for protection

19 "So it shall be that **whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head**, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. 21 Then she said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

1. Rahab's family also had to follow stern/严格 instructions if they wanted to be protected. They had to stay in the house with the red cord hanging out the window. To wander meant death. Later, these people showed their faith and remained in Rahab's house until they were taken to safety with God's people.

Joshua 6:23 And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.

It is not hard to see how covenant children endanger their spiritual health when they walk away from the blessing of the covenant. This is why you must work and pray tirelessly to make sure covenant children remain in the covenant. This effort to keep them faithful to the covenant must be much stronger than your efforts to feed them, than your efforts to give them a university education, than your efforts to make them fit in socially, and than your efforts to see them marry.

2. Rahab unequivocally agreed, by an oath, to fulfil her covenant responsibilities as she was told by the spies. She knew that the covenant could not succeed and dominion would not be established if commitment to the family, and then commitment to the covenant community was not required.

22 They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought them all along the way, but did not find them. 23 So the two men returned, descended 降落 from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. 24 And they said to Joshua, "**Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands**, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

3. You will notice at the end in V22-24, how Joshua himself was encouraged by God's providence 天意 and it helped to confirm that the Jews would get the land as God had promised them. God always gives ways to strengthen your faith.

Conclusion:

Rahab showed that she had faith **by her actions** by hiding the spies and deceiving the king of Canaan. Rahab showed her faith **by her testimony**, confirming that Jehovah was the true God. Today you saw further evidence of her faith when **Rahab showed love to her family and pleaded that they be protected** and be brought into the covenant family. She wanted to save them from destruction. Seeing her love for God and his people, the men agreed that they would protect her extended family, provided that **she remained faithful to the covenant** and provided that **they remained faithful to the covenant**.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Do you pray for your brother at home for your sister or brother? Do you plead that you and your covenant children, marked by the token of baptism, participate in the Lord's

Supper, remain in the covenant of God, claim his promises, and fulfill their responsibility to God?

2. Are you willing give up your life for your family or your covenant family? If you are willing it would show how much you value them and how much you value your Savior who bought them with his blood.

3. Do you realize how much God can accomplish through even small and seemingly insignificant people?

4. Do remember that you can only do these things if you are God's child through faith in Jesus Christ.

Finally: If you are not a Christian, your loyalty must change. You are on the wrong side of this war. You must change or God will destroy you. If you surrender your life to him you can be sure that he will not only take you in, but he will also adopt you as his son and give you a new name, a new record and a new life – he will do this because he will impute your punishment upon Christ. What would it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul?