

The Lord's Warrior

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[0 : 00] 19, if you're using a church Bible, it's a red... It's on page 219.

So let's read together. Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and he 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? Neither, he replied. But as commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come.

Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence and asked him, What message does my Lord have for his servant? 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. Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men.

[1 : 25] March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Make the seven priests carry trumpets of ram's horns in front of the ark. And on the seventh day, march around the city seven times with the priests blowing the trumpets.

When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, make all the people give a loud shout.

Then the wall of the city will collapse and all the people will go up, every man straight in.

So Joshua, son of Nun, called the priests and said to them, Take up the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Make the seven priests carry trumpets in front of it. Then he ordered the people, Advance!

March around the city with the armed guard, going ahead of the ark to the Lord. When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the Lord went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the Lord's covenant followed them.

The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. But Joshua had commanded the people, Do not give a war cry.

[2 : 40] Do not raise your voices. Do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout. So he had the ark of the Lord carried around the city, circling it once.

Then the people returned to camp and spent the night there. Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the Lord and blowing the trumpets.

The armed men went ahead of them, and the rear guard followed the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets kept sounding. So on the second day, they marched around the city once, returned to the camp.

They did this for six days. 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.

The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, Shout! For the Lord has given you the city. The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord.

[3 : 52] Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in the house shall be spared, because she hid the spies we sent. But keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them.

Otherwise, you will make the camp of Israel liable to destruction and bring trouble on it. All the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are sacred to the Lord and must go into his treasury.

When the trumpet sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed, so every man charged straight in and they took the city.

They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it, men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, Go into the prostitute's house and bring her out and all who belong to her in accordance with your oath to her. So the young men who had done the spying went in and bought out Rahab, her father and mother and brothers, and all who belonged to her.

[5 : 08] They brought her out, her entire family, and put them in a place outside the camp of Israel. Then they burned the whole city and everything in it.

But they put the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron into the treasury of the Lord's house. 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.

At that time Joshua pronounced his solemn oath, Cursed before the Lord is the man who undertakes to rebuild the city, Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son will he lay its foundations, at the cost of its youngest will he set up its gates.

So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land. I'm going to ask Derek to come up now.

He's going to preach. And before he does, I'm going to pray for him and for us as well. Okay? So let's pray together. Our Father God, we thank you again for these stories which have been recorded for us, to teach us and to tell us about your salvation and your plan.

[6 : 33] We thank you for your gifts in people who are able to teach your word. We thank you for Derek who is here with us today. We pray that you would fill him and that you would fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit, that we may understand your word, apply it to our lives, that you would change us and transform us and encourage us through it.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thanks, Derek. Well, we have enjoyed being here with you all this week.

It has been great. And we were especially looking forward to, and I think we have enjoyed worshipping with you all this morning. And especially now as we look to God's word, we are reminded this is God's word to all his people over all the earth.

And that's such an exciting thing to remember and realize. Now, I've learned a bit about Irish culture since I've been here. I haven't learned everything. And I don't think I may not have vetted this particular introduction properly.

But we have in the United States a television show called The Office, which I understand actually originally came from England. We have an American version of it.

[7 : 50] And there's one particular episode in which the character who's the manager in The Office, his name is Michael Scott, he gets into a bit of a pickle because he has promised a bunch of primary school students that when they graduate from high school, he's going to pay for their college tuition.

Anybody seen that episode? Okay. The Americans raised their hand, yeah. Now, the problem is he doesn't actually have any money. Well, I suppose he has some money, but he can't come through on the promise.

It was an empty promise. And so Michael is trying to explain himself. He's trying to justify himself and say why this is not such a bad thing. And this is what he says as he tries to explain himself. He says, I've made some empty promises in my life, but hands down, that was the most generous. As if to say, a generous empty promise is any better than an empty promise that is not generous. But of course, that's not the case, is it? An empty barrel of water is of no more use to a thirsty man than an empty glass of water. An empty promise is an empty promise.

[9 : 04] And so, you know, sometimes we've all experienced being on the receiving end of empty promises. We've all experienced the uncertainty that comes from not knowing if somebody's really going to come through on their promise for us or not.

And so many of the promises that people make today are empty. They may be generous. They may be quite generous. But they're empty. And it's not just other people.

It's not just what you might promise to somebody else or what somebody else might promise to you. But we make promises to ourselves that are empty also, don't we? How many of you, I don't know if this is a cultural thing here, but do you make New Year's resolutions in Ireland?

Okay. Raise your hand. Be honest. Raise your hand if you made a New Year's resolution this year. Oh, come on. Oh, come on.

Nobody? Okay. A few of you raised your hand. Are any of you to this day, you've been totally faithful to your New Year's resolution? Anybody?

[10:12] No. Of course not. And that's why most of you didn't raise your hands because you get to a certain point where you realize it doesn't matter what I promised myself. Right? I'm never going to do that again. Or I'm going to start doing that.

You know, it's, I'm going to lose weight. I'm going to start running. Or I'm not going to do this habit anymore. Or I'm going to, you know, for those of us who like to think of ourselves as super spiritually, I'm going to wake up at four o'clock every morning and pray for two hours.

And, you know, or something like this nature. Or I'm going to read the Bible, you know, three times a day. Or whatever it is, we make these promises to ourselves. We resolve. But they're empty. Our promises to ourselves, they may be grand, they may be generous. I shouldn't use the word grand improperly, sorry. They may be generous, but they're empty. So the question is, is there nowhere we can turn?

Is there no one we can turn to for a promise that is not empty? If we're so used to giving and receiving empty promises, then where do we find someone who can give us a promise that he can keep?

[11:21] Because it takes a couple of things to keep a promise. It takes the intention to keep it. It takes the power and ability to keep it. It takes the resolution and the steadfastness, the faithfulness, we might say, to keep it.

Well, I think we're going to find an answer to that question in today's text. But before we dig into Joshua chapter 5, let's back up just a bit and set some context for those of you maybe who haven't been here.

Every week, as Johnny has been preaching through Joshua, the book begins with God's chosen people on the verge of realizing a promise that was made to them.

They're on the verge of this land that was promised to them. A promise was given, a very generous promise. And the question is, is this an empty promise or is this a promise that's going to be fulfilled?

The first time they tried to enter, they failed. They failed, according to Scripture, by virtue of their unbelief. They didn't believe the promise. So the problem was not the promise was empty, the problem was they didn't believe it.

[12:31] And by virtue of that, they failed. So this is possession of the promise 2.0. Or this is sort of the second attempt to possess the promise of God.

And so what's really interesting in these first couple of chapters of Joshua is that this really is the second time. And everything is occurring again.

Everything that had happened before. This is basically an affirmation that the present generation that's about to attain the promise of the land are, in fact, the same people of God as those who received the promise originally.

You have a new leader replacing Moses in the person of Joshua. You have a new experience with the spies, whereas before the spies were unfaithful, now the spies come back and make a faithful report.

You have Israel responding with faith to the spies' report. You have a whole new crossing experience of the Jordan River instead of the Red Sea. You have a circumcision occurring again earlier in chapter 5.

[13:38] And you have the Passover occurring again. Both of those things are very significant because the people of Israel who are there on the verge of receiving the promise, they're saying, we are the people of God.

The circumcision was given as a sign that we belong to God and His promises are our promises. And the Passover was a ritual that would have connected them back to the original Exodus and said, that was our story.

That's the story of our people. That's the story of God at work among His people and that's us. And so all of those things that are happening as Israel is standing there on the verge of receiving the promise, everything is falling into place to reaffirm that these are the people of God and He has given them a promise.

Now what is that promise? Well, the promise was I will be your God and you will be my people. And that included a couple of elements. One of those elements was land.

You see, you have God who is king, you have people who are subjects, and then you have land. And all those things together would constitute in that way of thinking the kingdom of God.

[14:52] This was the promise. But there was a problem. Guess what they found as they were ready, they had actually already crossed, they were ready now to possess the land, but there's already somebody there.

There are already other nations living there. And it's even worse than that. They're prepared to defend themselves. They're planning to fight.

So how are we going to receive this land? Is this just an empty promise? Was this God just being overly optimistic and hopeful, but it's not going to come through? Or will something else happen? And this is where we are as we step into Joshua chapter 5, verse 13. As we look at this text, I'm going to go ahead and give you the main point, the big picture, just in case you're tempted to lose sight of the forest for the trees, you can kind of keep coming back to this.

This is the main point of this text. God is a divine warrior who, by His holy presence, secures His promises for His people, judges His enemies, and saves those who have faith.

[16:12] Let me say that again. God is a divine warrior who, by His holy presence, does three things. He secures His promises for His people, He judges His enemies, and He saves those who have faith.

And so, at its core, this is a story about God, as all the stories of Scripture are. It's a story about God's presence, God's gift, God's holiness, and so let's look at this story.

We see at the end of chapter 5, this very interesting occurrence. Joshua looks up and sees a man standing in front of him. This mysterious figure who identifies himself as commander of the Lord's army.

Well, who is this commander of the Lord's army? Well, obviously, we can see a couple of things, or at least one thing, very obvious. This is a warrior. After all, what does it say?

It says he sees a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword. This is somebody ready to fight. This is somebody ready for battle. This is a warrior.

[17:26] And then he identifies himself more specifically when he says in verse 14, I have now come as commander of the Lord's army. This is a phrase, the idea of the Lord's army, or Yahweh's army, specifically, the God of Scripture as opposed to the various other gods of that time.

God's army would have been understood to be primarily the angels or sort of, you know, a heavenly host, a heavenly army. But it could also be God's people if they were willing to fight on his side.

And this is the question, you know, Joshua asks, are you for us or for our enemies? And the response is, well, I'm sort of on my own side.

I'm on the Lord's side. I fight for the Lord's army. So, Joshua, the question really is, are you for us or for our enemies? And Joshua, like we so often do, wants to sort of claim God for whatever our cause is or whatever our nationality is or whatever, you know, we might want God to be on our side for.

But the real question is, you know, God commands his own army. Are we in that army? So the question for Joshua is, are you for me or for my adversaries?

[18:48] Now, this is an example. As we ask the question, who is this commander? This would be an example of what's called a theophany, which is just a big word that means God showed up.

God is there. And I think there's compelling evidence that this is God in some form appearing to Joshua because of one reality.

And that is found in verse 15. The commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, remove the sandals from your feet for the place where you are standing is holy.

And Joshua did so. Holiness is going to be a significant theme throughout this entire passage.

And it's set up right here. As Joshua, prepared to enter into battle, is confronted with an appearance of some sort of God himself. And wherever God is, is holy.

[19:55] holy. That's what you need to understand about holiness this morning, is that wherever God is, is holy. I understand the Queen of England was here recently.

And, we went to the English market yesterday and toured around and I saw a little plaque that apparently had been unveiled.

I guess the Queen had showed up there and a plaque had been unveiled. I've never seen the Queen in person. But I would imagine had I been there that day, had I been in that market on that day when the Queen was there, I may have acted, I don't know if I would have acted differently, it wasn't like I was being particularly rude or anything, but I would have been sure to be on my best behavior, right?

The Queen is here. This is somebody important. Because somebody is important here, then to be here, there's something significant about it. There's something momentous about this. Because the Queen is here. And so, had you had children there, you would have made sure they were on their best behavior and maybe not acting the way they normally do or you might have been particularly respectful or whatever.

[21 : 07] It's the nature of somebody important being there makes that entire location special. Well, now, multiply that times, and I know this is mathematically incorrect, but multiply it times infinity because I don't know what else to multiply it by.

Alright? Imagine God was there in the market. Then it would be holy ground. Not just special, not just interesting or unique, it would be holy ground.

And the reason why this is so important to grasp is because, remember, wherever God is, is holy. holy. I think the whole point of this whole story is to say, God is here among his people.

His people are taking the land and now the land is holy. Now, that may be misunderstood in our modern context and I'll try to clear that up as we go, but that's an important idea.

God is in the midst of his people. And so what does that make them? It makes them a holy people. So God is the divine warrior and God is holy.

[22 : 23] As we move on to chapter 6, we see that God gives gifts and God makes promises. We read in verse 1, it says, Now Jericho was strongly fortified because of the Israelites, no one leaving or entering.

The Lord said to Joshua, Look, I have handed Jericho its king and its fighting men over to you. This is an encouraging word for Joshua on the eve of combat.

For the commander of the Lord's army who is holy with his sword drawn to say to Joshua, I have given you this city.

It was a gift. It wasn't something that Israel was supposed to somehow earn or somehow deserve.

That wasn't the point. The point was it was a gift. I have given it to you.

It was a promise. It was a promise given as a gift. And that's important because this is not the story of one ethnic group being morally superior to another group and thereby deserving to take their land.

[23 : 37] There would be a misunderstanding of this whole book of Joshua. Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 7. In verses 6-8 it says, For you are a holy people.

That idea should sound familiar. You are a holy people belonging to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord was devoted to you and chose you, not because you were more numerous than all peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your fathers.

He brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. God chose this people.

He set his affection and his love on them, but not because they were such a great people, for reasons that are mysterious that we may never understand, but probably having something to do with the fact they were the smallest of all peoples.

[24 : 56] God chose them and gave them a promise and that promise involved giving them a gift, giving them the land. There's an application for this for us because if we go to Hebrews chapter 4, we understand that this same idea of God giving his people in the Old Testament this land as a gift.

We have a similar promise ourselves. It's really the same promise sort of fleshed out more fully. In Hebrews chapter 4 verse 1 it says, therefore, while the promise to enter his rest remains, let us fear that none of you should miss it.

He's writing here in the New Testament to New Testament Christians saying the promise to enter the rest was not an Old Testament promise. It remains.

If you back up to chapter 3, you see that's the context. The context he's talking about is the parallel with Israel entering the promised land. And the writer of Hebrews is saying this promise is still in

front of us.

It's not behind us. It's still in front of us. And then you read down in verse 8 where it says, if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day.

[26 : 15] See, our promise, we have a promise of eternal rest. Just as a promise was given to Israel of this land, we have the same promise, don't we? It's a promise given to us in Christ.

I know it's given to us in Christ because of Hebrews chapter 9 where it says in verse 12, He entered the most holy place once for all, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.

And so Christ, by His own blood, obtained in eternal, that means forever, redemption, being brought out of something, being purchased for something else.

And we have clarity of what that is a few verses later in verse 15. Therefore, He, Christ, is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance, because a death has taken place for redemption from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

you see, Christ, by His own death, secured for us, for His people, a promise, a rest that is still in front of us, an eternal redemption that begins when we put our faith in Christ, but the fullness of the promise is still in front of us.

[27 : 39] And so, just as for Israel, this land, Jericho, was a gift, and they should never think of it as anything else but a gift freely given by God to a people who did not deserve it.

So, when we think of the promise that is out in front of us, we should never come to the point where we think, you know, it was really, you know, God really knew what He was doing when He saved me, because, you know, He really foresaw that, you know, I was going to be a great Christian.

You know, God is awfully smart. No. This was a gift. Don't forget that. And this whole story is constructed to remind Israel forever and ever and ever that they didn't take Jericho.

God did. God gives gifts and makes promises. Next, we see in verses 3 through 14 that God is present among His people.

God is present among His people. In verses 3 through 14, we have a explanation of a continuing explanation.

[28 : 44] God speaking to Joshua with instructions. And then Joshua transferring those instructions to the people and then they begin the first six days of following through with those instructions.

We've already read that text. You can look back and see some of these things that I refer to. But here are a couple of key ideas in these verses. Number one is the ark.

Now, the ark is a box that they would carry around, but it wasn't just a box. You see, in the Old Testament, there were many very profound realities, very abstract sorts of things that are hard to understand, and they were all made very concrete, very tangible, things you could touch and smell and feel and look at.

That's why there was a sacrificial system with blood, so that you could see the animals that you were slaughtering, so that you could feel, so you could feel the blood on yourself, so that you could see that you were applying blood to an altar or to the ark.

And so, all of the rituals in the Old Testament are not random. They're like object lessons that we give to children as we try to instruct them about very complicated concepts.

[30 : 00] And so, in the Old Testament, when you see the ark, just realize this is supposed to be God. Wherever the ark is, that's where God is. In fact, that was the whole symbolism of it all, wasn't it?

You have this mercy seat on top, which is actually a throne. It's a throne of mercy. You have the ark, which is the object inside the most holy place, and so once a year, that is the object that has to be atoned for, or that's where you atone for your sins of the nation, is at the ark, because that's where God is.

And so, in this story, as you see all of these references to the ark, and there are many, the picture there seems to be you have this ark just going around in circles around the city.

And all these references to the priests, and the only reason the priests are important is because they're the ones who handle the ark. What's actually quite mysterious is that this entire thing is a religious ritual.

Priests? The ark, which is a religious object? This is not combat. That? This isn't a military strategy. This is some kind of worship service.

[31 : 14] This is some kind of religious ritual, which is really confusing because God is just walking around circles around the city, and why? Well, it's because God is present among his people, and he wanted to make that clear, that he was there in the midst of his people.

There are other references in this passage. In verse 27, at the end, it says God was with Joshua. We can even back up to the end of chapter 5 and see that the commander of the Lord's army says, I have now come, right?

Presence. So throughout this passage, there's this continuing theme that God is here, God is present with us. God is present among his people.

And there's application here as well, isn't there? Because God is present with his people now through Jesus Christ. Emmanuel? God?

What? With us. We see this in Matthew chapter 1, in verses 22 and 23, where it says this, now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet.

[32 : 34] See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Emmanuel, which is translated, God is with us. Just as, you know, when you think about this story, there are other references in the New Testament that make this clear, but as you think of this story and you think of God present among his people, people marching around the city, sort of being transported, carried around the city by these priests, I think it's a helpful picture for us to keep in mind.

That that's where our hope and confidence is, that God really is present among his people. We don't have to go try to knock those walls down by some military strategy. We simply need to believe that God really is here among his people, among us, through Jesus Christ, and through the spirit of Christ.

And I think that has a special relevance when we think about what we call the Great Commission, right, in Matthew chapter 28, when Jesus says, I will be with you always to the end of the age.

That's a reality that we have to trust. I don't know really how to explain that any better to you than to just sort of give you an example in my own life this morning.

As I thought about, and as I was praying, you know, God, I want your word to build up your people. I want your spirit to be here and be at work. And, you know, I don't want to, you know, the worst thing a preacher can imagine is to just stand up there and talk to himself and nobody get it, right, nobody be changed, nobody grow, nobody be fed by God's word.

[34 : 17] So I was praying as I often do and just asking God to, to be here. And then it dawned on me, what am I preaching about?

God is here. God is present among his people. God will do the work. And it was encouraging for me, myself, in that situation.

And I'm sure that there are situations you might encounter where it would be helpful to recall this event and think of God marching around the city with his people and then realize that God is present with you.

Believe it by faith. God is present among his people. As we continue on and we see the results in verses 15 through 27, we see that God's holy presence, because remember he is present and he is holy, God's holy presence results in two things, in one of two things.

judgment or salvation. After all, the people do what they are instructed. They perform this religious ritual, this consecration ritual, really it is, which goes back to the issue of holiness.

[35 : 35] Right? This city is being set apart. It's being made holy. It's a way of consecrating the entire land. That's why they had to destroy it completely. It was like a first fruits sort of offering.

So they do all of this and then the walls come down, don't they? The walls come down and the people do what they are instructed to do. In verse 16 it says, After the seventh time the priests blew the trumpets and Joshua said to the people, Shout, for the Lord has given you the city.

But the city and everything in it are set apart to the Lord for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and everyone with her in the house will live because she hid the men we sent.

But keep yourselves from the things set apart or you will be set apart for destruction. If you take any of those things, you will set apart the camp of Israel for destruction and bring disaster on it.

For all the silver and gold and the articles of bronze and iron are dedicated to the Lord and must go into the Lord's treasury. God's holiness results in judgment or salvation.

[36 : 53] It's judgment for those who even though they fear God in some sense, ultimately reject God and entrench themselves behind walls, refusing to believe and instead choosing to remain as they are.

And it's important to understand that this is not a story of ethnic cleansing. I've already mentioned that this is not a story of ethnic superiority. It's also not a story of ethnic cleansing. It's not a story of some sort of simple, just, you know, people greedy for land and coming and taking it. Because this was judgment.

It wasn't just like God was looking around and saying, my people need a place to live. That looks convenient. Let's go over there. No, the people in Canaan were under God's judgment.

This was not just an act of conquest. It was an act of judgment. God in His holy presence as He's marching around the city, as the trumpets are announcing His presence, as the trumpets, as they often do in Scripture, announce the coming judgment of the Lord.

[38 : 05] This was a proclamation of judgment against Jericho. They hid behind their walls. They had nowhere else to go, but they had these big walls to hide behind.

And perhaps they thought they were safe. We know that they were fearful because Rahab tells the spies as much. They were afraid. They understood that they were not dealing with something that they could handle.

But it didn't lead them to seek salvation. It didn't lead them to seek some sort of treaty. It didn't lead them as it led Rahab to proclaim, this is the true God.

I want to join you. No, they didn't seek escape. They just doubled down and tried to hide inside their fortress, even though they were scared.

Sometimes we can fall into the same trap. It's easy to fear God. It's easy to be afraid of God. And yet never repent. Yet never seek that salvation.

[39 : 07] Never seek that rescue because we would rather just keep building up walls and sort of try to be safe from the judgment of God, even though the trumpets are sounding and the judgment is coming and we hear it, we hear it, it's happening every day.

We hear this proclamation, but we don't want to believe it. And so God's holiness becomes judgment for us. Now it's important to note that this same principle would apply to other nations later in history as they would judge Israel.

I'm going to give you a few texts you can read later. I don't have time to go into them, but Jeremiah chapter 4 and verses 5 through 8. Jeremiah chapter 4 verses 16 through 21.

Leviticus 18, 24 through 28. If you're taking notes, look up those passages. Those are passages that make this point clear. But I will read one verse, and that is Isaiah chapter 1 verse 7.

Isaiah is speaking to the nation as they are running away from God. This is much later in history. They are now, they possess the land, but they are running away from God. And it says this, Your land is desolate.

[40 : 25] Your cities burned with fire. Foreigners devour your fields before your very eyes. A desolation demolished by foreigners. The exact same judgment would later come upon Israel.

That's how we know this has nothing to do with ethnicity. This has nothing to do with ethnic cleansing or just sort of, some sort of conquest for land. This has to do with God and His people in holiness. And I think that this story was included in the history here in Joshua precisely to teach and encourage God's people that, you know what?

God gave us this land. God made this land holy. And the same thing can happen to us if we reject the covenant. If we reject God. What prevents the same thing from happening to us?

But it's not just a proclamation of judgment, but it's also salvation, isn't it? Because there is somebody here in this story who is saved, which reminds us that salvation is possible.

Even as God encircles us proclaiming His judgment, salvation is possible. It's possible for those outside. It's possible for the outsiders, which in fact, all of us were at one time, outside the people of God.

[41 : 42] And so we see the example of Rahab, who according to Hebrews 11, by faith Rahab was saved. This was the issue. Rahab saw all the same things that the rest of her people saw.

But she had faith. And so when the spies came, she basically turned against her own people and said, I'm with you. Your God is my God.

Your people are my people. And it's interesting, Rahab broke with a couple of specific things. She broke with her people and she broke with her past.

Right? She's a prostitute. And I know that there are so many people here in Carraghline and Ireland and across the world. And if only we had the chance to sit down with him and say, you know, there was somebody in Scripture who made that break with her own people and her own past and by faith was saved out of judgment.

You know, everybody else in this city is destroyed except for Rahab and her family. Salvation, it's rescue. And of course, we understand now in the New Testament that all of this is pictured in the cross, isn't it?

[42 : 59] The judgment and salvation in the presence of a holy God which presents for us I think a very clear application.

Is God's holiness judgment for you or is it salvation? Are you entrenched like a fortified city? Or do you seek mercy as Rahab did? Have you come to Christ with empty hands saying, I'm leaving my fortification behind because I want to be rescued.

I don't want to be destroyed. I want to be numbered among Christ's people. The road to life is narrow.

The road to destruction is broad. Don't let the crowd on the broad road keep you from putting all, all, all of your hope in Jesus Christ.

[44 : 04] Let Rahab be your example. And I think in closing I would just want to summarize a couple of things.

Number one, what I've tried to say today is that Jesus Christ in this context it is God but we now understand specifically this we can put this in the context of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is a divine warrior who by His holy presence secures God's promises for His people judges His enemies and saves those who have faith.

Trust the promises heed the warning and trust in Jesus Christ. and I especially want to apply that now to all of you as a church as a body as you hear this word from the Lord together.

Believe that God is present among you. His promises are true. He is at work in the world. He is bringing the nations to faith in Christ through the power of the gospel.

[45 : 22] Believe. Believe in the power of the gospel. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid as a church to step out in faith and to do what you feel like you need to do for the sake of the gospel because God is with you.

Do not be afraid. Don't let fear control you when you look around and realize you are outnumbered and the task of taking the gospel to this city feels so momentous and there are so many fortifications there are so many barriers but God is with you.

Jesus Christ is with you and his gospel is advancing. It will advance here in Karaghline through you his people. It will advance to the ends of the earth through you his people.

Believe. Trust. By faith that God is present with you. Trust the promises. Heed the warning and trust in Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father this is a story of your great power and of the battles you fight for your people.

[46 : 40] But Father this is also a story as Hebrews reminds us of faith. It is a story of the faith of your people. Father I pray today that you might give birth to faith in hearts in this very room.

That they would see their sin and be repulsed by it. That they would see the coming judgment on their sin but that at the same time they would see a Savior who beckons them and says come come out from the city of destruction and find life.

Lord I pray for your people here today that you would give us faith believing your presence believing your promise and marching forward marching forward for the cause of the gospel for the cause of your kingdom.

A mighty army not engaged in military battle but a mighty army marching with the presence of God seeing the nations come to faith transformed by Jesus Christ.

It is in Christ's glorious name we pray. Amen. Amen.