

Rahab's Rainbow

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[0 : 0 0] Well, we welcome you to our service this evening. Thank you for joining with us in your own homes. And we pray that we would be blessed together as we study God's Word for a while.

Can I read just a verse from Psalm 147? He counts a number of the stars. He names them every one. Great is the Lord and of great power.

His wisdom search can none. May we bow for a word of prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity you have given to us to listen to your Word and to think upon it.

That it will be blessed to our hearts, blessed to our souls. And that we would find in it a treasure beyond anything that we have ever known before.

That we may see the preciousness and richness and loving mercy that is found in Jesus.

[1 : 1 3] That we would have our eyes fixed upon him for this time. We pray that you would keep the evil one from distracting us. We pray that you would put him to bed and let him lay for a while.

And allow us to concentrate on your Word that you have given to us. For we are continually under attack. For we are continually under attack. For that as we join together.

We would have a praying heart. We would have a praying heart. That we would come before him asking that you would speak to us.

And that we would be encouraged. Even as we listen to your Word being read today. And so we thank you for all that you give us.

We thank you for the health care that is provided to us in our country. Especially at this time. We thank you for those that you have placed around us.

[2 : 2 5] Those who are of our own families. And those who are friends to us. That we would help and encourage one another.

That we would be looking out for each other's needs. And supporting one another in whatever way we can. And especially at this time. As we find ourselves in strange circumstances.

That we would firstly be leaning upon you. Our Heavenly Father for guidance.

And that we would be looking out for those around us. And we pray for those that are anxious about what we are.

Anxious about worries. Anxious maybe about financial positions. Or job security. We pray that they would bring these concerns to you.

[3 : 3 1] And that you would give them comfort and rest. From these worries of life. And that we don't know what is in the heart of each person.

But you know. You know the troubles of every man's heart. If only each would bring them to the physician. Who has a remedy for everyone's issues.

Free of cost. There is no charge. And what a gift is offered through the gospel.

Of the Lord Jesus. Who died on the cross for us. Willingly went there. Because he has a love for us.

That we cannot fully grasp. Nor fully understand. Nor comprehend how deep it is. That he should love people like we are.

[4 : 32] And we pray for our nation. That the leaders of our country. Would seek wisdom from you who is above all things.

For you know all things. And you are the source of all wisdom. And so to whom else should they turn.

Plenty men wish to give advice. But men are only men at best. And their advice may not be the best advice to be given.

And so we pray. That they would seek your guidance. As only you can give it. And admit in their own hearts.

That they do not know what to do. What is best. At this strange time. That none of our generation. Have really experienced anything like this before.

[5 : 38] And maybe through it. You are speaking to us. Maybe you are speaking to souls. Even this day. And we just pray.

That it would be for your glory. And every effort made. In sharing the gospel. Would be. For your glory.

And so. We ask for your guidance. For this. Time. While we study your word. And worship you. That you would.

Keep our minds focused. Our eyes on Jesus. And we ask all these things. In his name. The one who died on the cross. The one who loves us.

Greater than anyone else loves us. And knows us. Greater than ourselves. The Lord. Jesus Christ. In his name. We ask these things.

[6 : 35] Amen. If we could. Continue by. Saying a wee word. To the younger ones. For a wee while. You'll have noticed that.

Going into shops. Or even if you've traveled on the ferry at all. That you'll have to wear a mask now. It's for your own good. And it's for the good of everyone else.

In the shop. And. I found myself. Forgetting to put on my mask. Either forgetting to. Take it out of the car with me.

And reaching the shop door. And seeing everyone else with masks on. Or meeting someone. Coming out of the shop with a mask. And realizing. That I had to go back to the car. And get my mask.

I even had to go home one day. Because I couldn't find anything. In the car. To cover my face. But I remembered that I had this snake scarf. I hope you can see it. So it would just go over my head.

[7 : 32] Like so. And it's a handy wee thing. So. It would just go over and. And it would just go over and. This would allow me just to leave it on my neck. And I could lift it up. Like that. And that would cut my nose and my mouth. Which.

Apparently is. Perfectly fine. To have something like that on. But I couldn't find this. And it had been. It had been missing before. And I decided that. Well I'll see. I'll have another look. And see if I can.

Find it. But. It didn't turn up. And I decided. Well. I'll order exactly the same as I had. So. The next morning. I'm going to put it on my nose. And it would cut my nose and my mouth.

And it would cut my nose and my mouth. Which. Apparently is. Perfectly fine. To have something like that on. But I couldn't find this. And it had been. It had been missing before. And I decided. Well I'll see.

I'll have another look. In the morning. I went on the computer. Ordered it straight away. And then. Later that evening. I was outside working. And I had on an old. Grubby jacket. That I use for. Working around the house.

[8 : 27] I don't usually have it on. But I. I felt something. In my chest pocket. Up there. And. I thought to myself. Well I better. Check. What that is. When I finish.

But truly enough. When I finished. What do you think I find. The missing. The missing. The missing. The missing. The missing. The missing. The missing.

The next scarf. That had been. Lost for. Probably a year. On a year. And I just thought. Well. That's typical. I said I order a new one, the old one shows up after me being unable to find it for so long.

And I thought, well, I should have probably had a better look for it. And really, I didn't try too hard. I should have it. I didn't. And it reminded me of the short version Jeremiah that says, You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Now, I didn't put too much effort into finding or looking for this next calf. And so I didn't find it. And I was thinking that, you know, if we don't put the effort in looking for Jesus and seeking out Jesus, then more than likely we'll never find him.

[9 : 55] And we'll find him as we read the Bible and as we come to him in prayer and acknowledge that he is the King of kings, that we would put in the effort in looking for him.

As the lady had the ten coins and she lost one coin, she didn't give up until she found what she was looking for.

So I want to encourage you, if you don't have the Lord Jesus in your heart, that you would keep looking for him and never give up looking for him.

It may not be found or he may not be found quickly, but it may take time, it may take a lot of effort and a lot of hard work.

And you may not know exactly where you will find him, but I pray that he will show himself to you and that he would find a home in your heart.

[10 : 56] We pray this for everyone listening today. So may we say the Lord's Prayer together. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever.

Amen. If we could turn to the word of God and read from the book of Joshua. The book of Joshua, chapter 2.

This is the account of Rahab. And we'll read down to verse 22. Chapter 2, the beginning.

[12 : 05] And Joshua, the son of Nun, sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, Go view the land, especially Jericho.

And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. And it was told to the king of Jericho, Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.

Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.

But the woman had taken the two men and hidden it. And she said, True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.

[13 : 12] But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. So the men pursued after them, on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords.

And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out. Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof and said to the men, I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sion and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.

And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you.

For the Lord your God, he is God of the heavens above and of the earth beneath. Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house.

[14 : 41] And give me a sure sign that you will save alive my father and my mother, my brothers and my sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.

And the men said to her, Our life for you, even to death. If you do not tell this business of ours, then, when the Lord gives us the land, we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.

Then she led them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. And she said to them, Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned.

Then afterward, you may go your way. The men said to her, We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear.

Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down. And you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household.

[16 : 04] Then, if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But, if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head.

But, if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to the oath, to your oath, that you have made us swear.

And she said, According to your words, so be it. Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

Amen. May the reading of God's word be blessed to each and every one of us today. Now, if we look at this passage, if we can have a study for a short time at this lady, Rahab, and just look at exactly what is going on in this account that we have just read about.

And if we use our text as the latter part of verse 21, and she tied the scarlet cord in the window. Now, while I'm at work, I'm often driving around the island, and during the period of lockdown, especially, and they're even still in windows today, there's lots of rainbows being displayed in windows.

[17 : 38] There's small ones in the corners of windows, there's bigger ones stuck in the middle of bigger windows, and then occasionally, you'll see a huge rainbow and a huge window.

And they are happy reminders to us of what we are all going through together during this strange time that we find ourselves in, being stuck at home and not being able to go out and meet each other.

They are bright reassurances for us, even if it is only a distraction for parents and children to colour these rainbows with.

And it is a symbol that's meant to represent a hope of better days that is to come after this experience. And it is good that we are hoping for better things to come and that we do have a hope.

But I wonder what is our hope in? And what do we place our hope in? And I was thinking, well, can we have a sure hope?

[18 : 50] Is it possible to be sure of what we hope in? Now, Rahab, she had her hope displayed in her window.

This scarlet cord that she fixed to her window, this was a sign of her hope. So let us look at the hope that she had fixed in her window and the sure faith and the fulfillment of what came from that hope.

So, this lady, Rahab, now, she was, of course, a prostitute, as we have read about. And in all likelihood, this would have meant that she was not a character held in high regard or endowed with respect amongst the people of the city of Jericho.

Probably someone placed firmly last in the pegging order of life. and whilst she may or not have had the best reputation with men, she shows us to have the greatest understanding towards the Lord and towards the Lord's people.

For she confesses, the Lord is your God. He is God of the heavens above and of the earth beneath.

[20 : 16] And she admitted that everyone's hearts were melting with fear. And we think that, well, maybe there's a degree of likeness to what we are experiencing.

But this threat that she had and the people of Jericho had before it, this threat that could possibly have been fatal for them. And did we not experience something like that a couple of months ago?

There was a threat posed to us that could have been fatal for us. But, by God's grace, he has protected us largely from it, especially on the island that we live with the confession that Rahab makes, she is saying that she recognises the Lord's authority present with the children of Israel.

And whispers amongst the people of Jericho are that this group are drawing nearer and they have overcome kings and they are even still speaking about when they crossed the Red Sea to escape the Egyptians.

This happened many years prior to them approaching Jericho, but still this story has been retold.

[21 : 43] And she is convinced by these stories. She believes these stories. She does not think they are mere fairy tales. And for you listening today, what have you heard about God and the Lord's people?

Are you convinced by him? Have you heard stories of how God has miraculously converted people?

And that you hear of things that you would never have heard of before or never have expected to ever hear. People coming to God that you would never have thought.

Things happening where God provides for people in ways that no one would have expected. And there is plenty of stories to read about.

And there are stories within people's memories that we should be sharing with each other for each other's encouragement. But I ask you to seek them and seek them out and reap them for yourselves.

[22 : 54] And challenge yourselves and say, well, is this Lord true? And is this Lord present with his people?

And then what am I, how am I going to react with this Lord? And what am I going to do with him? And now Rahab, she was fully convinced.

And she showed her faith and trust in the Lord in her actions by protecting the spies and hiding them on the roof. She wanted to help as much as she could.

And therefore pleaded with the men that her household would be spared. And how did the men reply to her? Our life for years, even to death.

In verse 14. What a reassuring promise for her to hear. I wonder had anyone ever offered to die for her before?

[24 : 04] Or put their life on the line for her? And especially for this lady, who everyone in Jericho probably thought as worthless.

Maybe she thought herself as worthless. And there the spies' commitment wonderfully equals Jesus' words when he says in John 15, verse 13, greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

And an even greater beauty is seen when Jesus himself shows us to be that friend and lays down his life for us.

Willingly going to the cross and experiencing the worst of all deaths, even though he lived a life of perfection and showed himself to be the best of all life.

It seems like it was complete injustice on the world's behalf to put this perfect man to such a cruel death.

[25 : 21] But unbeknown at the time, it was complete justice on God's behalf. So what is your worth today? Do you think anyone would die for you?

For it says in Romans 5, verse 7, So Rahab's, seeing or knowing that maybe she was the most rejected person in Jericho, had the offer of the Lord's people putting their life on the line for her.

And Jesus has put his life on the line for us. He has shown us that he is our friend by dying for us, even while we reject him.

What a friend we have in Jesus. There is nothing in us worth the life of Christ. Nothing at all that we will ever be able to identify.

But be assured that although we can't, Christ can and he does. Thankfully, he has a love that is deeper than our understanding.

[27 : 07] And so your worth to Christ is what you are worth the ultimate price. And makes his actions so beautiful to us when he calls us his friends and shows us in his actions that he is our friend.

Leaving the glory of heaven and willingly pouring out his blood at the cross and payment for our wrongdoings in order to justify us before God so that we may have everlasting life.

He gives us a gift that we can in no way repay. And so our own worthiness becomes totally encapsulated in this Christ because we see in ourselves there is nothing of any worth.

But Christ shows us that we are of worth. And so we cling to him for he knows better than we do. He knows ourselves better than we do.

And so we begin to reject our old desires for we know that they do us no good even though they cling so well to us that we would be self-controlled to put them away and exchange these empty hopes for a sure hope in Jesus Christ for he is the one who saves.

[28 : 50] He is the only one who gives us a hope. And so the spies that we read of they parted Rahab with the agreement to have the scarlet cord hanging from the window in order to identify the home that had all their hope and trust placed in the Lord.

And it reminds us of when the Israelites were in Egypt and they were told to sacrifice a lamb and paint the blood on their doorposts in order that the angel of death would not enter their homes.

And so Rahab confidently trusts as she hangs this scarlet blood-like cord from her window as a sign of protection for her home.

And as we think of this lady who left this scarlet cord or this blood-like coloured line hanging from her window in order to be saved, the thought arises that through this defiled Rahab and through her family bloodline comes Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus who is called the Christ.

Christ in his perfect wisdom, the Lord in his perfect wisdom used even this lowly lady for great service.

[30 : 34] And she was not forgotten about. Her trust was not forgotten and she is honoured by being mentioned in the Bible and her honour continues in heaven and so the Christian, although you may not be honoured here in this world, you may find part of your honour here, but we look forward to an honour that awaits us and the waiting can be difficult, but there is no other gift worth comparing to enter the gates of glory and to be told well done good and faithful servant.

Through this bloodline salvation was given. The Lord has employed even this defiled Rahab for his glory as we don't understand how he uses us and we would just trust and obey him in whatever he leads us to do.

So in this cord we see her faith she was quick to act and the cord was set in position straight away. It reads in verse 21 as soon as the men departed.

She tied it in the window. She didn't linger over whether to wait until the Lord's army returned wait until she would hear them or wait until she would see them.

She was wholly committed to the promise that was made with the men. Now J.C. Ryle he writes Satan does not care how spiritual your intentions are or how holy your resolutions if only they are determined to be done tomorrow.

[32 : 34] now even in my day-to-day life you come across people when you hear that they're told to do something they'll say to themselves well I better do that right now or else I'll forget or I better do that today before I forget.

We are so easily distracted with things and we are so busy doing other things that we can so easily forget even the most important of tasks that we are given to do.

And why are people not like that with the gospel? People that hear the gospel message are so quick to say I'll leave it for another day and not to say well I better do that today before anything else happens.

I just pray that you would resolve like Rahab to secure that hope for your household and yourself today.

Do not linger over whether to put it over your house or over your life. She was not ashamed to do it so we should not be ashamed to make a difference.

[33 : 51] To make a different stand for Christ. She had only to put out the cord. Outwardly nothing else but inwardly she had to have a belief and a continued faith in the spies to trust in their word.

Now an interesting point that we should look at before we go father is that although the cord had been placed in the window and she had acted upon the promise the men did not say when they would return and we don't read of it until chapter six and for however long this period was I think it would have been possibly a number of weeks or even months but regardless of the time we can't help but think about what Rahab thought during this period.

after all these people were spies and were they worthy of her trust they didn't seem to be coming back surely she would have questioned their authenticity will they keep the promise that they have made to me will they return and save me will they remember my family or will they just overcome me with the rest of Jericho will I be separate from this entire city she could easily have cut away the cord but she didn't she remained faithful to the promise that was made and so we do not know what lies ahead of us we do not know when the Lord Jesus will return but like

Rahab I pray that we will be resolved not to question not to doubt God and we are so inclined to question God before remembering his promises and holding to them so we pray that we would hold to what he tells us and expect his return which he tells us will happen maybe Rahab was uttering words in our hearts as we read off in David's Psalms in Psalm 119 uphold me according to your promise that I may live and let me not be put to shame in my hope she dared not risk throwing away her only hope she remained faithful and it was proven to her and so the gospel promises whoever believes in him the

Lord Jesus Christ should not perish but have eternal life is this your best hope today surely surely it is assured hope than any other or will you let the devil doubt you will you let the devil say we'll do it tomorrow it may never happen tomorrow and you may be find that the years will be taken from under your feet and the words of

[38 : 04] Jeremiah may come to you the harvest has passed and still we are not saved so the question to you today is what are you going to do with this offer of salvation are you going to secure it or are you going to let it go and let it fall away are you going to throw your only hope out of the window and now if we can look shortly and briefly at the fulfilment of the promise we didn't read about it but in chapter 6 the Lord's army for sure did arrive and they walked around the city for six days not showing much of a threat to them just surrounding the city but I wonder how the men of Jericho thought it's saddening that we didn't read of anyone else joining within the house of

Rahab or anyone else coming out from Jericho and surrendering themselves to the Lord's army no they were absolutely confident and proud enough to remain and trust in their own strength but that strength that they trusted in didn't do them any good for they were overcome and their walls crumbled and their walls and their walls won't crumble around us that we would have a hope in Jesus and even as we grow older and as the threat of death comes closer that we will not have hearts that are melting with fear but that we would find a peace and rest in the

Lord and you might be listening today saying well I hope this isn't true and that's completely understandable because that's your only alternative hope it's either true or it isn't but what is that hope that you are trusting in your alternative hope is it just a desire or is it just a wish and you'll find plenty of reassurances in the world to back up and satisfy your idea that Jesus Christ is not the only offer of salvation or the only way to be saved that's not what the word of God says the word of God proves itself as we have even realised the Lord's people proving themselves there is no salvation for everyone everyone won't get to go to heaven as so many people wish to assume the rest of Jericho it was destroyed its destruction was once and final but for the person without

Christ and we apply that to ourselves we would take that lightly or we should take that lightly because we read in Revelation 14 that the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever they have no rest day or night the ones who die without Christ the ones who don't put their trust in the Lord Jesus have no rest they are tormented forever and ever imagine never getting rest but I believe Rahab did for she held to the promise of Jesus and Jesus gives you a promise peace I leave with you my peace I give to you not as the world gives do I give you let not your hearts be troubled neither let them be afraid he knows what is best for us not as the world gives do I give to you let us come and trust in the one who knows best for our souls and so the company within

Rahab's household if they left it was their own peril and how is it for us today maybe we dwelt within the household of God's people and have we left that household it says it was be at their own cost that they would leave and they would not be responsible for their actions the spies wouldn't be responsible for their actions and so there is no salvation out with this household we pray that you would come again and join with those who have their hope in Christ whatever church you may be found in as long as you have your hope placed firmly on the Lord Jesus or maybe some wouldn't want to associate themselves with the house of

[43 : 59] Rahab with this lady that was of a tarnished reputation salvation but even so we are all sinners and even so we are all capable of sinning in ways that we never think we ever would but we must not let anyone else's reputation affect our salvation we are not to keep our eyes on other people but to keep our eyes on Christ it wasn't the wealthiest or most respected person that was saved but the very one the people of Jericho would have last have favoured the gospel is not accepted by everyone and not everyone wants to be associated with it people often mock it but for those who believe in it and trust in it it is a treasure to them beyond anything else that they could be offered nothing else in the world can compare to it and for sure better days are promised for the

Christian a glory beyond what we can ever know we can look forward with a hope that is so sure the promise is not on our behalf the promise is not made for us the promise is not made in us but it's made for us the promise maker is far superior that you can rest assured whilst around you there is a situation where all others have hearts that are melting the Christian's hope may be visible within the window of their life but but but is anchored deep within their soul for they trust in the one whose promises are faithful amen may these thoughts be blessed to us as we part one another this evening can we continue in our worship by singing in

Psalm 62 of the Scottish Sata Psalm 62 of the Scottish Sata from verse 5 my soul wait thou with patience upon thy God alone on him dependeth all my hope and expectation he only my salvation is and my strong rock is he he only is my sure defence I shall not move to be in God my glory placed is and my salvation sure and God the rock is of my strength my refuge most secure ye people place your confidence in him continually before him pour he out your heart God is our refuge high we will sing these words to the praise of

God my soul with thou with patience upon thy God alone on him dependeth all my hope and expectation he only my salvation is and my strong rock is he he only is my sure defense I shall not move and be in God my glory blessed is and my salvation sure in

God the rock is of my strength my refuge more secure he people place your confidence in him continually before him pour ye out your heart God is our refuge I may we close with a word of prayer our heavenly father we thank you again for this opportunity to listen to your word and to stay upon it for a wee while pray it may speak to us pray your spirit may work in our hearts that where our eyes would be opened that we would see

[49 : 52] Jesus more clearer that we would desire him and hold to him more than anything else in this world and that we would place our hope in him that our hope would be sure and not just a mere wish that we would trust in his promises for you are faithful and you the Lord Jesus died for us what a friend we have in Jesus may he be our friend and may we know him as our friend forgive us our sins and all these things we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Amen He APPLAUSE