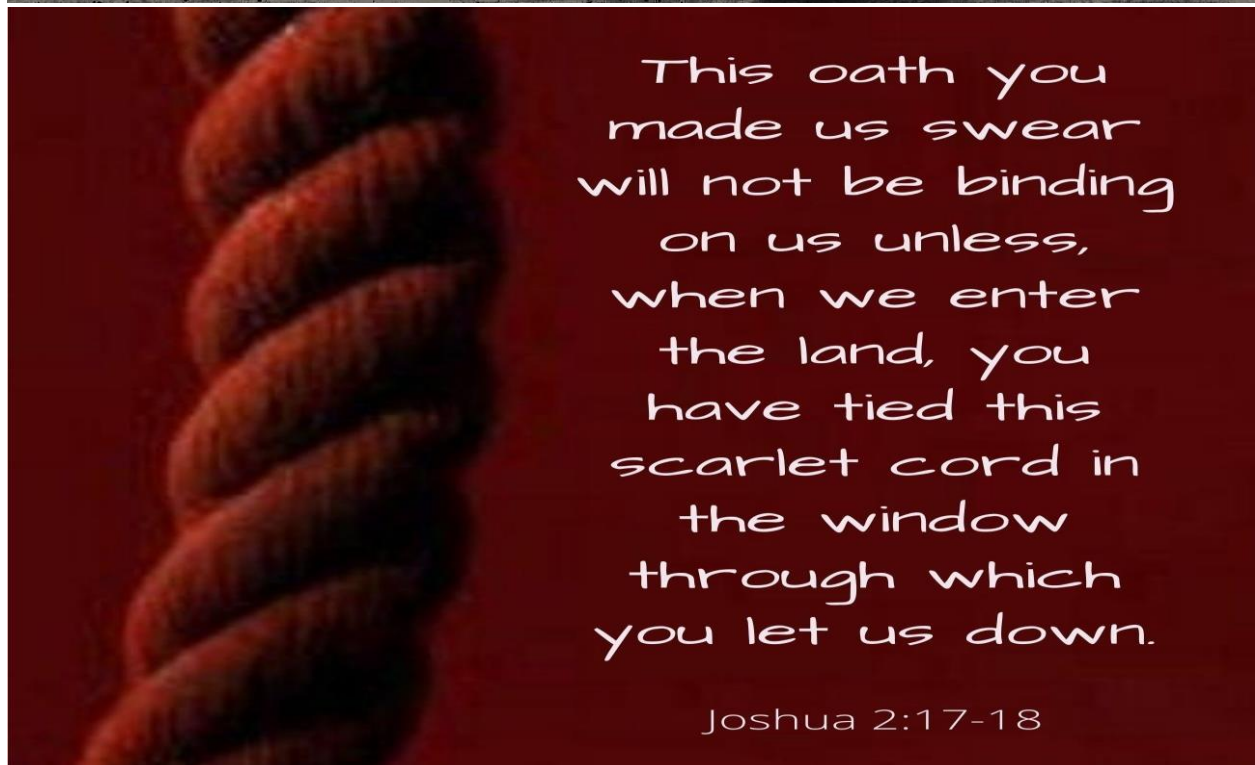


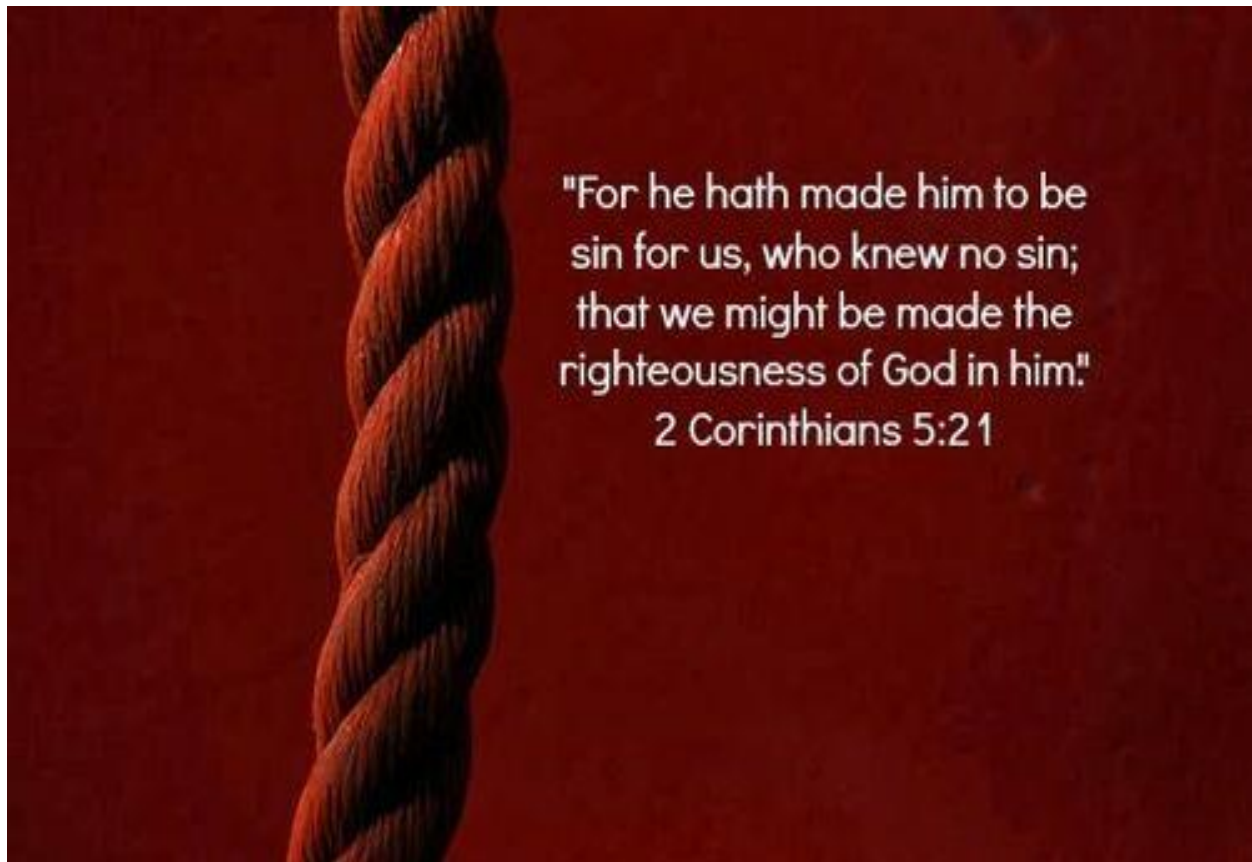
Scarlet Cord Runs Through The Bible

By David Lee Burris



This oath you
made us swear
will not be binding
on us unless,
when we enter
the land, you
have tied this
scarlet cord in
the window
through which
you let us down.

Joshua 2:17-18



The Scarlet Cord

- The **Scarlet Cord** which **Rehab** used to let Joshua's spies down to the earth (ground) from the top of the window for safety (salvation)
- The Implication of the Scarlet Cord is significant. And **reached all the way to Jesus Christ.!!!**
- The **scarlet cord**=the **blood stain of Jesus**
- Decision → destiny





What is the significance of a scarlet thread?

There are several mentions of a scarlet thread throughout the Bible, occurring in varying situations. Often these are symbolically linked to the theme of redemption through Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross—His shed blood for our salvation.

In Genesis 38:27–30, during the birth of Judah and Tamar's twin boys, the midwife ties a scarlet thread on the arm of Zerah when it emerges from the birth canal. This was to indicate him as the firstborn son. However, it was actually the other twin, Perez, who was born first. The birth line of Jesus Christ came generations later through the ancestors of Perez (Matthew 1:3).

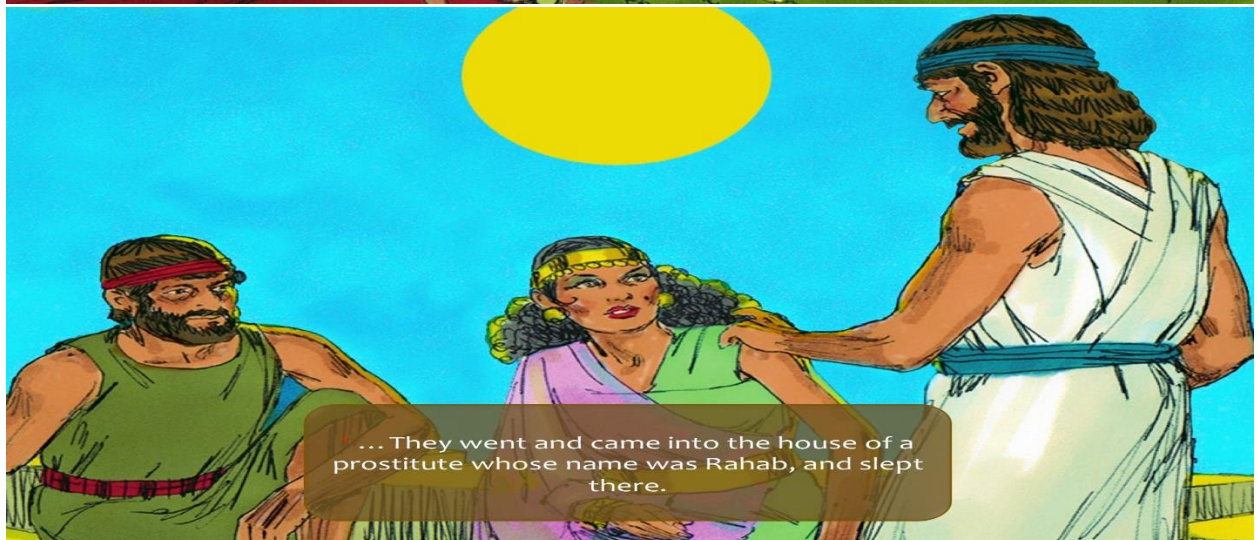
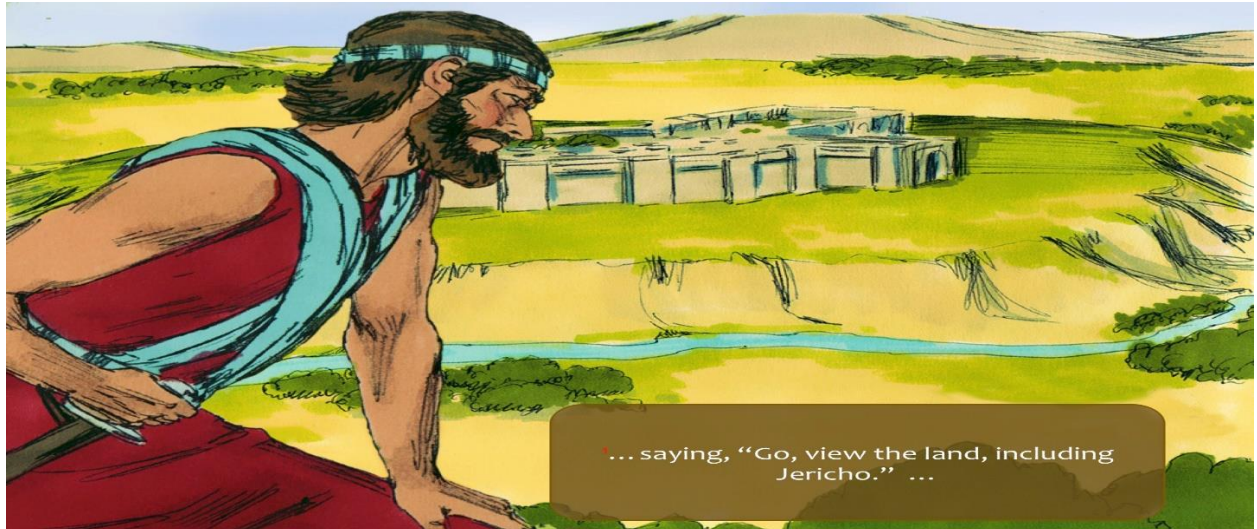
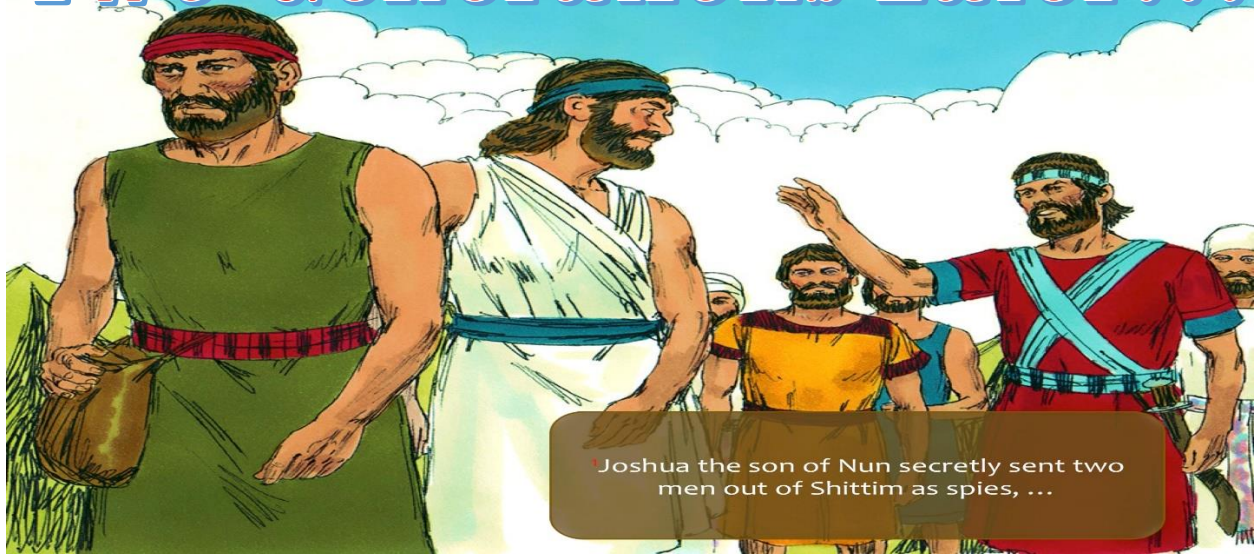
The Bible mentions there being scarlet threads both in the curtains of the tabernacle (Exodus 26:1) and in the priest's ephod (Exodus 28:6). The curtains also contained blue and purple threads. The ephod, a garment like an apron, also contained threads of gold, blue, and purple.

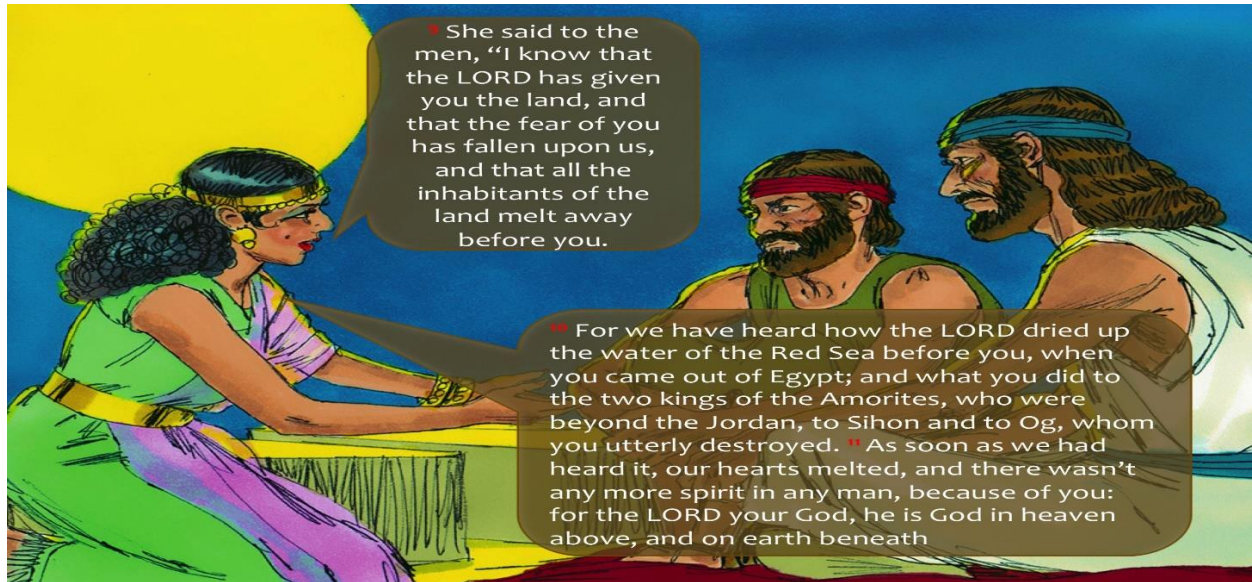
Scarlet thread is also mentioned in Joshua 2 in the story where Rahab hides the two Israelite spies who had come to scope out the city of Jericho. She expressed her faith in the God of the Israelites and helped the men escape by a rope through her window. She asked them to deal kindly with her and her family, as she had treated them, when the Israelites came back to conquer the city. The men promised to do so and instructed her to tie a scarlet cord in her window as a sign. She does as they say (Joshua 2:18–21), and she and her family are kept safe (Joshua 6:22–23). Rahab was an ancestor of Jesus (Matthew 1:5). The scarlet cord in her window harkens back to the story of God's plague in Egypt where the Israelites had to sprinkle the red blood of a lamb on their doorposts so that their households would be spared from death (Exodus 12:13).

Some theologians talk about there being a scarlet thread that runs through the Bible. This is referring to the consistent theme and promise of redemption that we see woven throughout the Bible. Without shed blood, forgiveness is not possible (Hebrews 9:22). Whether the actual sacrificial blood of animals, the salvation granted with a scarlet cord, or the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, redemption is signified with scarlet. All versions of redemption in the Bible lead us to the true redemption that comes only through Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) once and for all. — C.A.R.M.



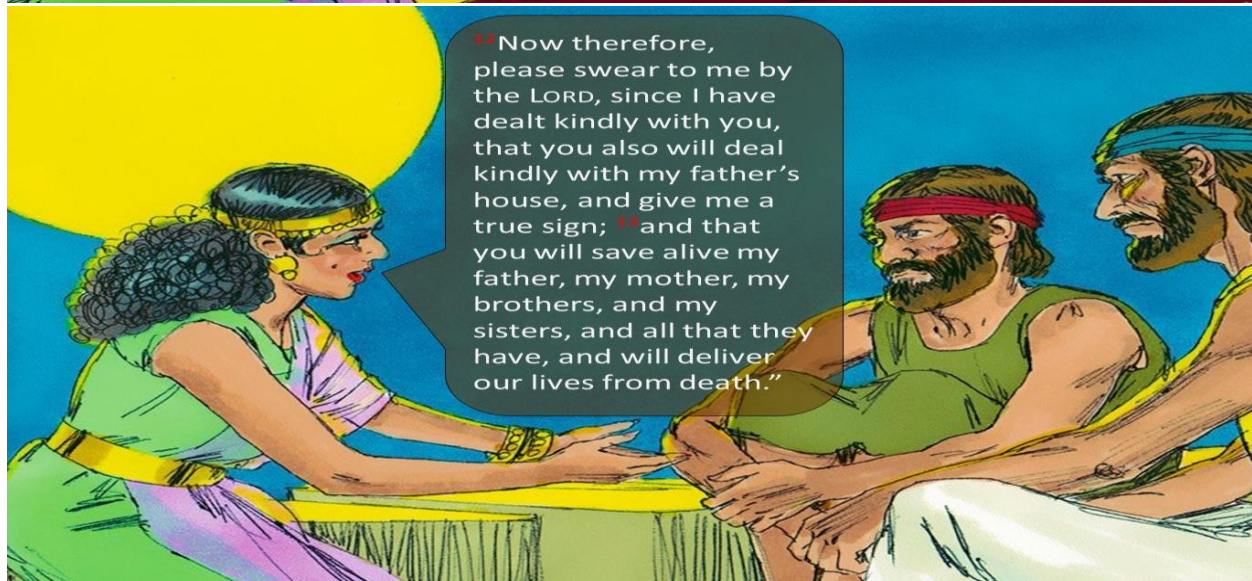
Two Generations Later...



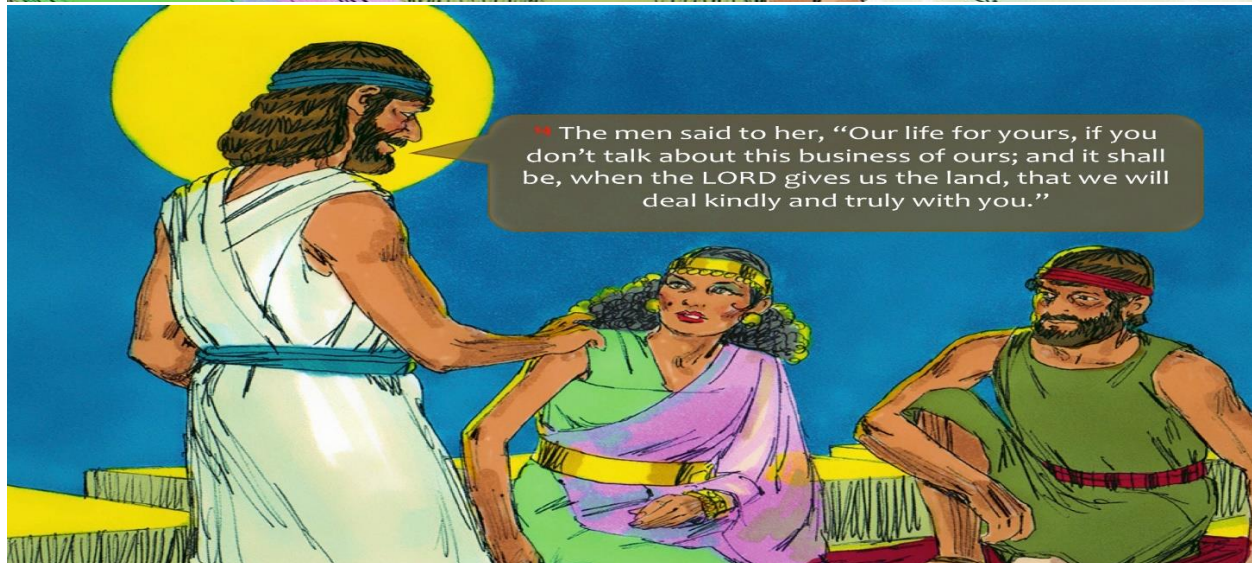


She said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melted away before you.

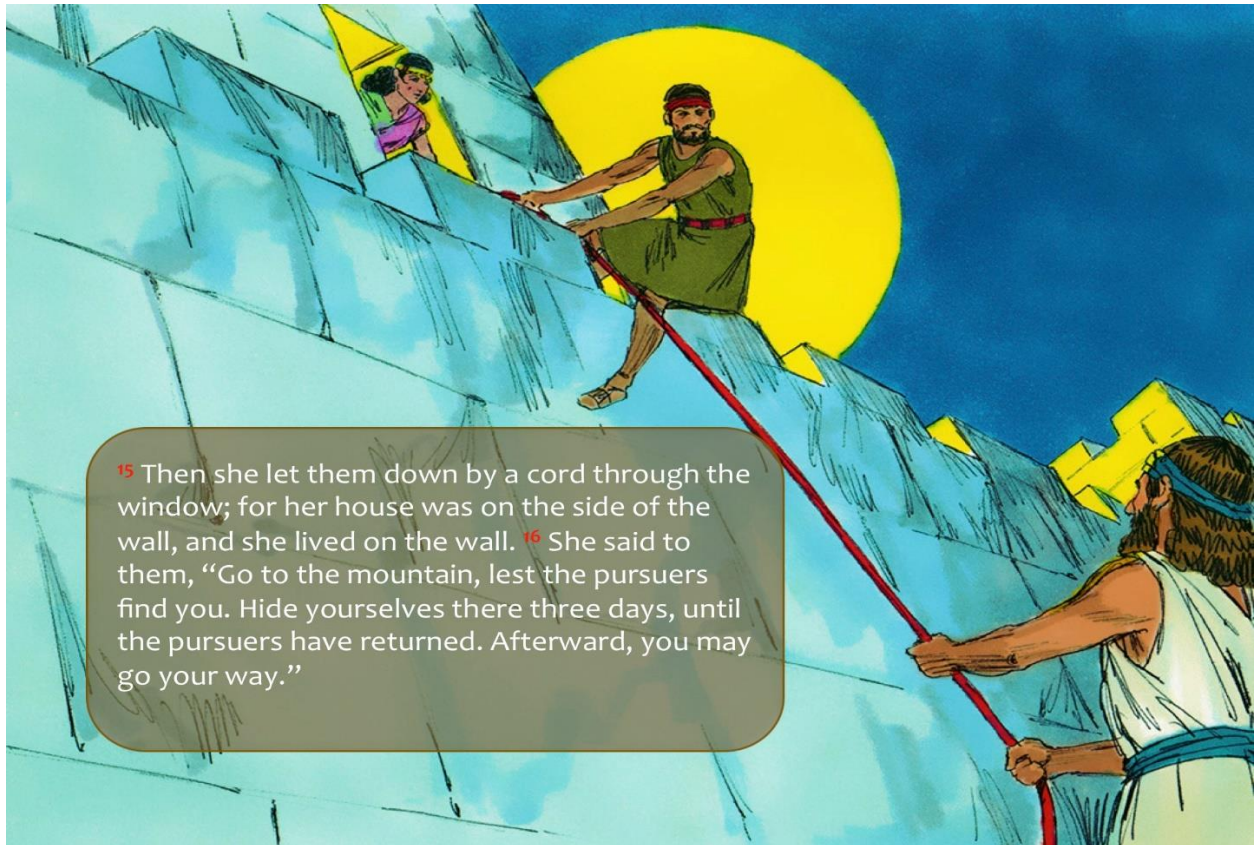
For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and to Og, whom you utterly destroyed. As soon as we had heard it, our hearts melted, and there wasn't any more spirit in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath



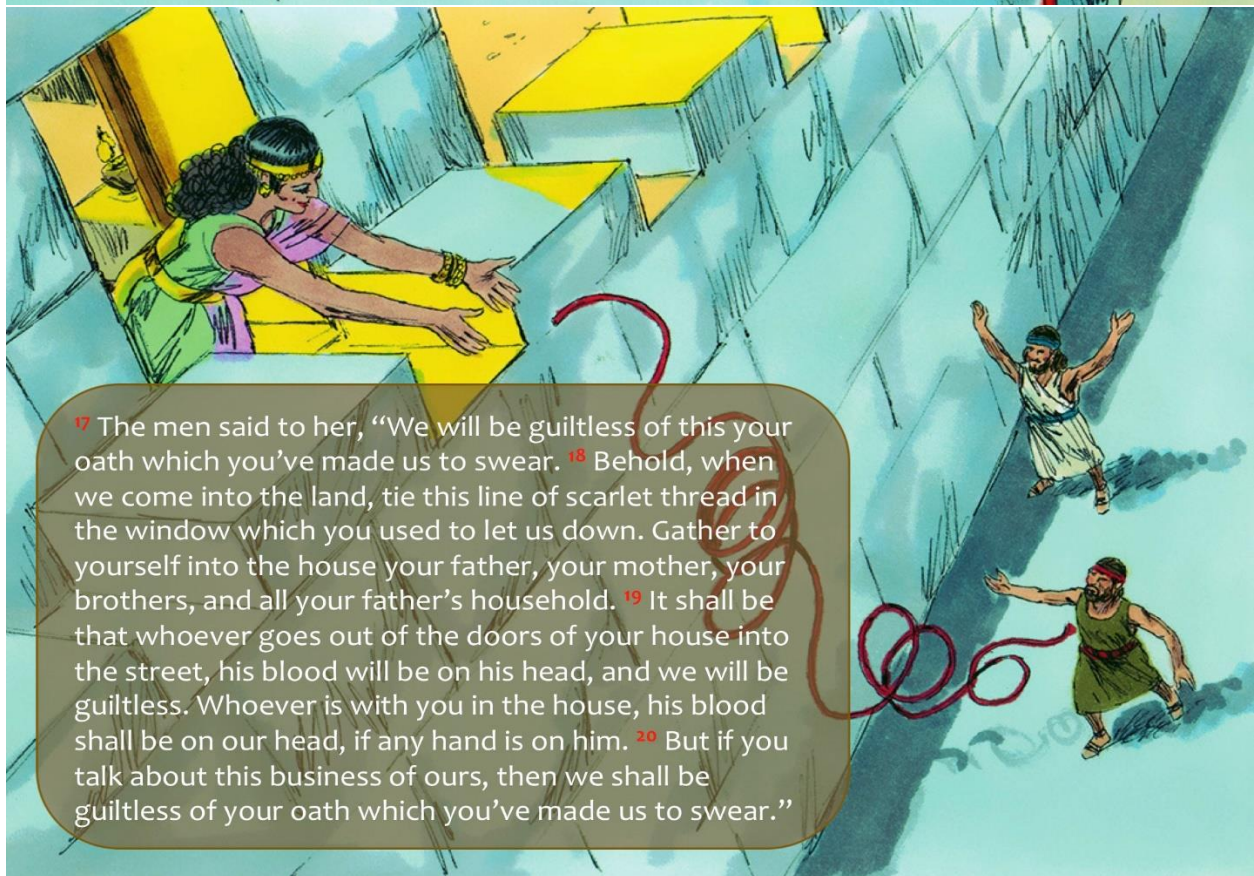
Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a true sign; and that you will save alive my father, my mother, my brothers, and my sisters, and all that they have, and will deliver our lives from death."



The men said to her, "Our life for yours, if you don't talk about this business of ours; and it shall be, when the LORD gives us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you."



¹⁵ Then she let them down by a cord through the window; for her house was on the side of the wall, and she lived on the wall. ¹⁶ She said to them, "Go to the mountain, lest the pursuers find you. Hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward, you may go your way."



¹⁷ The men said to her, "We will be guiltless of this your oath which you've made us to swear. ¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, tie this line of scarlet thread in the window which you used to let us down. Gather to yourself into the house your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. ¹⁹ It shall be that whoever goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood will be on his head, and we will be guiltless. Whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand is on him. ²⁰ But if you talk about this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless of your oath which you've made us to swear."

The salvation of Rahab takes place in a way parallel to the original Passover. While I would not argue on the basis of Passover being "recent," 40 years is not significant, given the fact that biblical typology pops up again and again hundreds of years apart. The important thing is what the parallels are.

Factors in the story of Rahab:

- 1) hang a scarlet thread through the window, which so far as the spies were concerned functioned as an exit door**
- 2) gather all her household into her home**
- 3) those not gathered would be subject to death**

Factors in the story of Passover:

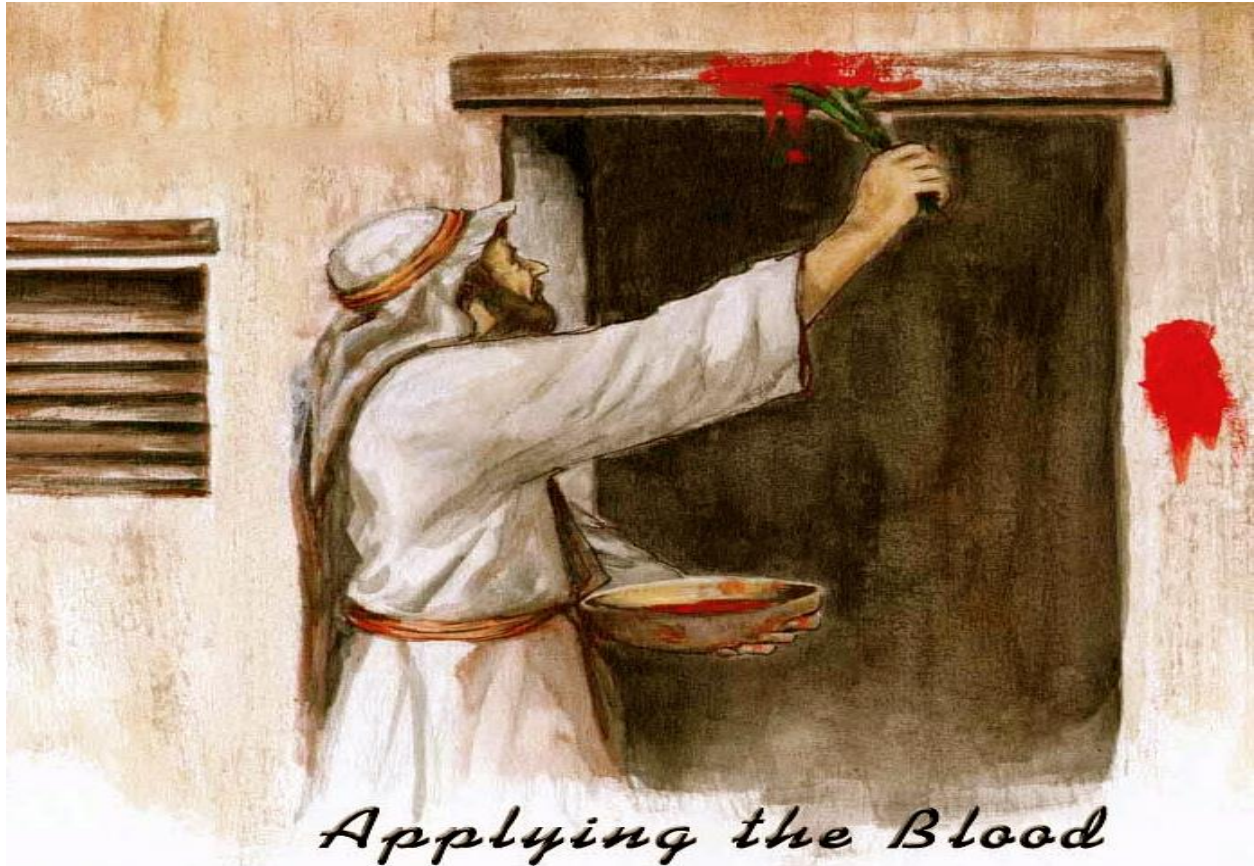
- 1) blood on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the door (Exodus 12:7)**
- 2) all the household to remain in the house (Ex 12:22)**
- 3) those outside the households sprinkled with blood were subject to death (Ex 12:29)**

The fact that blood changes color when applied to wood has no real significance here; everyone knows what the color of blood is, and there were other rites prior to Moses and Levitical law where blood applied.

The scarlet cord symbolized in type Rahab's acceptance of the "lamb's blood" in her life. What the blood on the doorposts on the first Passover night in Egypt was to the houses of Israel, so the scarlet cord in the wall window was to the household of Rahab. It became Rahab's identification as one that was to be saved in a day of calamity. It was the acting out of her faith.

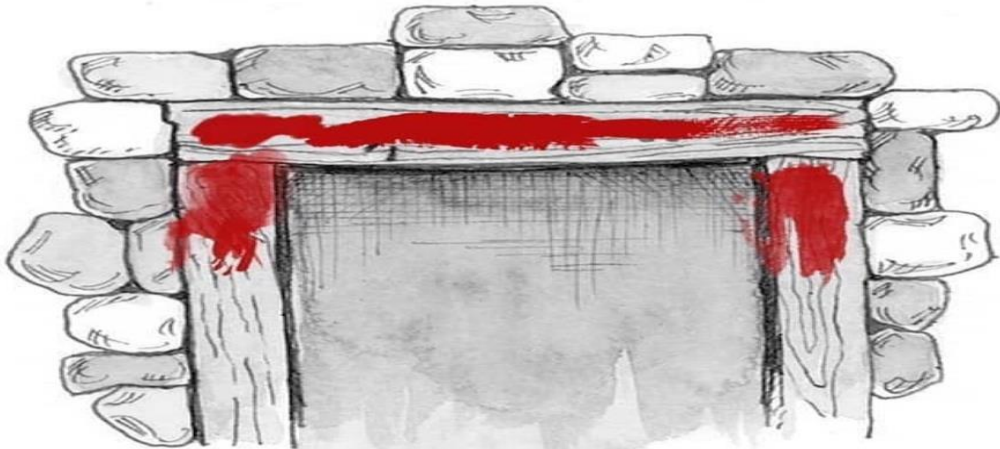
Her sinful years being overlooked (Acts 17:30-31) she became the ancestress of David and of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:1, 5-6).

What the blood of the first Passover did for the Israelites, the scarlet cord did for the prostitute Rahab. What Christ's poured-out blood on the stake did for mankind's sins, the red grape of communion each Lord's Day similarly memorializes for believers.



Applying the Blood

BLOOD ON THE DOORPOSTS
EXODUS 12



The LORD did not check
who inside the house was worthy.
HE checked for the BLOOD
on the doorposts.
None of us is worthy.
Only the blood of Jesus can cover us.



west
palm
beach



CHURCH *of*
CHRIST

Applications

There is reason why this historical event is recorded for us today. Remember that the apostle Paul told us that what was written in former days was written for our instruction so that we would have endurance and have encouragement (Romans 15:4). So, what is the message from this account of Rahab? There are a few messages God is proclaiming.

Creating Faith.

First, we see God creating faith. God was already doing his work, striking fear in the hearts of the land's inhabitants. We see God's fame spreading despite actions of Israel. The people knew what God had done for his own glory against Egypt and other nations. The exodus was intended to be a global story that created faith in those who heard. In this we're seeing God intentionally bringing salvation to the Gentiles. God did not need to spy out the promised land. God was going to fight for the people and give them victory. But God is going to show the world a picture of how he will redeem people, even the Gentiles.

Indiscriminate Faith.

Second, anyone can have faith, regardless of the depth of their sinfulness or their background. Rahab is a Gentile doomed for destruction but was saved from the wrath that was to come. She's doomed as a Canaanite because the nation is deserving destruction. She is doomed as a prostitute because of her own personal sins. There is nothing about her worthy of saving. She isn't an Israelite. She lives in a wicked land. She's a wicked person. But she has something that is necessary for salvation. She does not have good works, but she has faith. If God will save Rahab, then anyone can be saved. No one is beyond God's love, concern, or reach. It doesn't matter who you are or what you can have done, you can be saved by acting on faith.

Yet, even more amazing is that her name is emblazoned as part of the faithful. Not only is she listed in Hebrews chapter eleven for her faith, but she is also listed as part of the family line that leads to the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:5).

Think about this. She is going to marry someone in Israel and they are going to have children, and their children will have children, until we get all the way down through time that one of her descendants will be Jesus. Rahab is fully included in the nation of Israel. Her sinfulness is washed away. Her profession is washed away. She is given a whole new life through the salvation God brought to Jericho.

Necessary Faith.

Finally, we see that faith will be necessary for salvation. James tells us that Rahab is a model of necessary faith.

And in the same way wasn't also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (James 2:25–26)

Rahab's faith is amazing and represents the faith needed for salvation. First, she knows and acknowledges that the Lord is God in heaven above and on earth below. Second, she asks for salvation from the coming judgment. Third, she forfeits her own earthly citizenship, rescuing these men rather than obey the authorities of Jericho. Finally, she acts on her faith. She protects the spies at great personal risk. She puts the cord in the window as she was instructed to do. She does not tell the authorities about these men and helps them escape. All she does is her acting on her faith. This is the picture of true, saving faith. Faith acknowledges the Lord and submits to his requirements. She knows God is going to win and she wants to belong to the winning side. Her name is set for eternity next to Abraham's name as a model of faith in the book of James.

Redemptive Tapestry Is Woven In Red

The great teacher of yesteryear, William Evans, noted, **“Cut the Bible anywhere and it bleeds.”** The blood of Jesus stains every page, every book, in both testaments. Evans observed that **“the atonement is the scarlet cord running through every page in the entire Bible”**; it **“is red with redemption truth.”**

Jesus Himself intimated this connectedness - this bloodline of redemption. After His atoning death and resurrection, He approached two unnamed disciples who were consumed with discouragement as they were walking to a town near Jerusalem. Disillusioned over Jesus’s execution, they did not recognize Him by face, nor did they expect what they were about to hear. They tried to explain to this “stranger” what had happened, even though they were actually unaware of what had *really* happened (Jesus was risen and with them!). He told them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” The author, Luke, then explained, “And starting with Moses and the Prophets, he interpreted to them in the Scriptures all the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27 esv).

This first post-resurrection message covered how Jesus was anticipated and predicted in the Old Testament

He must have pointed to highlights like Abraham’s near sacrifice of his son on the very mountain where Jesus, the Son of God, would die centuries later. He probably told them how the exodus from Egypt prefigured our exodus from the slavery of sin, made possible by His death.

I can almost hear Him describing the blood sacrifices of Leviticus, the servant prophecies of Isaiah predicting Christ, and so many psalms now considered to be messianic in nature.

Actual scarlet cords show up in Scripture with some interesting overtones.

The garments of the high priest and the curtains of the tabernacle in the Old Testament included scarlets threads. Many have seen such usages as prefiguring the atoning work of the future Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, through His blood.

When an advance team of Jewish spies scouted out Jericho and almost got caught, a faith-filled ex-prostitute named Rahab helped them to escape through her window via a scarlet cord. They promised her when the day of Jericho's destruction came, she and her family could be identified for rescue by hanging that rope from her window on the wall of the city.

The scarlet cord—the color of blood—was a sign of her faith that led to her salvation. The cord, for Rahab, worked much like the smeared blood on the lintels and doorposts of Jewish homes in Egypt on the night of the Passover decades before.

The main theme of the Bible is Christ.

He's the hero of the story because His sacrifice on the cross provided the salvation for mankind. The "scarlet thread" of redemption is interwoven through the entire story and can be seen in the accounts of biblical *history* that tell *His story*.

It weaves together the hides of the animals slaughtered in the Garden of Eden to provide garments for Adam and Eve. It snares the ram provided in Isaac's place on Mount Moriah. It stains the doorposts in Egypt and trickles down the altar in the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple in Jerusalem.

That blood-red cord binds the Old Testament to John the Baptizer's introduction of Jesus Christ as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," and to the beams of a Roman cross at Golgotha, where Jesus later declared, "It is finished!"

Though Jesus had a miraculous birth, though He performed many nature-defying wonders, and though He taught the most sublime truths ever proclaimed, none of these provide salvation, and none are the focal point of His ministry. **The epicenter of all history, especially redemptive, is the cross!**

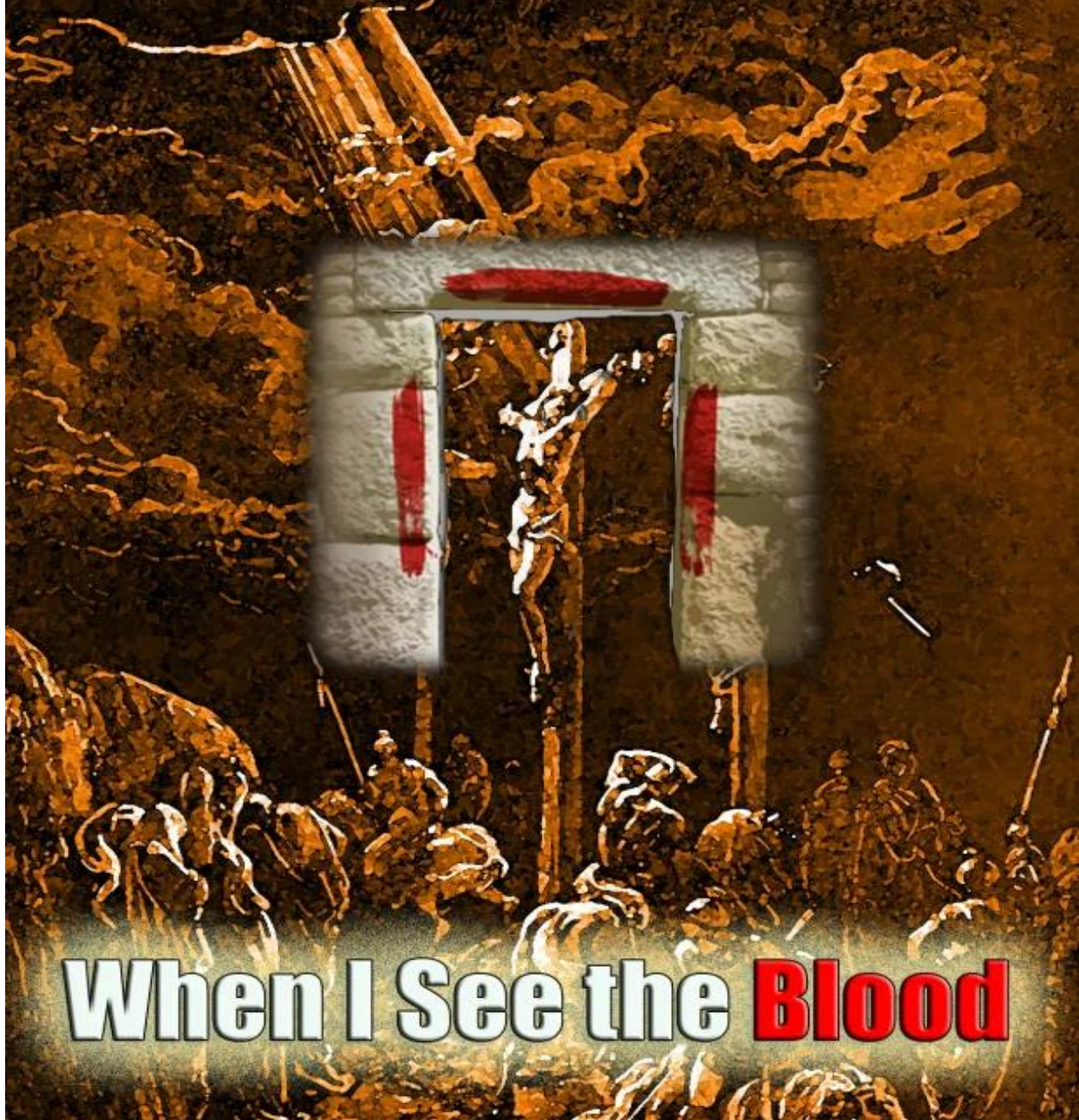
Bethlehem's baby was born to die! The Bible even refers to Jesus in its final book as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). In other words, before God made the world, He made the plan to save the world. And why blood? Because "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22 niv).

That's why the scarlet thread leads all the way to the cross.

We know the New Testament authors were keen to this by how much literary real estate they devoted to the details surrounding the crucifixion. In the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), there are only four chapters devoted to the first thirty years of Jesus's life. The same books provide eighty-five chapters about His last three-and-a-half years, the span of His earthly ministry. Of those eighty-five chapters, twenty-nine are dedicated to the final week of His life, and thirteen of those twenty-nine chapters focus solely on the last twenty-four hours! The events of Jesus's last day, leading up to and including the violent crucifixion, take up 579 verses.

- BLOODLINE

OUR SPIRITUAL UMBILICAL CORD!

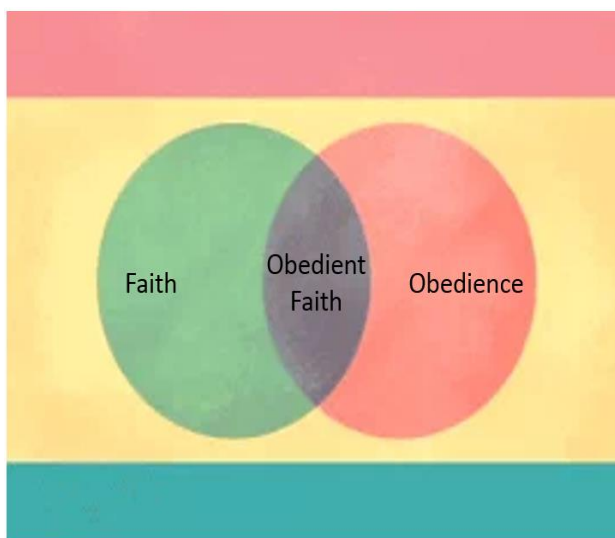


All pre-New Testament history looked forward to that atonement act; all post-New Testament history looks back to it!

AT THE NEXUS OF GRACE & GLORY

Five Steps For Saving:

- HEARING:
- Romans 10: 17; Matthew 7: 24 - 27
- BELIEVING:
- Hebrews 11: 6; Mark 16: 15, 16
- REPENTING:
- Acts 2: 38; 17: 30; Luke 13: 3
- CONFESSING:
- Matthew 10: 32, 33; Acts 8: 36, 37
- BAPTISM:
- Romans 6: 3 – 5; Acts 8: 36 – 38



O That Will Be Glory

2. *Wh* O that will be glory for me, e grace,

I an Glory for me, glory for me; ce,

When by His grace I shall look on His face, e

That will be glory, be glory for me. me.

