



# ~AT HOME WORSHIP~

6<sup>th</sup> December 2020



## Advent Series: Extraordinary Women of the Bible

### Rahab

**Preparation** As we continue in the season of Advent we remember in anticipation the coming of Jesus who said:

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness , but will have the light of life” **JOHN. 8:12 ESV**

**Hymn/Song:** [Chris Tomlin - Come Thou Long Expected Jesus - YouTube](#)

Come, thou long expected Jesus  
Born to set thy people free  
From our fears and sins release us  
Let us find our rest in thee

Israel's strength and consolation  
Hope of all the earth thou art  
Dear desire of every nation  
Joy of every longing heart

Born thy people to deliver  
Born a child and yet a king  
Born to reign in us forever  
Now thy gracious kingdom bring

By thine own eternal spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone  
By thine own sufficient merit  
Raise us to thy glorious throne

By thine own sufficient merit  
Raise us to thy glorious throne

### **Opening Prayer:**

Loving God, all worship and adoration belongs to you for you alone are Lord, you alone are the mighty God, Creator of all that is good.

And yet you are closer than our very breath.

You are closer than my breath and I thank you Lord that you are always with me, whether I know it or not, whether I recognise it or not, whether I delight in it or not.

You are always there to comfort and to challenge

Thank you for your saving presence.

Amen

## Prayer for the Day

**Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds,  
that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again  
as judge and saviour we maybe ready to receive him,  
who is our Lord and God. Amen**

**Saying Sorry:** This Sunday, A prayer attributed to Sir Francis Drake:

Disturb us, Lord, when  
we are too pleased with ourselves,  
when our dreams have come true  
because we dreamed too little,  
when we arrived safely  
because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
with the abundance of things we possess  
we have lost our thirst  
for the waters of life;  
having fallen in love with life,  
we have ceased to dream of eternity  
and in our efforts to build a new earth,  
we have allowed our vision  
of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
to venture on wilder seas  
where storms will show Your mastery;  
where losing sight of land,  
we shall find the stars.

We ask you to push back  
the horizons of our hopes;  
and to push back the future  
in strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain,  
who is Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxviwvjyg1w>

## Faithful One

[Brian Doerksen](#)

Faithful one, so unchanging  
Ageless one, you're my rock of peace  
Lord of all I depend on you  
I call out to you, again and again  
I call out to you, again and again  
You are my rock in times of trouble  
You lift me up when I fall down  
All through the storm

Your love is, the anchor  
My hope is in You alone

## BIBLE READINGS



### Mark 1:1-8

#### The Preaching of John the Baptist

**1** This is the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.<sup>[a]</sup> **2** It began as the prophet Isaiah had written:

“God said, ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you  
to open the way for you.’

**3** Someone is shouting in the desert,  
‘Get the road ready for the Lord;  
make a straight path for him to travel!’”

**4** So John appeared in the desert, baptizing and preaching.<sup>[b]</sup> “Turn away from your sins and be baptized,” he told the people, “and God will forgive your sins.” **5** Many people from the province of Judea and the city of Jerusalem went out to hear John. They confessed their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan River.

**6** John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. **7** He announced to the people, “The man who will come after me is much greater than I am. I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals. **8** I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### Joshua 2:1-24 (Focus on Rahab)

#### Joshua Sends Spies into Jericho

**2** Then Joshua sent two spies from the camp at Acacia with orders to go and secretly explore the land of Canaan, especially the city of Jericho. When they came to the city, they went to spend the night in the house of a prostitute named Rahab. **2** The king of Jericho heard that some Israelites had come that night to spy out the country, **3** so he sent word to Rahab: “The men in your house have come to spy out the whole country! Bring them out!”

**4-6** “Some men did come to my house,” she answered, “but I don't know where they were from. They left at sundown before the city gate was closed. I didn't find out where they were going, but if you start after them quickly, you can catch them.” (Now Rahab had taken the two spies up on the roof and hidden them under some stalks of flax that she had put there.) **7** The king's men left the city, and then the gate was shut. They went looking for the Israelite spies as far as the place where the road crosses the Jordan.

<sup>8</sup> Before the spies settled down for the night, Rahab went up on the roof <sup>9</sup> and said to them, “I know that the LORD has given you this land. Everyone in the country is terrified of you. <sup>10</sup> We have heard how the LORD dried up the Red Sea in front of you when you were leaving Egypt. We have also heard how you killed Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan. <sup>11</sup> We were afraid as soon as we heard about it; we have all lost our courage because of you. The LORD your God is God in heaven above and here on earth. <sup>12</sup> Now swear by him that you will treat my family as kindly as I have treated you, and give me some sign that I can trust you. <sup>13</sup> Promise me that you will save my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families! Don't let us be killed!”

<sup>14</sup> The men said to her, “May God take our lives if we don't do as we say!<sup>[a]</sup> If you do not tell anyone what we have been doing, we promise you that when the LORD gives us this land, we will treat you well.”

<sup>15</sup> Rahab lived in a house built into the city wall, so she let the men down from the window by a rope. <sup>16</sup> “Go into the hill country,” she said, “or the king's men will find you. Hide there for three days until they come back. After that, you can go on your way.”

<sup>17</sup> The men said to her, “We will keep the promise that you have made us give. <sup>18</sup> This is what you must do. When we invade your land, tie this red cord to the window you let us down from. Get your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's family together in your house. <sup>19</sup> If anyone goes out of the house, his death will be his own fault, and we will not be responsible; but if anyone in the house with you is harmed, then we will be responsible. <sup>20</sup> However, if you tell anyone what we have been doing, then we will not have to keep our promise which you have made us give you.” <sup>21</sup> She agreed and sent them away. When they had gone, she tied the red cord to the window.

<sup>22</sup> The spies went into the hills and hid. The king's men looked for them all over the countryside for three days, but they did not find them, so they returned to Jericho. <sup>23</sup> Then the two spies came down from the hills, crossed the river, and went back to Joshua. They told him everything that had happened, <sup>24</sup> and then said, “We are sure that the LORD has given us the whole country. All the people there are terrified of us.”

## REFLECTION TIME



### Short Reflection by Clive

Both Jewish and Christian writers have tried to prove that Rahab was a different woman from the one whom the Bible always speaks of her as a “harlot.” To them it was abhorrent that such a disreputable person should be included in our Lord's genealogy and by Paul, as a woman of faith, and so her story has been distorted in order to further a scheme of salvation based upon human goodness. Although man's sense of refinement may be shocked, the fact remains that Rahab, Tamar and Bathsheba were sinful women who were purged by God, and had their share in the royal line from which Jesus sprang.

It has even been suggested that the word “harlot” can be translated “innkeeper,” thus making Rahab the landlady of a wayside tavern. Guesses have been made that she had been a concubine, such as Hagar and Zilpah had been, but that in Jericho she was a reputable woman identified with a respectable business. The Bible, however, makes no attempt to smooth over the unpleasant fact that Rahab had been a harlot. Endeavouring to understand her character

Rahab indulged in venal wantonness as traveling merchants came her way and were housed in her ill-famed abode. Evidently Rahab had her own house and lived apart from her parents and family. Although she never lost her concern for her dear ones, perhaps she was treated as a moral leper. We are told that prostitution was not regarded with the same horror then, as now, but the Bible with one voice speaks of harlotry with moral revulsion and social ostracism.

When the two spies from Joshua sought cover in her house, she knew that sooner or later the king of Jericho would get to know of the accommodation she gave them. Here were two men, different from other men who came seeking her favours. These were men of God, not idolaters, bent on one mission, namely, the overthrow of the enemies of His people, and brilliantly she planned their protection and escape. The flax that she spread on her roof and the scarlet cord she used as a sign indicated that Rahab manufactured linen and also dyed it.

Rahab’s skilful scheme succeeded. The two Jewish spies were in desperate straits, seeing the Amorite pursuers were hot on their trail, but Rahab, although her safety and patriotism as an Amorite would be assured if she informed against the spies, decided to hide and preserve them. Seeing their hunted and dreaded look, Rahab assuredly said, “Fear not, I will not betray you nor your leader. Follow me,” and taking them up to the flat roof of her house, bade the men cover themselves completely with a pile of flax lying there to dry. Shortly after, when the pursuers had tracked the two spies to Rahab’s house, she met them with a plausible excuse that they were there but had left by way of the Eastern Gate. If they doubted her word, they could come in and search her house. But off the pursuers went to catch up with their prey, not knowing that the spies were being befriended by Rahab. As soon as the way was clear, under cover of night, she let the spies down from the window in the wall and, knowing the country, guided the spies in the best way to escape capture.

One of the features associated with this clever plan of Rahab which is worthy of notice., idolater though she had been, with a phase of immorality associated with her idolatrous life, she witnessed to a remarkable understanding of the sovereignty of the true God for she said to the spies—

I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us....  
The LORD, your God he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath ([Joshua 2:9-11](#)).

As a result she and her family were saved, she married and became part of the Ancestry of Jesus.

The threefold reference to Rahab in the New Testament reveals how she became a faithful follower of the Lord. She had been taken from the dunghill and placed among the saints in the genealogy of the Saviour ([Matthew 1:5](#) where Rachab [KJV] and Rahab [ASV], are to be identified as the same person).

Paul highly commends Rahab for her energetic faith and gives her a place on the illustrious roll of the Old Testament of those who triumphed by faith. “By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace” ([Hebrews 11:31](#)). What a suggestive touch that is, “with peace.”

The Apostle James adds to Paul's record about Rahab being justified by faith by saying that she was likewise justified by works ([James 2:25](#)), and there is no contradiction between these two aspects for Rahab's courageous deed was but faith in practice.

Rahab became a new creation in God just as we can in Christ today.

[Children may choose to use the Activity and Colouring Sheet](#)



[I am a new creation - YouTube](#)

I am a new creation  
No more in condemnation

Here in the grace of god i stand

My heart is over flowing  
My love just keeps on growing  
Here in the grace of god i stand

And i will praise you lord  
Cause i will praise you lord  
And i will sing of all  
That you have done

A joy that knows no limit  
A likeness in my spirit  
Here in the grace of god i stand

I am a new creation  
No more in condemnation  
Here in the grace of god i stand

My heart is over flowing  
My love just keeps on growing  
Here in the grace of god i stand

And i will praise you lord  
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A joy that knows no limit  
A likeness in my spirit  
Here in the grace of god i stand

I am a new creation  
No more in...

## Time for Prayer

We pray for the Church: that the Holy Spirit may breathe compassion and courage into the hearts of all her people. May she walk alongside all those who are vulnerable and respond in love to their needs. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world, our common home: that through God's grace we may recognise that we are all part of a fragile balance. May we hear the earth's cry, and be moved to protect it for future generations. Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for world leaders, that the Lord may move them to act with respect and urgency for the sake of the earth and the most vulnerable. Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for those of us who are already struggling in the face of increasing droughts, floods and storms, and for all who are working to tackle the climate emergency. May God grant us all hope and strength for the future. Lord, in your mercy...

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for our Partnership, and our local communities as we begin to rebuild following coronavirus. Through the grace of God may we choose lifestyles that do not negatively impact our vulnerable brothers and sisters or the earth. Lord, in your mercy...

**All: Hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** We ask these prayers through our Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of all creation,  
**All: Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
On earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread  
Forgive us our sins  
As we forgive those who sin against us  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory are yours  
Now and for ever.  
Amen.**

**Hymn/Song** [Hills of the North, Rejoice \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

Hills of the north, rejoice;  
river and mountain spring,  
hark to the advent voice;  
valley and lowland, sing;  
though absent long, your Lord is nigh;  
he judgment brings and victory.

Isles of the southern seas,  
deep in your coral caves

pent be each warring breeze,  
lulled be your restless waves:  
he comes to reign with boundless sway,  
and makes your wastes his great highway.

Lands of the East, awake,  
soon shall your sons be free;  
the sleep of ages break,  
and rise to liberty.  
On your far hills, long cold and grey,  
has dawned the everlasting day.

Shores of the utmost West,  
ye that have waited long,  
unvisited, unblessed,  
break forth to swelling song;  
high raise the note, that Jesus died,  
yet lives and reigns, the Crucified.

Shout, while ye journey home;  
songs be in every mouth;  
lo, from the North we come,  
from East, and West, and South.  
city of God, the bond are free,  
we come to live and reign in thee!

## Closing Prayer

May the beauty of Christ be reflected in our eyes.

May the love of Christ be reflected in our hands.

May the wisdom of Christ be reflected in our words.

May the knowledge of Christ flow from our hearts.

May the peace of Christ rule our hearts.

So that all might see and in seeing believe.

## Dismissal

May you know the Lord with you each day of your life, may you answer the call to listen and the challenge to follow.

And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be with you as you go. Amen

*God bless us as we*



*watch and wait*