

THE THREAD RUNNING THROUGH THE BIBLE

From my own experience I know that reading and understanding the Bible may be a challenge for some people. In the beginning of my Christian walk, I would sit down to read my Bible, hoping it would all make sense to me, but one thing I remember that was quite confusing, was how the Old Testament and the New Testament were related.

Little did I know that both testaments were telling the same story.

The Old Testament is a picture of Jesus. The picture is in shadow form but when we dig deeper, the picture comes into focus, and we can see the person – Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the thread running through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation.

He said:

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” Revelation 22:13

When Jesus and the New Testament writers referred to the “Scriptures” or “Scripture”, they were speaking of the Old Testament.

Jesus Himself, confirmed that the Old Testament was a portrait of Himself, and that it all pointed to Him.

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. John 5:39

One time when Jesus was speaking to some Jews, He said:

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust.

46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

John 5:45-46

This is why Jesus also had said in Matthew 5:17:

“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

It’s interesting to note that Jesus’ first post-resurrection message was about how He was anticipated and predicted in the Old Testament.

Right after Jesus was resurrected, He appeared to two of His followers on a road to Emmaus, not far from Jerusalem.

Luke 24:25-27

25 Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

I’m sure that Jesus told them how the Exodus from Egypt prefigured our own exodus from the slavery of sin by His death on the cross.

I can almost hear Him describing the blood sacrifices in Leviticus, there is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood – explaining to them the significance of His blood flowing from his body on the cross. Also, the prophecies of Isaiah predicting His death (53), and so many Psalms that alluded to the Messiah to come.

By the time Jesus came along the Jews had divided the Old Testament into three parts: The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

So, anytime someone used these references, they were talking about the complete Old Testament.

So, Jesus continued saying to them - **Luke 24:44-47**

Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”

Luke 24:45-47

45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

46 Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Basically, Jesus was telling them that the Old Testament writers wrote of His crucifixion and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.

We need to remember that it was all done in shadow form, because at that time it was not yet the right timing for God to reveal His plan, it was still a mystery.

We also need to bear in mind that there are prophecies in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled in the future.

We can read the Old Testament through the lens of the Cross, which was the beginning of a new covenant with God, through the blood of Jesus Christ.

This is why it's so important to read the whole Bible to get the complete picture.

To illustrate my point, I would like to show you an example of how a story in the Old Testament points to Jesus.

Our story is found in Joshua chapter 2.

Joshua sends two spies to look over the land. Jericho was a pagan city; the centre of Canaanite worship of the moon-god. They were an extremely wicked and idolatrous people. They practiced human sacrifice and perverse sexual activity.

Joshua 2:1-2

1 (...) So they went and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab and lodged there.

2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, “Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country.”

Rahab probably kept an inn or, It was not uncommon for both an inn and a brothel to operate within the same building.

But someone saw them going into Rahab's place and the King sent soldiers to arrest them.

Verse 3 So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country.”

She decided to help the Israelite spies.

Verse 4 -7

Why would she risk her life like that? We find the answer in what she told the Israeli spies in

Joshua 2:8-10.

She had already heard about the God of Israel. She understood that her moon god was no match for the Almighty God of Israel, who had dried up the water of the Red Sea to rescue the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. She knew that if there was going to be an attack on Jericho, she would need to take action to survive, so she made a deal with the Israeli spies.

Verse 12 -18

The spies agreed to protect her and her family but said that she must hang a scarlet rope out of the window, so her home and family would be spared.

The Israelites crossed the Jordan into Canaan and took the city of Jericho and kept their promise to Rahab.

Joshua 6:22-23; 25

The city was destroyed with only Rahab and her family spared, plus all that they had.

What Rahab did was so impactful that we find her name referenced in 3 New Testament books, and she is part of the hall of faith heroes in **Hebrews 11:31**

By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

Where do we find Jesus in this story?

1. Rahab is part of Jesus's genealogy.

Matthew 1:5

5 Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,

And when you carry on reading it, (verse 16) it leads to Joseph, the adoptive father of Jesus.

If you had never read the story of Rahab in the Old Testament, you would not know the significance of that name in the genealogy of Jesus, and you would not understand why her name is in the book of Hebrews in the New Testament.

2. The scarlet rope is an allusion to the blood of Jesus on the Cross.

The red rope on Rahab's window was a shadow of what the blood of Jesus would accomplish on the Cross: grace, mercy, deliverance.

3. Rahab's story speaks of our own redemption.

Because Rahab decided to believe in the God of the Israelites, she was no longer viewed as an unclean prostitute, but as one worthy through God's grace to be part of the lineage of Jesus, to be part of His family.

Like Rahab, once we become Christians our sins are forgiven, the slate is wiped clean.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

3 POINTS FROM RAHAB'S STORY:

1. You and your family can be saved no matter what your background is.

Rahab was a prostitute, morally unfit, socially not accepted, but God brought her into His family. God can save you and your family.

I believe that the greatest battle that we are facing in today's world, is the battle for our spiritual legacy, which is our families.

The only thing that will stand between us and our families from destruction, chaos, and hopelessness, is the power of the blood of Jesus.

2. There is nothing more powerful than the blood of Jesus Christ.

Rahab believed that if she would bind a red rope to her window she and her family would be saved. Don't let the devil reach into your past and condemn you, either. Your slate has been wiped clean.

Revelation 12:11

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

3. Take the red rope and bind it to the window.

If you want your family saved, to come to the faith, then you must get involved.

Let's throw the red rope out of the window and keep it there until we get our breakthrough through prayer.

Acts 16:31

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.

