



READ: Selections from Joshua 2:1-22 (NirV)

Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there... The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight. They've come to check out the land." So the king sent a message to Rahab. It said, "Bring out the men who came into your house. They've come to check out the whole land." But the woman had hidden the two men... Rahab went up on the roof before the spies settled down for the night. She said to them, "I know that the LORD has given you this land. We are very much afraid of you. Everyone who lives in this country is weak with fear because of you. "Now then, please give me your word. Promise me in the name of the LORD that you will be kind to my family... Promise that you won't put any of us to death." The spies had said to her, "You made us give our word. But we won't keep our promise unless you do what we say. When we enter the land, you must tie this bright red rope in the window. Tie it in the window you let us down through. Bring your father and mother into your house. Also bring in your brothers and everyone else in your family..." "I'll do as you say," Rahab replied. So she sent them away, and they left. Then she tied the bright red rope in the window.

ENTER THE STORY:

Rahab was a woman from Jericho, a strong city with really big walls, but she had an even bigger secret – she had heard about ALL of the things God had done to Egypt when he rescued the Israelites from slavery, and she wanted to leave Jericho and join God's family. When Joshua sent two spies into her town to find out what the city was like, she helped them hide from the King, and made a deal with them. They agreed to save her and her family on one condition - she had to hang a scarlet "cord" outside her window. It was the *ONLY HOPE* she had to be saved!

Did you know that the word cord or rope in Hebrew is the same word for *HOPE*? That word can also mean "to tie or bind two things together," so that "scarlet cord" is really her "scarlet hope!"

By hanging that cord out her window, Rahab was binding herself to the Israelites and putting her *HOPE* in God to save her and her family! And God did save her and her family!

After Israel defeated Jericho, Rahab went with them and married a Jewish prince named Salmon. Because of her *FAITH*... Rahab went from being a nobody to being a princess in a very special family! God blessed Rahab and Salmon with a baby boy named Boaz. Boaz had a son named Obed. Obed had a son named Jesse and Jesse had a son named David - who would grow up to be the greatest king of Israel.

Just like that, we are back at Jesse's tree. Do you remember what God promised would come out of the stump of Jesse's Tree? A Shoot that would be our FOREVER KING! A very special someone who would bless the whole world.

Do you know who this special someone is? It's Jesus!

This Christmas, we are reminded that our hope is in a tiny, little baby. That baby is OUR Scarlet Cord, and everyone who binds themselves to him will be saved just like Rahab and her family.

PRAY: Jesus, you are our Scarlet Cord, and our only hope. We choose to bind ourselves to you and wait with great expectation for you to return again to rescue us and bring us home to be with you forever. Amen.