



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Joshua 2: 1-24

Lesson 2

Fall 2020

"Grace Abounding"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you, Seth and good to have you back. We are in the Book of Joshua. We're in chapter 2 this morning and I'm going to read the entire chapter, Joshua 2, beginning with verse 1.

¹ Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. ² It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." ³ And the king of Jericho sent *word* 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 land." ⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." ⁵ It came about, when *it was time* to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

⁸ Now before they lay down, she came to them on the roof, ⁹ and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen

on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. ¹⁰ 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 Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹ When we heard *it*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹² 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 household, and give me a pledge of truth, ¹³ and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sister, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." ¹⁴ So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.", (I'm going to mention this in the lesson itself, but that word, 'deal kindly', that is the word *chesed*; it's a word of covenant faithfulness. And she has used that, "deal kindly with us," and they say, "we will deal kindly with you." And it suggests they've entered into a covenant with the Lord. But I'll say more about that in a moment.),

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. ¹⁶ She said to them, "Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way." ¹⁷ The men said to her, "We *shall be* free from this oath to you which you which you have made us swear, ¹⁸ unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household. ¹⁹ It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *shall be* free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is *laid* on him. ²⁰ But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear." ²¹ She said, "According to your words, so be it." So she sent them away, and they departed, and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²² They departed and came to the hill country, and they remained there for three days until the pursuers returned. Now the pursuers had sought *them* all along the road, but had not found *them*. ²³ Then the two men returned and came down from the hill country and crossed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they related to him all that had happened to them. ²⁴ They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us.

Joshua 2:1-24

May the Lord bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of studying it together. Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

Father, we do thank You for this time together. It's a great privilege and blessing to be with Your people and we thank You that things, each week, seem to be returning more and more to normal. And so we thank You for that and thank You for this time together; and thank You for this great text of Scripture which we have the opportunity to study at some length this morning, and pray that as we do that, the Spirit of God would guide us in our thinking and give us understanding, and make the proper application to us. And certainly that application, among other things, will be what a great and gracious God You are, and what a marvelous work of grace You've done. We sang about that earlier, but we certainly see it here, boldly, in the salvation of Rahab the harlot. So bless us, Lord.

And help us to understand Your grace a little better and appreciate what You've done in our lives as a result. And may that prepare us for the day and the week ahead, that we would live a life of trusting in You and walking by faith.

Lord bless us materially, bless us spiritually, bless our nation. Bless our leaders; give them wisdom as they guide us through these difficult days. And we pray Your rich blessing upon our nation. Most importantly, may Your people be lights in the midst of

darkness and may the Gospel go out—and perhaps, if it be Your will and if You're so pleased, bring about revival in this land. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

In Romans 5, verse 20, Paul made the observation that 'where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' He knew that personally; 1 Timothy, chapter 1, in verse 15 he called himself 'the chief of sinners.' There are others who would claim that title and would certainly agree about grace abounding to them. There's the sinful woman of Luke, chapter 7, who from gratitude washed Jesus' feet with her tears. John Bunyan felt that way about himself when he wrote his autobiography. He combined Paul's statements for his title, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. He described himself from the time he was a child as having few equals in cursing, lying, and blaspheming God. He was, he said, "The ringleader of all the youths in vice and ungodliness."

Bunyan differed from Saul of Tarsus, who was a man others looked up to: A religious man, a moral man, an educated and devout man who discovered that he was just a self-righteous man. Bunyan was more like the woman of Luke 7. But all of them, whether the self-righteous Pharisee, or profane sinner, each was a 'brand plucked from the fire' to whom grace abounded.

Now that's the story of Joshua chapter 2; the story of Rahab the harlot. It's the story of a foreigner, a Canaanite, a prostitute, born in darkness who believed in the Lord God. How does such a person come to have that knowledge and faith? —Grace. It abounded to her. That's the lesson of this chapter. It's an important chapter for the rest of the book because it explains the events of chapter 6, which is about the fall of Jericho. So it's been called a bridge between chapter 1 and chapter 6.

But taken by itself, chapter 2 is a story of grace abounding—and really the story of each of us who have been saved. We were lost, utterly lost, when we were found. Your story is no less one of mercy than Rahab's is.

On the face of it, though, it's a story of espionage, intrigue, and adventure. It begins with Joshua sending two men to spy out Jericho and the surrounding region. It was cautious preparation for war. —But it might seem that it was unnecessary. God had

told him He was giving them the land, "Go and conquer", was basically what He had told Joshua in chapter 1. So was this a lack of faith on Joshua's part?

I don't think so. The Lord had assured him, as He had Moses, that they would inherit Canaan. But His commands don't preclude preparation. A life of faith is not a life of haste, and it involves planning. And Joshua, being a general, knew that he needed a strategy for battle. He had not seen the city. The Lord had not told him that He would make the walls fall down, so Joshua was being wise. He was laying plans for the fight with full confidence in the Lord. The two go together—planning and trusting.

Oliver Cromwell used to tell his troops, "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." Well, that's how we're to live. Carefully, cautiously, using common sense, and trusting in the Lord.

Jericho was an important city. It was a strongly fortified city in the Jordan valley and controlled the pass westward into the highlands of central Canaan. It was a strategic place to begin the conquest.

"So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab and lodged there.", (vs1b). Suddenly the story gets interesting—and controversial. They stayed in a harlot's house. What is going on? That's an embarrassing detail that people have tried to gloss over, explain away, or give a more acceptable explanation. Josephus and the Rabbis explained her profession as that of an innkeeper. But the text is very plain. The Hebrew word is *zanah*, which means harlot. And that's clear from the New Testament also. Hebrews 11, verse 31, and James, chapter 2, verse 25 both identify her with the word *porné* harlot. She was a prostitute.

And for purposes of espionage, Rahab's house was a logical choice. It was busy with visitors. That's not surprising. So a good place to gather information, while at the same time giving them cover, so that they didn't draw attention to themselves. And as it turned out it was an excellent location for an escape. Verse 15 describes Rahab's house as being "on" the wall. Now the preposition "on" is usually, in the Hebrew text, the preposition usually has the meaning "in". So maybe "in the wall" is the idea.

Ancient cities had double walls that gave room in between; so there's the outer wall, then there was an inner wall, and in between was space that was used for various things, to store things. So storage space or living space. And that may be the idea here, a multistoried house between the walls, with the top of the house being the roof, (or the top of the wall, rather, being the roof). So, we can find a reasonable explanation for the two entering Rahab's house.

Still, in all of this, is Providence. The Lord led them to this encounter with this remarkable woman, for them and for her. But it was almost interrupted, and their mission ended when their presence became known. The king learned there were Hebrew spies in the city. He learned that they were in Rahab's house, (and we don't know how that happened). There are other details and questions left unexplained in the first verses of the chapter, in fact, down through the chapter as well. And the author wasn't concerned to answer them.

And that's not unusual in Scripture. In fact, if you're familiar with reading Scripture, you know that. You'll ask yourself, why is that said this way? And you seek an answer, and it's not given in the text. The authors of the Bible never got bogged down in secondary issues; things that puzzle us, but aren't essential to the story. They had a purpose and they stuck to it closely. So how the spies were found out wasn't the historian's concern. It was Rahab and her response to the spies, and her faith. That's what he comes to quickly, her faith.

But first of all, her resourcefulness: The authorities came to her home and demanded that she bring out the men. It was a dangerous moment. Calvin said, "Their life hangs upon the tongue of a woman, just as if hanging on a thread." Their lives were in her hand— completely—at least humanly speaking.

But she'd already made provision. She had already made her decision about the men and what she would do. She had identified their nationality somehow. We're not told, but perhaps from the way they spoke. And she decided to protect them. She had hidden them under some stalks of flax drying on the rooftop. And then she misled the king's men at the door with a deceptive answer. "Yes," she said, "the men came to me,

but I did not know where they were from. It came about, when it *was time* to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." (vs4-5). 'Hurry up', she's saying.

Well the soldiers believed her. They had no reason not to. They went off in the direction that she pointed, east to the Jordan River, looking for the spies. Rahab saved their lives with a lie, which raises a question of ethics, doesn't it? Was it right for her to lie? After all, had she told the truth, the spies would have been arrested and executed.

It's an ancient story, and lots of Christians over the centuries have puzzled over this and given different answers, many justifying her action for various reasons. One justification is that it was a choice between the lesser of two evils. She had to choose one ... she made the best choice ... lying over betrayal, deception over death.

Another justifies it on the grounds that in war we follow a different ethic. And that is true. In a normal society, killing is illegal. But in war, killing is permitted; and deception is also legal. In fact, deception is an important strategy in warfare. Well, there's a logic to that, but it's not flawless. God does condone killing in time of war. (The Book of Joshua is an example of that.) But nowhere does the Bible condone lying.

There are other cases, like the Egyptian midwives disobeying Pharaoh's order to kill all the Hebrew boys when they were born. They feared God. They let the boys live, and they lied to Pharaoh. Exodus, chapter 1, verse 20. "So God was good to the midwives." Wasn't that divine approval of a lie? No, it was approval of their deed of saving children from their fear of the Lord. God does not bless sin or lying of any kind, even when it's what we might call a 'white lie'; one that's done for a good purpose. What He blesses is faith; even when it is weak faith. And that's what He blessed here.

That is what the Bible applauds in Rahab. In Hebrews 11, verse 31 we read, "By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient". James, chapter 2, verse 25 states, "...was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?" It was her faith in the Lord that saved her from the city's destruction, and it was her good works in receiving the spies and helping them that demonstrated that her faith was real. (That's what the

text means when it says she was justified.) Her faith was justified. Her faith was demonstrated to be real.

Now that's what God approves. He approves faith and mercy—not lying. And it's not certain that the spies in Rahab's house would have been caught had she not lied. She could have remained silent and simply invited them to search the house and trusted the Lord to blind their eyes.

Now Brother Andrew is a Dutchman who wrote a book a number of years ago ... you perhaps read it, I read it back when I was in college ... titled *God's Smugglers*. It's about his ministry of transporting Bibles behind the Iron Curtain, when Eastern Europe was under communist control. The communists were atheists and Bibles were contraband. So when he stopped at the border of a communist country for his car to be searched, he would pray, "Lord, when You were here you made blind eyes see. Now Lord, make seeing eyes blind." And He did.

There are lots of examples of such things happening. We're to trust the Lord. We are to trust the Lord—He is real. We know that. I think every one of you is saying, of course I believe He's real. I trust Him. I'm here for that reason. We need to trust Him, and we need to live like it. He is the God of providence. He orders and guides events. He is personal. He guides and guards His people.

Still, without being hard on Rahab, we should put this in context. She was a Canaanite and barely a spiritual infant. She didn't have the law of Moses and probably saw nothing unethical in her actions. And there's always a need for humility and honesty; it's easy to pass judgment on others, but would we have done any different, any better in such circumstances? I'm not sure that I would have.

Rahab was a remarkable person. We see that in the next verses from her confession and deeds. When the king's men rode off in hot pursuit, Rahab went to the rooftop where she had hidden the spies. Rooftops in ancient near eastern houses were flat. In fact, it's very much the case today as well in that part of the world. They are used for things like washing and drying the laundry, socializing, and storage space. They have a function, a function beyond simply keeping the elements out of the house.

In this case, Rahab stored flax on the roof, and had hidden the Hebrews under bundles of it. She returned to the men with important information, (in verse 9), and her confession of faith. She said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have 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 Og, whom you utterly destroyed."

Now this is one of those facts of history that the writers of Scripture didn't record, that is, how the news of Egypt's defeat spread all over the Near East. Now you would have expected that to happen. Egypt was the superpower of the day. The Pharaohs of the late kingdom, when the exodus occurred, thought of themselves as generals of a god. Now they had many gods, but they would perhaps elevate one god and go out as a general for that god. And they would erect great temples and monuments to their victories that they won for their god. And they extended, through war, their borders of Egypt into Asia and into Africa.

It was then probably during the reign of Amenhotep II at the zenith of Egypt's power, that God drowned Pharaoh's vaunted army in the Red Sea. He wrecked Egypt with plagues and judgments, which showed both His power and the vanity of the gods—that they are imaginary deities. They are of no help because they don't exist.

Well it was inevitable that the news of Egypt and its demise, would spread rapidly. It struck terror in those who heard. It struck terror all through the land of Canaan. In verse 11 Rahab says, "Our hearts melted and no courage remained." The Lord had promised that to Moses in Deuteronomy 2, verse 25. "This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere...". They "...will tremble and be in anguish because of you." Rahab confirmed that that had happened. The land was in a panic. The resolve of the people to fight was very low. God had prepared the land for conquest.

This was information that the spies needed. It was also important revelation about the Lord God, the only God: He is sovereign over the nations and He is sovereign over the hearts and the minds of men. Now that's Proverbs 21, verse 1, "The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD. He turns it wherever He wishes." We should never be cowed by kings or great men and compromise our faith. The Lord's in absolute control.

But here is the providence of God; we see it here. He led them, He led these two spies to the house where this person was, who protected them and gave them the information they needed. But she also gave important information about herself. She understood that all this had happened because, "The LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath." (vs11).

Now that's a remarkable statement, not only for its breadth and depth of knowledge, but its source—Rahab. She was a Gentile, outside of the covenant of Israel and its special revelation from Sinai. Maybe there was still a rumor, an echo of the gospel that Abraham had preached when he came into Canaan and he built altars and he called upon the name of the Lord, but that was 400, 500 years earlier. Whatever knowledge there was of that was at best only a faint memory, if it even existed at all.

She was a harlot. We might call her a Canaanite of the Canaanites. Her interests would have been in things far from spiritual. And she was a pagan, an idolater. Jericho was the center of Moon worship. That's indicated from the city's name, Jericho, which is from the word for moon. So Jericho was the 'City of the Moon', the light that rules the night. That's what they worshiped. And yet Rahab confessed that "the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above". Not the moon or the stars or any celestial thing. Not Ra, the sun god of Egypt. Her confession was, "the LORD God rules the sky above, day and night." But also she said, "He rules on earth beneath."

Well, that's everything. There's nothing outside heaven above and earth beneath. She was confessing that the Lord God, Yahweh, is the only God. Her statement then disavowed the gods of Canaan and Egypt and Babylon and all the gods across the

Gentile globe. —They were nothing, no gods. The Lord alone is God. She had a clear profession of faith, as the author of Hebrews said in Hebrews 11, verse 13.

In fact, she had a great profession of faith. She had only heard reports of the miracles. She didn't have first-hand knowledge of them. She hadn't seen the exodus through the Red Sea. She hadn't seen the pillar of cloud and fire that led the children of Israel through the desert. She hadn't seen any of the miracles that took place. —She had not seen them. She'd only heard of them. —And she believed them. And she alone! All the Canaanites heard the same report, but their response was different. It produced fear in them—it produced faith in her. Now that's what the Word of God does.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2, verse 16, the Gospel is to "...one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life." Don't be surprised, when you give the Gospel to someone and they look at you like you're from another planet. They dismiss it as foolish. It's death to them. —That's the natural man. And it was death to all the Canaanites—but one. It was life to her. She believed in the God of Israel. Why? What Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2, verse 16 describes the response, the two responses to the Gospel. People either reject it or receive it. They either loathe it or love it, but that doesn't explain why.

But other passages do. And there are many of them, such as Ephesians 2, verses 1 through 10, where Paul explains to the Ephesians why they had believed. "You were dead," he said, 'when God made you alive.' Now "dead" is a pretty absolute term, isn't it? You were spiritually lifeless. No will, no ability to comprehend; You were dead 'when God made you alive.'

Salvation is that simple and that radical. Certainly we all heard the Gospel, we who have believed. We understood what we heard. We believed it, we trusted in it, we trusted in the Lord. —But why did we? How did we dead, rebellious sinners stop and believe? The answer is grace. Sovereign grace. "God being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us." (Eph 2:4). Why would He have loved us? No answer given to that. But "because of His great love with which He loved us...made us alive in Christ Jesus (by grace you have been saved)." Ephesians 2, verses 4 and 5.

But why Rahab the harlot, and not, say, the king of Jericho? We don't know—other than it was God's good pleasure. It was because of His great love with which He loved her, just as He loved you, eternally, unconditionally.

But certainly Rahab made a statement. She was a trophy to grace; sovereign grace—just like the apostle Paul was, that chief of sinners. And she's an example of Toplady's great verse, “Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling.” That was Rahab the harlot.

And the help she gave to the spies and her allegiance to Israel was the response of her living faith. She had joined herself to that nation. She was a spiritual Israelite. And so, because of her conversion and based on her kindness to the spies, she asked for their protection from the judgment she knew was coming, for herself and others.

Verse 12, "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 household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sister, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." Now that's a sign of real conversion. She had left behind the gods of her past. She had no connection with them. But she had not left behind the people of her past; she was concerned for them. And that's a sign of new life. We care about the salvation of others. And so she says, 'I dealt kindly with you, you deal kindly with my father's household.'

Now I mentioned the word “*kindly*” in the reading of the text, and it's that word *chesed* that you hear quite often. It's like hearing the word *agape*. You may not know Greek, but you know a few words. And you may not know Hebrew, but that's one that you know, *chesed*. Often translated ‘*lovingkindness*’. It's the word used of God's faithfulness to Israel. It speaks of His special relationship with that nation, as opposed to all others. He knew Israel. He loved from all eternity, Israel. He made a covenant with them, and it speaks of that, speaks of ‘covenant faithfulness’.

And her use of it here indicates that she had entered into a covenant relationship with God and His people. She had joined herself to Israel as a worshiper of the one true God. And they recognized that because they used the same word in regard

to their kindness to her. The two spies responded in verse 14, by giving her that assurance, which they pledged with their lives. "Our life for yours." In other words, God will punish us. He'll take away our lives if we don't guard and protect your life. So, it's a vow of faithfulness and a warning to themselves about faithlessness.

And so, having secured their pledge, she let them down from a window on a rope, but not before telling them to head to the hills west of the city, since the posse had gone east to the Jordan. But before making their escape, the men gave three conditions to Rahab to keep their oath valid. First they say in verse 18, that she was to tie a scarlet cord from her window. The reason was to make her house identifiable to Israel's army. Because the house was on the city wall, the soldiers would be able to see it as they marched around the city, and then they would not harm anyone in it when the fighting began.

Secondly they said, in verse 19, when the city was taken, everyone was to stay in the house, so that they would not be slain by mistake. If anyone leaves, they told her, "...his blood shall be on his own head." And finally, they said that she was to remain faithful. They swore her to secrecy not to betray them—verse 20, "But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear." Rahab agreed to all their requests—all their conditions. Then, after letting them down by the rope, she tied the scarlet cord in the window. She was obedient; another sign of genuine faith.

The scarlet cord is another detail that's left unexplained. Emphasis is placed on the fact that it's scarlet, but why that color? Well, explanations have been suggested, but from the angle of the New Testament it's easy to associate it with the blood of Christ. If so, providence intended it as a type of the Lord. But what it would certainly have done for the faithful Israelites is remind them of the blood of the Passover Lamb applied to the doors in Egypt. In both cases, the crimson color was a sign of protection for the house against judgment—which still draws us back to Christ because He is our Passover, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5, whose sacrifice saves us—saves all to whom

that sacrifice is applied. Rahab's obedience in applying the scarlet cord to her house was an expression of faith that brought salvation to her and her family.

The two spies escaped to the mountains in the wilderness. It was a rugged area with caves where they could find shelter and hide out for three days. When it was safe, they returned to the camp on the east side of the Jordan River, went directly to Joshua, and they told him all that had happened to them. Verse 24, They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

What an encouragement that was. It was a land of giants and great walled cities; the Israelites weren't naturally men of war; they were a nation of slaves. They'd been brick layers and shepherds, but God said, "Be strong and courageous," because He would be their warrior. He would fight their battles. And He'd already prepared the way for them. They would be triumphant. All they had to do was be faithful to what He told them.

And that's true for us as well. Be faithful. The Lord is for us and the Lord is with us. And the proof of that is He has saved us. He saved us eternally, just as He did Rahab. If He has done that for us, as He did for her, for the harlot, what won't He do? That's Paul's rhetorical question in Romans, chapter 8, in verse 32. "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" If He gave the greatest gift of His for us, when we were no better than Rahab—rebels—what won't He do for us now that we are His sons and daughters and children of God? There's nothing that He won't do for us.

That's "Grace Abounding"! It's for the undeserving and the unable. But it plucks us from the fire; it puts us in God's family, and promises us success—victory in this life. We're simply to follow the Lord.

So, has grace abounded to you? Or are you still lost and as doomed as those old Canaanites in Jericho? If so, recognize your conditions and look to Christ. Take hold of

the scarlet cord, trust in Christ the Son of God, and His sacrifice. It is enough. It's all we need. "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling." Believe and be saved.

May God help you to do that and help all of us to trust Him — "Be strong and courageous" in this world, to follow Him faithfully. He'll bless us when we do. Let's bow in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank You for this great text of Scripture, this unusual text of Scripture, but a text of Scripture that informs us of just the kind of people we really are. We may think of ourselves more highly than this woman who was *zanah*; a *porné*; a harlot. And yet we're all fallen, equally dead, equally unworthy, and equally unable. And yet You in Your grace saved us in the depth of our sin; or the depth of our self-righteousness; or whatever the condition was, You save us by Your choice of us, and by the sacrifice of Your Son, and by the irresistible work of the Holy Spirit that has drawn us to You. Father, may we continue to be men and women of faith, and trust You and live obedient lives. We thank You for all that we have in Christ.

And now, as we turn our thoughts to the Lord's Supper, we pray that You prepare them, and help us to focus on Him and what He's done, that work which He did for us, that did snatch us like brands from the burning. We thank You for Him and His work. We pray these things in Christ's name.

Amen.

(End of Audio)