

How God Brings the House Down

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[0 : 00] This is the evening service at Holy Trinity on the 29th of April 2001.

The preacher is Andrew Prideaux. His sermon is entitled, How God Brings the House Down, and is from Joshua 5, verse 13, through to chapter 6, verse 27.

Let's pray before we continue to look at God's Word together. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you speak to us in your Word. Please teach us tonight. Please change us through your Word tonight.

For we ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen. My name's Andy Priddo. I belong to the Morning Congregation here. I'm also a linked missionary with this church, a home missionary.

I work at Monash University in Clayton with the Christian Union. But I'm not talking about the Christian Union tonight. If you want to find out more about that, you have to talk to me afterwards. Over the next two weeks, we're taking a quick jump into Joshua, I guess, and looking at two key passages in Joshua.

[1 : 25] I've photocopied the passage out because I'm using a different translation. I'm sorry about that. It's not because I don't like the NRSV, but I'd used this translation before the NIV when I'd prepared it.

So you'll need the sheet. I've also managed to cut off the far left-hand column. That was to test whether you were listening to Jamie or not as he read it, so that you can follow it in as we go.

And there's a Mars bar to the person who can present a correctly filled sheet after the service. But let's look at this difficult passage. Actually, before we do, I wonder why people find reading the Bible hard work, especially passages like this one.

There's probably lots of reasons, but I think one of the main reasons is that often when we read the Bible, we get offended. It offends us. And I think at the heart of this offence is that in the end, the Bible tells us, and you may have heard this before in a slightly different form, but basically, in the end, the Bible tells us that there are two ways to live.

There are two ways to live, either with God as our God, or with ourselves as our God. And obviously those two things can't go together. And when we read the Bible, and we're trying to be God, and God is God, something's going to happen, isn't it?

[2 : 49] Especially when we keep reading the Bible, that the first way, acknowledging God as God, means blessing and life. And the second way, pretending to wear God, leads to death and judgment.

We don't like to hear that. Not everybody understands the message of the Bible in this way, though, do they? Some people think that we can fit God into our plans, into our philosophy, into our politics, into our ethical code, our lifestyle, without rocking the boat too much.

The issue for many is not who is God, but how can God, or the Bible, or whatever it is, fit into my dreams for my life? Or if you're a bigger thinker, my dreams for the world.

So we have a magic genie view of God, that God is there to grant us our heart's desire. He's there to help our plans get carried out. We've just got to rub the lamp, and he'll make it happen for us.

But in order not to rock the boat in that way, you really need to cut great chunks out of the Bible, or at least ignore them when you come to them. And one such chunk is Joshua chapters 5 to 12, the first bit of that, which we're looking at tonight.

[4 : 04] Because this is a section in Joshua, which is quite stark. It's all about God's people going into the land, the inheritance that he promised to give them, at his command, to take it for themselves, when there's already seven different people groups living there, they're to destroy any inhabitants that remain in the land, men, women, and children, and then live there themselves.

Have a look at verse 21 on your sheep there. They devoted the city to the Lord and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it, men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

They didn't just do this because they're particularly violent people. They did this at the Lord's command. We'll come back to these passages, and they're on your outline, that other sheet that you've got tonight that you might like to follow.

But in Deuteronomy 7 and Deuteronomy 20, God commanded Moses that this is what was to happen when his people went into the land and received it as their inheritance.

Just to give you a bit of background, you may not have read Joshua recently, there are four battles described in detail in chapters 6 to 12 of the book, and the rest of the battles and the kings and the peoples who were defeated are then summarised at the end of that chapter, at the end of chapter 12.

[5 : 35] What we're doing tonight is looking at the first of the four main battles, the taking of Jericho, which is really representative of the complete victory that the armies of Israel would have under Joshua and through the power of the Lord.

They would take all the land as their inheritance, again in line with the promises that God had made as far back as to Abraham in Genesis 12 and 15.

Okay, coming back to what this passage is actually talking about, it's got to be one of the most politically incorrect passages of the whole Bible, doesn't it? There are no shades of grey here, are there?

There's no hope of compromise with people in the land. And the thing which really gets me is that these events are not recorded as if they're the products of sinful human activity, but it comes at the Lord's command.

So how do we fit these events into our understanding of who God is? It's quite challenging, isn't it? It blows all our ideas of who we think God should be and what we think he should be doing out of the water.

[6 : 45] This is a God who refuses to be straightjacketed, I think. This is a God, as you see many times, who's not sitting around waiting to see how he can fit into our plans like a magic genie, but he's actually got plans of his own that he's carrying out.

He's a proactive God. Now if we're going to come to terms with passages like these in the Bible, and not just leave them out, we're going to have to work hard at understanding God's plan and how it all fits together.

And I guess that's our challenge tonight. Perhaps more importantly, how this relates to us. On the first column there, the scene is set.

Joshua and the people are in the Promised Land. Just before this, they've crossed the Jordan River. And you'll have to read about this early on to find out why all this happened.

But Israel's male contingent, these are adult soldiers, have just undergone a mass circumcision, so they're understandably resting up. I kid you not, you can read about that. And they're at Gilgal now, which is on the eastern border of Jericho.

[7 : 56] And this is where Joshua has an unexpected meeting. In verse 13 of chapter 5, we read, first column, Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.

Joshua went up to him and asked, Are you for us or for our enemies? Neither, he replied, but as commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come. Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence and asked him, What message does my Lord have for his servant?

The commander of the Lord's army replied, Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy. And Joshua did so. What have we got here?

We've got a man, or what seems to be a man, appearing before Joshua, a military man, ready for battle. His sword is drawn. He's a military commander, in fact.

And at this point, Joshua asks him a fairly normal question, being a military leader himself, Whose side are you on? Our side or our enemies? Now in view of the promises, that God's promised them from chapter 1 of this book, that they're going to have complete victory in the land, what would you expect this man to say?

[9 : 10] Maybe you'd expect him to say, Well, I command the Lord's army, and I'll give you victory. He doesn't say that, though. It's very interesting. He says, Neither, but as the commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come.

Whose side are you on? Neither. Neither. There's a clue here to help us understand what's going on in these chapters. Whether he's an angel that represents God, or whether like the burning bush was for Moses, this is a special appearance of the Lord himself.

The Lord is teaching Joshua something. These victories are not ultimately about Israel having a nice place to live. God's plans are bigger than just Israel.

And that's why in one sense, God's not for the Canaanites or Israel. He's for his plan, and for any who would put their trust in him and his plan.

You see, Israel, as they've been told again and again, are not inheriting the land because they deserve it. It's theirs as a gift of God. They, just as much as any other nation who turns their back on God, can forfeit this gift.

[10 : 21] If they pollute the land with their sin, it will vomit them out, to use the language of the Bible, just like the Canaanites before them. Well, Joshua's response to the word of the Lord is the right one, isn't it?

He falls face down, he stops talking, and he asks rather that God should speak. And the word that he gets is the same one that Moses got at the burning bush. There's a lot of similarities between Moses and Joshua and their careers, if you read those stories.

But he's told to take off his sandals, for the place where he is standing is holy. See, this land belongs to God, and he has a purpose for it. Joshua is now in the presence of God, in his special place, and he needs to acknowledge that.

Again, God's plan is bigger than just Israel. There's a lot at stake here. This is why there will be no room for half measures, as Israel come into the land.

There will be no room for compromising on sin. This is no near enough, is good enough situation. This is about God judging, and God blessing, and through that, bringing about a new Eden, a new creation, in his way.

[11 : 33] This is Yahweh war, which is why, only with the arrival of Joshua's heavenly counterpart, this commander, can Israel now go in, and have success, in taking the land.

The commander of the army, literally, of the host, which could include an angelic army, is here. Well, the next column there, is probably one of the most well-known stories, of the Bible.

If you went to Sunday school, it's guaranteed, that at least once, in your career, you acted out, at least part, of this story. You may have even, made cardboard trumpets, and walked around, sort of boxes, which are meant to be walls, and of course, they came tumbling down.

Maybe the Sunday school teacher, was hiding in the middle, ready to knock them down, at the appropriate moment. Maybe you've even sung, that great old, Negro spiritual song, Joshua fit the battle of Jericho.

We see a familiar pattern, in the narrative here, verses one to five, God gives the instructions, verses six to seven, Joshua passes them on, verses eight and following, they're carried out.

[12 : 40] This strengthens the point, that from beginning to end, the true commander, of this army, is the Lord himself. And so their victory, is certain. Everything comes down, to his word, being followed to a T.

And verse one, actually reinforces the fact, that from a human point of view, this is a very difficult siege. The city is shut up tight, there on the outside, but from God's perspective, it's like it's wrapped up, like a present, that he's going to give to them.

God says in verse two, as if he's already done it, I have delivered Jericho, into your hands, along with its king, and its fighting men. Then he gives them, very specific instructions, every day, for six days, they've got to march, around the city, on the seventh day, they have to march around it, seven times, the priests blow the horns, the people shout, and the walls come tumbling down, and Israel goes straight in.

Every day too, they're lugging around, the ark of the covenant, with them. It's not exactly a typical example, of siege warfare, is it?

It seems more like instructions, for some sort of parade, or a religious festival, or procession. But it makes a point again, that it's only if they follow, God's commands, will it work.

[14 : 00] It's God's way, or no way. The presence of the ark, remember, this is God's very presence, amongst them, shows that, it is only in his power, that they, will do this.

He provides the strategy, and he leads them. By circling around the city, day after day, they're also making the point, that, this is Yahweh's city.

He's claiming it for himself. He is, its true king. And Israel have to trust him, don't they? They have to, actually put his plans, into action.

And this is a big, theme in Joshua. God is giving them the land. It is a gift. He's doing it. But they need to do something too. They need to go in, and take it.

They need to trust, that the Lord will do it. And they need, to act on that trust, and obey him. In verses 8 to 14, they carry out the instructions, just as the Lord, and Joshua commanded them.

[14 : 59] And we're being held in suspense, waiting to see, what will happen. Finally, in verse 15, we get to the seventh day. This was always going to be, the decisive one. Let's have a look, at verses 15, 16 here.

On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak, and marched around the city, seven times, in the same manner. Except that on the, on that day, they circled the city, seven times. The seventh time around, when the priest, sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, shout, for the Lord, has given you, the city.

Well, there's no need, to keep reading, is there? We know, what happens next. Most well-known story, in the Bible, isn't it? Remember the Sunday school lesson, the walls come tumbling down, end of story, time for a song, then go home, and show mum, the trumpet you made.

Well, if we read on, we actually find that, what we got in Sunday school, was the G-rated version, the Disney version.

This isn't the end, of the story. Verse 17, The city, and all that is in it, are to be devoted, to the Lord. Only Rahab, the prostitute, and all who are with her, in her house, shall be spared, because she hid the spies, we sent.

[16 : 16] But keep away, from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about, your own destruction, by taking any of them. Otherwise, you will make the camp of Israel, liable to destruction, and bring trouble on it.

All the silver and gold, and the articles of bronze and iron, are sacred to the Lord, and must go into his treasury. When the trumpet sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed, so every man charged straight in, and they took the city.

They devoted the city, to the Lord, and destroyed with the sword, every living thing in it, men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

Devoted to the Lord, or in other translations, devoted to the ban, simply means, as we see in verse 21, that every living thing, was to be put to death, in accordance, to the laws given, in Deuteronomy 7, and Deuteronomy 20.

Let me read to you, from Deuteronomy 7, verses 1 to 6, to fill this out for you. This is God talking to Moses, they're on the verge, of entering the promised land, and the law is reiterated, to God's people, as they're mobilised, and prepared, to go in and take the land.

[17 : 34] This is what the Lord says, when the Lord your God, brings you into the land, you are entering to possess, and drives out before you, many nations, the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations larger, and stronger than you.

And when the Lord your God, has delivered them over to you, and you have defeated them, then you must, destroy them totally, make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy, do not intermarry with them, do not give your daughters, to their sons, or take their daughters, for your sons, for they will turn your sons away, from following me, to serve other gods, and the Lord's anger, will burn against you, and will quickly destroy you.

This is what you are to do to them, break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn their idols, in the fire. For you are a people, holy to the Lord your God.

The Lord your God, has chosen you, out of all the nations, on the face of the earth, to be his people, his treasured possession. Now in this first battle, in other battles, following Joshua, they are allowed to keep the loot, in this first battle, the first fruits, go to the Lord, and it looks like, that is for the building, of the temple, later on.

If they kept it for themselves, they would bring down, the same destruction, upon themselves. It is devoted to the Lord, it belongs to him. Now, I don't think anybody, could put up their hand here, who's ever acted out, that part of the story, at Sunday school.

[19 : 09] There should be a warning label, before we get to these bits of the Bible, shouldn't there? There should be a red page, in front of these passages. Well, in a way, there has been.

If you've, read the Bible up to this point, we've already seen, God's judgment, on sin and rebellion, and that's what it is, break into history. In Genesis 6 to 9, God sends a flood, that devastates, every living thing on earth.

Why? Because he got up, on the wrong side of the bed, that morning? No, because, chapter 6, verse 5 of Genesis, the Lord saw, how great man's wickedness, on the earth had become, and that every inclination, of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil, all the time.

I take it too, that their children, were caught up, in this judgment, just like the people, in the land. And that is a terrible thing, about sin, that we see every day. It doesn't just have consequences, for us, when we do it, does it?

But for our families, for our friends, and the society, that we live in. But, in that flood story, those who put their trust, in the Lord, Noah and his family, were saved.

[20 : 25] Keep reading, into Genesis 15, God makes his covenant, with Abraham, it's formalized, in that chapter, and God points him, to the future. He says, that his family, will inherit the land, but not straight away.

Why? Not until the sin, of the Amorites, that is, people in the land, has reached, its full measure. That is, it will come to the point, where God will no longer, let the sins of the peoples, in the land, go unpunished.

But, those who put their trust, in the Lord, will inherit the land. What we're seeing, in Joshua chapter 6, to 12, all these passages, is sin, reaching its full measure.

See, these are not, innocent people, falling victim, to Israelite, national pride. This is not like, if I can be controversial, the first fleet landing, in Australia.

It's not like that. It's not even, that the people in the land, are neutral, towards God. Have a listen, to another passage, in Deuteronomy, where Moses is, trying to explain, to the people, why it is, that they get to, inherit the land.

[21 : 33] Chapter 9, verse 4, Deuteronomy, after the Lord your God, has driven them out, the peoples before you, do not say to yourself, the Lord has brought me here, to take possession of this land, because of my righteousness.

No, it is on account, of the wickedness, of these nations, that the Lord is going, to drive them out, before you. It's not because, of your righteousness, or your integrity, that you're going in, to take possession of the land, but on account, of the wickedness, of these nations.

The Lord your God, will drive them out, before you. To accomplish, what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand then, that it is not, because of your righteousness, that the Lord your God, is giving you, this good land to possess, for you are, a stiff-necked people.

Clear point 2, being made about, God's people, not just, that, the people in the land, deserve to be judged, but that God's people, don't deserve, to inherit it.

They're a stiff-necked people, they're a rebellious people. It's about God's grace, we'll come back to that, in a moment. See, the people, in the land, were like a microcosm, of the human race, that had turned, its back, on God, whose religion, has become so corrupt, that it includes, child sacrifice, and cultic, prostitution.

[22 : 54] We read about that, in Leviticus 20, 1 Kings 11, I think the references, are on your outline there, you can have a look later. These are people, who have heard of God's, great saving acts, among Israel, but instead of choosing, to fear God, and put their trust in him, like Pharaoh in Egypt, they harden their hearts, and turn their backs, on him.

See, these nations, are in the place, that God has set apart, to be his new Eden, the beginning of new creation, or a model for that, if you like. So what is God going to do, with sin in the land?

Is he going to say, hmm, I wonder, how I can incorporate evil, into my grand design? No way. He's going to remove it, and God's people, will be the instrument, of his judgment.

Now I need to say, a few things more, about the ban, or things being devoted, so that we understand, it properly, and I've listed these, in point form on your sheet, there's four of them there.

The first thing is this, that if you read the instructions, for it, back in Deuteronomy, it's quite clear, that this is not, blanket permission, to act this way, in every battle, that Israel is involved in.

[24 : 10] It is specifically, for the peoples, who remain, in the promised land, who have not been driven out. The second thing, there is a vital reason, that Israel are to do this, and this is also the reason, that they're forbidden, to intermarry, with people, in the land.

It's because, they will be led astray, they will just, imitate the detestable practices, of the nations, and so, in the end, they'll have nothing to offer, that is different, to the nations.

They'll just fall, under the same judgment. See, there's a lot of stake here. There's a lot at stake. This is the beginning, of God setting up his kingdom, that would one day, include people, from every nation.

If they compromise, at the beginning, there is no future, no new creation. Now you might say, oh well, that's a bit negative, to think that God's people, would compromise.

Well, read the rest of the Old Testament. That is the sad story. They don't actually, obey this command, completely. They become like the nations. They worship idols.

[25 : 15] And, the exile is the result, of that. We also know, third point, that this is not a, case of extreme nationalism. The Old Testament, is quite clear, that Israel, will go the same way, as the nations, if they turn, their backs, on God.

They're not, protected, from God's judgment, in that sense. If they reject God, they will be judged too. See, God doesn't do deals. He won't be bought off.

He won't ignore sin forever. He makes no, bargain with the devil, as we see with Jesus, in the desert. And this is not just, an Old Testament thing.

The fourth point there, this is only a taste, of the final judgment, that will burst into history, at Jesus' return, isn't it? In Luke 10, Jesus says that, the worst judgment, we see in the Old Testament, will be more bearable, than the judgment, that will come upon those, who reject, his gospel, and so him.

I think one of the reasons, we find, these parts of scripture, so hard for us to understand, is partly the cultural thing, it's partly because, at least in our country, we don't live, in a society, where war, and the things of war, and the extremes of war, are familiar to us, but I think, there's a deeper reason, I think it's because, we just don't, hate, sin and evil, as much as God does, we don't share, his priorities, and his plans, we actually, do the exact opposite, I think we actually, flirt with sin, see, Jesus tells us, that if our eye, causes us to sin, we should pluck it out, throw it away, Paul tells us, to put to death, what belongs to our sinful nature, but our natural response, to sin is more like, well, how far can I go with this, and still be okay, as a Christian, it's like the, the classic question, that every youth worker, gets asked, I'm sure that Steve, can back me up on this one, you know, the stuff like, can I go out with a non-Christian, and still be a Christian, can I get drunk every Friday, and still be a Christian, what are they, what are people really asking, are they asking, tell me how I can live, to please God, with my life, no, the question behind the question is, tell me how I can get away, with living the way,

[27 : 33] I want to live, and still be on God's good side, but that's not what it means, to be a Christian, is it, see, in the land, God was starting something new, there, there could be no compromise, you see, and when we become Christians, there is new creation, the old is gone, there is, it's new, there can be no, compromise, pretty heavy stuff, but judgment, is only half of the story, in this passage, have a look at the, fourth column there, chapter 6, verse 22, see, woven into this description, of the destruction of Jericho, is the description of one person, and their family being saved, now, who do you think, this person, is going to be, or must be a very good person, perhaps it's the, president of the local, Amnesty International chapter, and his family, although godless, they were fine, outstanding citizens, servants, no, perhaps it's that kindly old lady, on the corner, who always gave, lollies to the kids, she always said nice things, she's such a nice lady, of course she's not sinless,

I mean, who is, but she was a really nice person, no, it's a Gentile, it's not an Israelite, it's a Gentile, a woman, a prostitute, a prostitute, who'd probably been involved, in the cultic prostitution, of the religion, of the land, Rahab the harlot, was her nickname, what is going on here, why her, look at verse 17 again, let's have a think about, who this person is, the city, and all that is in it, are to be devoted to the Lord, only Rahab the prostitute, and all who are with her, in her house, shall be spared, because she hid the spies, we sent, further down in verse 22, in the fourth column, on your sheet there, Joshua said to the two men, who had spied out the land, go into the prostitute's house, bring her out, and all who belong to her, in accordance with your oath to her, so the young men, who had done the spy, went in, and brought out Rahab, her father, and mother, and brothers, and all who belong to her, they brought out her entire family, and put them in a place, outside the camp of Israel, further down verse 25, we see that she lived, lives among the Israelites, at the point in which, this was written, even to this day, need a bit of context here, chapter 2 of Joshua, we read the story of Rahab, who recognized, that Israel's God, was the Lord of the earth, including her hometown,

Jericho, not her gods, not her king, but Yahweh, she believed this God, was powerful, she believed, that he had a right to judge, she trusted in him, and she proved her faith, through action, instead of turning in, the Israelite spies, at great cost, to her own personal safety, she protected them, and by faith, she enters into God's family, as if she was born into it, she dwells amongst Israel, in the land, you see what God is teaching us, Rahab is a sign, of things to come, remember the land, was bigger, than just Israel, the promises God made, to Abraham, culminated in the nations, being blessed, through him, everyone who follows, Abraham's example of faith, and Rahab's example of faith, who puts their trust in God, becomes an inheritor, of all God's blessings, now, when we read a story like this, as religious people, or church going people, we get offended, at the judgment, that's what we get offended at, but that wasn't what offended,

God's people in Jesus day, the thing that really got, on the goat, of religious people, in Jesus teaching, was when he told them, things like this, tax collectors, and prostitutes, are entering the kingdom, of God, before you, Matthew 21, that's the thing, that really, irked them, no good works, lives, that have been lived, in sin, it's too easy, well these were the ones, who accepted, the gift of forgiveness, and a fresh start, with God, that Christ offered, in his very person, you read Luke 2nd volume, Acts, you see the story, of God's church, exploding out, of the physical boundaries, of the promised land, and taking in people, from every nation, Gentiles no less, and they're not even circumcised, how controversial, is that, why, because they recognize, that in the face, of coming judgment, their only hope, was Jesus Christ, just as Rahab, recognized, that her only hope, was the Lord, because Jesus, is the one, that absorbs,

God's curse, into himself, when he dies, in our place, on the cross, bearing our sin, he takes, the judgment, we deserve, and by rising, from the dead, he shows, that he is broken, sin's stranglehold, that new creation, is possible, if only, we won't turn our backs, on him, if only, we won't be like, the rich young ruler, who came and met Jesus, but preferred the old, creation, that seemed easier, where there is compromise, where I don't get asked, those difficult questions, about how I treat God, and other people, if only I would let Jesus, take the judgment, I deserve, instead of me, so that I don't have to, bear that myself, when he returns, as the judge, of all the earth, well the final, column on your sheet there, the passage ends, with a curse, being uttered on anyone, who would rebuild Jericho, why is that, well, this defeated city, was to remain, as a trophy, if you like, to God's power, and judgment, it would stand, as a symbol, or not stand, you know what I mean, a symbol of, what would happen, to the whole land of Canaan, the world, would see, that the Lord, was with Joshua, and Israel, it's a reminder, to us too,

[34 : 14] God's judgment, is real, but there is mercy, there is a future, there is blessing, for those, who surrender, themselves, to him, think about it, this passage, these chapters, chapters 6 to 12, are all about God, not giving his people, what they deserve, but out of his great love, fulfilling promises, he made to their ancestor, Abraham, blessing them, giving them the land, as a gift, I start this talk, by thinking about, how we try to make God, fit into, our shape, that we've worked out, for him, and sometimes, I talk to people, and I talk to them, about passages like this, and they say, things like this, they say, well the God, that I'm prepared, to believe in, the God I believe in, would never do this, my God doesn't do things, like this, but follow that through, for a moment, and think about, what you're saying, if you say that, what sort of monster, are we building, do we really want a God, who tolerates evil, who gives up, on his creation, and who surrenders it, to the slavery, of its own sin, to the devil, that lets the human race, slowly tear itself apart, as every individual, or nation, pretends, that they're God,

I hope we don't want, a God like that, anyway, talking about the God, we want, is a bit silly, isn't it, it's an academic question, we don't have a choice, in the end, the living God, of the Bible, the creator God, the God who is known, by his great acts, of judgment, and salvation, in history, the God, who has now been revealed, in the person, of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the only God, God we have, this is a God, who was not ashamed, to call Rahab, his daughter, to include her, in his family tree, the question is, are we ashamed, to call this God, our God, let's pray, heavenly father, with passages like this, you really work us hard, when we see your, your judgment, breaking the history, so starkly, it scares us, sometimes it even, offends us, but we want, to thank you Lord, tonight Lord, that you, do include passages, like this, because you teach us, that you treat, sin seriously, that you have not, given up on creation, but that you are, the judge of all the earth, but that you are, also the God, of all mercy, who in your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has provided a way, for us, like Rahab, before us, to find salvation, in your name, to find life, please help us, to put our trust, in you, and not in the gods, of our imaginations, for we ask this, for Jesus sake,

Amen. Before I step down, just a brief, thing for, sorry about that guys, for next week, if you don't have anything, to do in terms of, reading the Bible, have a read of Joshua, so that you know, what's going on, especially, chapters 13 to 21, and if you really, don't have much time, just the first, six verses of chapter 21, and then you'll know, what's going on next week, thanks for listening.