



HISTORIC ST. JAMES AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
222 NORTH ROMAN STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70112
Telephone: 504.586.8381 Facsimile: 504.586.8993

THE REVEREND JONATHAN C. AUGUSTINE, J.D., M.Div., PASTOR

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“God Comes in Ways We Least Expect”

I Prayer

II Advent Bible Study Series Part 2

As you are aware, in our Christian faith tradition, the four weeks immediately preceding Christmas begins a new liturgical year, with Advent, a word derived from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” As a body of believers, we celebrate Jesus’ coming in a two-fold capacity. First, as you will recall from last week’s Bible Study, we celebrate Jesus’ coming in fulfillment of the messianic scriptures that one would come from the line (lineage) of David to reconcile heaven and earth. The first coming was therefore Jesus’ birth. In addition to celebrating Jesus’ birth, however, Christian believers also celebrate the *parousia*, a Greek term denoting Jesus’ second coming. The season’s four weeks are observed thematically, with focuses on the four virtues Jesus brings: **hope, peace, joy, and love.**

During last week’s Bible Study, in preparation for Advent and in working from the topic “Promises Made and Promises Kept,” we looked at the messianic promise detailed in *2 Samuel* 1-17 (the Davidic Covenant), as well as the story of David and Bathsheba (*2 Samuel* 11:1-17 & 26), two popular members of Jesus’ family, as we asked the question “Why Did Jesus Come?” After examining the texts, we concluded it was necessary for Jesus to come to save those that are the most lost, just like the people in our own families.

This week, in continuing to look at members of Jesus’ family, while focusing on His second coming, we’re looking at the *Joshua* 2 story of Rahab, the prostitute, as we marvel in the fact that **“God Comes in Ways We Least Expect.”** We should all be encouraged by this story. If God could use Rahab, God can also use each one of us, too!

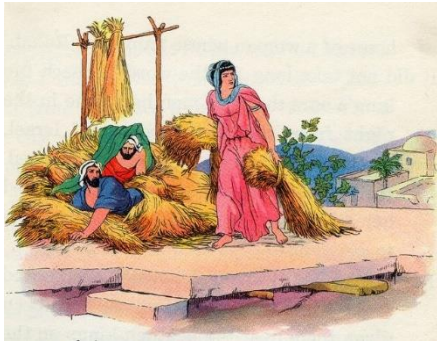


III Preliminary Discussion

NOTE: Remember that Jesus’ genealogy (his family lineage) includes some not so wholesome people, just like all of our family lines. Reminder: for Jesus’ ancestry, see *Matthew* 1:1-17.

IV Textual Examination: *Joshua 2* (read out loud)

- In looking at verse 1, the spies came from a place called Shittim (*see Numbers 25:1*). What do you think these “upstanding” Israelite men were doing, as they went to do a reconnaissance of Jericho?



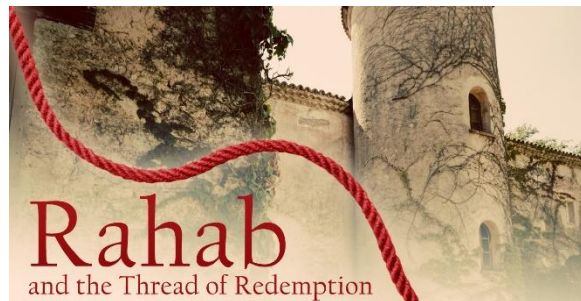
not exactly like us?

- Rahab is a Canaanite woman, living in Jericho, the land God promised to the Israelites. How does Rahab act, as an “outsider” in verses 4-7, to the two Israelite men who have come to take over her homeland? What does this tell you about her as a “Gentile?”

- What does Rahab’s actions say to us, about how we see others who are not Christians or

- Verses 8-13 are like a confession. Even as a Canaanite/Gentile, Rahab confesses her love and admiration for God and her belief in God’s supremacy. God is obviously using her to not only help the Israelite men, but equally as important, God is using her, as a Gentile, to help a Jewish cause. Have others helped Christians with their causes? What about Martin Luther King’s allies in the Civil Rights Movement?

- By verse 14, we see that the Israelite men trust Rahab and are thankful for her help in their cause. God has used her—a very unlikely person—not only as a heroine, but as an ally for the Israelites. Have you ever had any unlikely allies in things you’ve tried to accomplish? If so, have you ever thought that God could have been working through them? Is it possible that God uses those (comes through them) we least expect? Did Jesus come in a form we would have expected?



- How did people receive Jesus? He was chided as “King of the Jews,” although He advised that His kingdom was not of *this* world. Similarly, David was looked over as Jesse’s youngest son because most couldn’t see him as a warrior who could lead Israel. Didn’t God come through him (use him), too? Again, does God use those we least expect? Are you willing to allow God to use you (come through you), especially during Advent? What does this mean to you?

V Comments and/or Questions

VI Closing Prayer