

Daily Spiritual exercise



Rahab

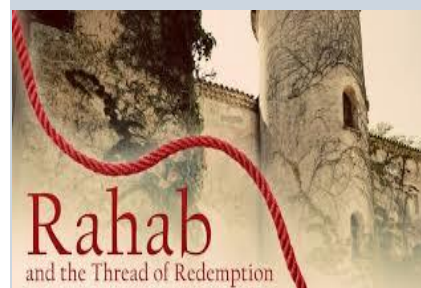
After the death of Moses, God chose Joshua, son of Nun, to be the leader of the Israelite people. They set out to conquer the land of Canaan, under the Lord's guidance. The Lord told Joshua to send two spies into the city of Jericho. They went and stayed with a prostitute called Rahab. As a prostitute she was a disgraced and shameful woman, but she had faith in the Almighty God of Israel saying that she knew that He had delivered Israel from Egypt and that the Lord had given them their land. She helped the spies by hiding them from the king's soldiers and when the time was right, she helped the spies escape out a window and down a rope, as her house was built into the city wall. Rahab made the spies swear an oath. She promised not to give their plans away, and in return, they vowed to spare Rahab and her family when the battle of Jericho began. She was to tie a scarlet cord to her window as a sign of their protection. In the siege of Jericho, she and her family were spared just as the "spies" promised. Rahab, the once despised Canaanite woman, would become the female ancestor of Jesus Christ and is mentioned in His genealogy in Matthew 1. Rahab was the mother of Salmon, the father of Boaz, who married Ruth. There are two references to Rahab in the New Testament, both mentioning her faith in a time of crisis. We are also experiencing a crisis and we have to ask ourselves the questions: "Do we trust God with our lives"? and "Have we forgotten how He has brought us through past troubles"? God has not changed, and He never will. He promises to be with us wherever we go. May we have faith, as Rahab had, a long time ago. Amen

Monday 11 May 2020

Joshua 2:1 "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."

Heavenly Father,
help us to
develop a trust
and faith in You
that reflects the
simplicity of
childlike faith that
so rejoices Your
heart, and which
is so evident in the
lives of little
children.

Amen



**Listen to and read the
words of the hymn:
"Trust and obey."**

Daily Spiritual exercise



Ruth

During a famine, a man named Elimelech took his wife Naomi and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, east from their home in Bethlehem in Judea to a country called Moab. After their father's death, the sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. They lived together for about 10 years until both Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving their mother Naomi to live with her daughters-in-law. Hearing that the famine had ended in Judah, Naomi decided to return to her home, and she urged her daughters-in-law to return to their own mothers in Moab. Orpah decided to go back to her family while Ruth clung to Naomi and uttered her now-famous words confessing that the Almighty God is also her God. Ruth's determination saved not only Naomi but the lineage of Naomi's family. Once they reached Bethlehem, Naomi and Ruth sought food by gleaning grain from the field of a kinsman, Boaz. He offered Ruth protection and food. Boaz married Ruth and they were blessed with a son, Obed, who fathered a son Jesse, who was the father of David, who became king of a unified Israel.

Ruth is also mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1. Although Ruth was a Moabite, through her faith in the Almighty God she became an ancestor of our Lord and Saviour. Through her selfless sacrifice, leaving everything that was dear to her behind, she rescued the lineage of her in-laws.

We do not have to feel sorry for ourselves in times of crisis. We can rely on God for His strength, wisdom and mercy to help us through any crisis just as Ruth did a long time ago. Amen

Tuesday 12 May 2020

Ruth 1: 17-17

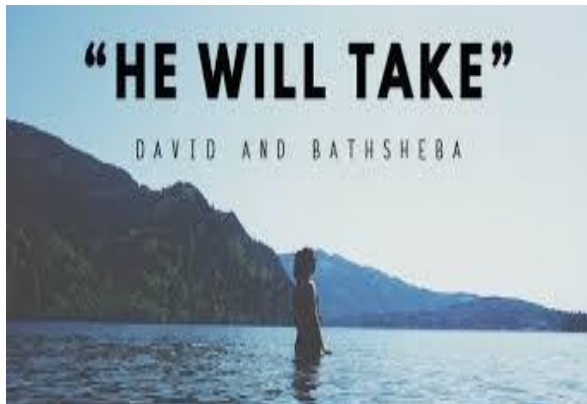
"But Ruth replied, 'Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.'"

Our Father, thank you for this new day. Though I do not know all the challenges I will face, I know You will be with me. You are my hope.

You are my strength. Give me wisdom as I seek Your Will in my life. Amen

Listen to and read the words of the hymn: "It is well with my soul".

Daily Spiritual exercise



Uriah's wife

Uriah's wife's name was Bathsheba. The way Bathsheba came to be King David's wife and Solomon's mother was scandalous and shameful. She was married to Uriah when David took her into an adulterous affair. When she became pregnant, David tried to cover up the matter. To hide his misdeeds, David tried to call Uriah home from the war, hoping that the two would have relations and that he would be able to pass the child off as belonging to Uriah. But Uriah, being a disciplined soldier, refused to leave his post. So, David murdered him by proxy, ordering all of Uriah's comrades to abandon him during battle, so that he was killed by the opposing army. Following Uriah's death, David took Bathsheba as his eighth wife. David's action was displeasing to the Lord, who sent Nathan the prophet to reprove the king. Although God punished David for his sinful deed of murdering an innocent man, He blessed David and Bathsheba with an heir to the throne, Solomon, who would become a very "wise king".

God uses flawed people every day. He uses you and me to further His kingdom, even when we fail to be what He intended us to be. Our hope does not lie in how good we are, but in His faithfulness to fulfil His plan in us. Matthew does not hide Bathsheba's part in the story, although he does not mention her name, he makes sure we remember her. Nothing we have done or will ever do can keep God from using us for His glory. Let us not be blinded by our own flaws and mistakes but focus on the gifts and talents we have received from God. May we use them wisely to do God's will. Amen

Wednesday 13 May
2020

Matthew 1:6: "David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife."

Heavenly Father
forgive me when I
beat myself up for
the mistakes I've
made. Remind
me that Your
perfect plan can
be fulfilled no
matter how
imperfect I am.
Thank You for
Your forgiveness
and grace in my
life.

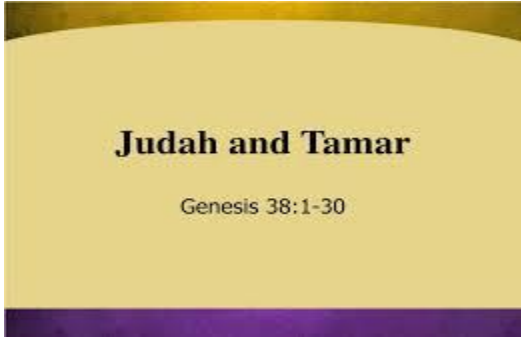
Amen.



GOD IS FAITHFUL

Listen to and read the words of the hymn:
"Great is Thy faithfulness".

Daily Spiritual exercise



Tamar

Tamar is mentioned in Genesis chapter 38. She married Judah's (who was the fourth son of Jacob and Leah) eldest son, Er. He was killed because of his wickedness, and Tamar became a widow. Judah then asked his second son, Onan, to provide an offspring for Tamar so that the family line might continue. Onan knew that if a son is born from this union, this son would be regarded as the offspring of his brother and would inherit the firstborn's double share of inheritance. However, if Er was childless, Onan would inherit as the oldest surviving son. No wonder that Onan did not want to conceive a child with Tamar. His action was deemed wicked by God and so, like his older brother, he was killed. Judah assumed that Tamar was cursed and was reluctant to give her his remaining and youngest son Shelah. Rather, he tells Tamar to wait for Shelah. However, even after Shelah has grown up, Judah still does not give Tamar to him in marriage. So Tamar made a wicked plan to disguise herself as a prostitute to deceive Judah. He did not recognise her and slept with her. She was clever and demanded from him a pledge which was "his seal and its cord, and his staff". Later when Judah discovered she was pregnant (not realising that he was the father), he ordered that she should be killed. She then sends to Judah "his seal and its cord, and his staff". It was only then that he discovered the truth and said that she was more truthful than he was. She gave birth to the twins Perez and Zerah. Tamar had no other option but to take matters into her own hands. Her father in law lied to her which left her alone with no future. In her time of crisis, she acted, and in acting, gave Judah two off-spring which would guarantee his family name! Sometimes we allow our circumstances or fears to overwhelm us, instead of acting and trusting in God. She was truthful while Judah was not. Amen

Thursday
14 May 2020

Matthew 1:3

"Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar. Perez the father of Hezron..."

Heavenly Father, help me to seek truth today –

To find it in places and people I would not otherwise notice.

Teach me that in truth there is wisdom and understanding.

Lord, help me to strive for truth in all that I do today –

That my thoughts, words, and actions may reflect Your goodness.

Show me that only in truth will I be free

Amen

Truth

Listen to and read the words of the hymn:
"How great Thou Art."

Daily Spiritual exercise



Mary

The angel Gabriel appeared and spoke to a young unmarried virgin who had no status at all. He appeared to her in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy. It was unheard of for an angel to appear to people who had no status like Mary. Even his greeting would have been out of the ordinary by addressing her as "favoured" or "graced one" and using words such as "The Lord is with you". Mary now joins the list of those in the Bible who found favour before God like Noah and Moses. The angel said to her that she would become the mother of a son who would be identified with the "Mighty God" and who would have an eternal kingdom. In spite of her reaction that she was still a virgin (meaning that she did not have a bad reputation in her village), Gabriel said that the Lord would overshadow her as He did a long time ago in Egypt when He went ahead of them in a cloud! Jewish tradition used the language of "overshadowing" for God's presence with his people. As Mary was wondering if this was really happening to her, Gabriel informed her that her elderly aunt Elizabeth, like Sarah in the Old Testament, was six months pregnant. Mary did not know this, because in those days they did not have modern means of communication such as mobile phones or the internet. This must have told Mary that for God anything was possible - something which Sarah, in the Old Testament was not so sure of! In her dire situation, Mary expresses her submission to the Lord's will in Old Testament terms of obedience. Mary was prepared to be a servant of God. She persevered and trusted in God. While we are in lockdown, we should be trusting, having faith in the Lord, praying while we journey with Him. We should show the world what it means to be a true follower of Jesus, despite our circumstances. Amen

Friday 15 May 2020

Matthew 1:16 "and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah."

Lord Jesus,

Thank you that you came to give new life, peace, hope, and joy.

Thank you that your power is made perfect in our weakness. Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure. Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit. Direct our hearts and minds towards you, now and always.

Amen



Listen to and read the words of the hymn:
"My faith looks up to thee."