

# Joshua 6:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

## Analysis

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The scarlet thread (יָצוּר שָׁנִי) that Rahab let down becomes her salvation marker—a typological foreshadowing of Christ's blood. Just as the Passover lamb's blood on doorposts saved Israelites from death (Exodus 12:13), the scarlet cord saves Rahab's household from Jericho's judgment. The Hebrew יָצוּר (shani) means scarlet, crimson—the color of blood and sacrifice. Rahab must bind it in the window, making salvation visible and accessible. This public identification with Israel's God required courage, as Canaanite neighbors would have questioned her loyalties. The cord remained as a constant witness to her faith-decision. Theologically, this illustrates that salvation requires public identification with God's people and trust in the provided means of deliverance. Rahab couldn't save herself through personal virtue (she was a prostitute) or through alternative means—only through the appointed sign. This exclusivity prefigures Christ as the only way of salvation (John 14:6). The color scarlet throughout Scripture symbolizes both sin's stain (Isaiah 1:18) and redemptive blood that removes it (Hebrews 9:19-22).

## Historical Context

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Ancient Canaanite buildings in cities like Jericho often had windows in the outer walls where families could look out or conduct business. Rahab's house being 'upon the town wall' (verse 15) explains why spies could escape through her

window. The hanging of specific markers for identification was common in ancient warfare—cities under treaty protection would display specific signs to spare them during conquest. Rahab's faith in binding the scarlet cord parallels Israel's faith in applying blood to doorposts during the Exodus. Both required acting on God's word before deliverance came. The scarlet thread industry was significant in the ancient Near East—purple and scarlet dyes were expensive, often associated with royalty and wealth. That Rahab had access to scarlet thread suggests her brothel served elite clientele, perhaps explaining how she gained intelligence about Israel that influenced her faith (verse 11).

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the scarlet thread as a visible sign of faith challenge privatized or hidden Christianity?
2. What does Rahab's exclusive trust in the provided sign teach about salvation by faith alone in Christ alone?
3. In what ways does the scarlet thread (pointing to Christ's blood) comfort you regarding past sins?

## Interlinear Text

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וְכִן	אֶתֶם	וּ	שְׁמַרְוּ	מִן	לֵהָרֶם	פֶּן
And ye in any wise	H859		keep	H4480	a curse	H6435
H7535			H8104		H2764	
תַּחֲרִימוּ	וְלָקַחְתֶּם	מִן	לֵהָרֶם	וְשִׁמַּתֶּם	אֶת	
lest ye make yourselves accursed	when ye take	H4480	a curse	and make	H853	
H2763	H3947		H2764	H7760		
מַחֲנֵה	יִשְׂרָאֵל	לֵהָרֶם	וְעִכְבָּרָתָם	אוֹתָם:		
the camp	of Israel	a curse	and trouble	H853		
H4264	H3478	H2764	H5916			

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 John 5:21** (Parallel theme): Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

**Ephesians 5:11** (Parallel theme): And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

**Joshua 7:1** (Curse): But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

**Joshua 7:25** (References Israel): And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

**2 Corinthians 6:17** (Parallel theme): Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

**Romans 12:9** (Parallel theme): Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

**Jonah 1:12** (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

**James 1:27** (Parallel theme): Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

**Ecclesiastes 9:18** (Parallel theme): Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.

**Deuteronomy 7:26** (Curse): Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

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