

## LENT III - Wednesday, March 6, 2024

### *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church Year B*

Wilda C. Gafney, Church Publishing Incorporated. Kindle Edition

#### **Joshua 6:15-17, 23, 25**

<sup>15</sup> And it happened on the seventh day that they rose early, at the break of dawn, and circled the city in the same way seven times. Only on that day that they circled the city seven times. <sup>16</sup> And it was the seventh time, when the priests blew the ram's horns, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the FAITHFUL ONE has given you the city. <sup>17</sup> The city and all that is in it shall be devoted to the HOLY ONE. Only Rahab the prostitute, she shall live and all who are with her in her house because she hid the messengers we sent.

<sup>23</sup> So the youths who were the spies went in and brought Rahab out, along with her mother, her father, her sisters and brothers, and all who belonged to her—all her kinfolk they brought out—and set them outside the camp of Israel.

<sup>25</sup> And Rahab the prostitute and her ancestral household and all who belonged to her, Joshua let live. She [her descendants] lives in the midst of Israel to this day for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

#### **Psalm 146**

<sup>1</sup> Halleluyah! Praise the AGELESS ONE, O my soul!

<sup>2</sup> I will praise the EVER-LIVING GOD all my life;  
I will sing praises to my God throughout my living.

<sup>3</sup> Put not your trust in the great, nor in any child of earth,  
for there is no help in them.

<sup>4</sup> When they breathe their last, they return to earth,  
and in that day their thoughts perish.

<sup>5</sup> Happy are these for whom the God of Rebekah's line is their help,  
whose hope is in the CREATOR OF ALL, their God.

<sup>6</sup> Maker of heavens and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;  
keeping faith forever.

<sup>7</sup> Bringer of justice to the oppressed,  
bringer of bread to the hungry.

<sup>8</sup> The COMPASSIONATE GOD sets the prisoners free,  
the ALL-SEEING GOD opens the eyes of the blind,  
the JUST GOD lifts up those who are bowed down.

<sup>9</sup> The RIGHTEOUS GOD loves the righteous,  
the MOTHER OF ALL cares for the stranger,  
orphan and widow she bears up,  
but confounds the way of the wicked.

<sup>10</sup> The MAJESTIC ONE shall reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, from generation to generation.

#### **James 2**

<sup>14</sup> What benefit is it, my sisters and brothers, if faith you say you have, but do not have works? Is faith able to save you? <sup>15</sup> If a sister or brother is naked and lacks daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to

them, “Go in peace; warm yourself and eat your fill,” and you all do not provide what is necessary for the body, what is the benefit of that? <sup>17</sup> And thus faith, if it has no works, is dead by itself.

<sup>18</sup> Yet someone will say, “Faith you have and works I have.” Show me your faith separately from your works, and I through my works will show you my faith. <sup>19</sup> You believe that God is One; you do well. Even the demons believe and they tremble.

<sup>24</sup> You see that by works is a woman or man shown to be righteous and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup> And likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute, by works, also shown to be righteous when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? <sup>26</sup> For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so then faith without works is also dead.

## Mark 7

<sup>24</sup> [After teaching] Jesus, getting up, went to the region of Tyre. And he entered a house and did not wish anyone to know. Yet he was not able to escape notice; <sup>25</sup> rather, immediately, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and she came and bowed down at his feet.

<sup>1</sup> Now the woman was Greek [meaning not Judean], of Syrophoenician ancestry and she asked him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup> And he said to her, “Let first the children be fed, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs.” <sup>28</sup> But she answered him, “Healer, yet even the dogs under the table eat the crumbs of the children.” <sup>29</sup> Then Jesus said to her, “Because of this word, go; the demon has come out of your daughter.” <sup>30</sup> And she went to her house, found the child put on the bed and the demon gone.

### Text Notes

In Joshua 6:25, what has previously been described as Rahab’s household (Josh. 2:1) is now configured as her father’s household. That language along with “mother’s household” signifies the smallest unit of Israelite society now applied to Rahab and her family. It reads as though a later Israelite editor was trying to fit her household into their social context. Indeed, in verse 27, it is “she” who continues to live among the Israelites, meaning her lineage, not her father’s.

In Psalm 146:1, “throughout my living” is derived from “in my continuing” where “continue” is the adverb meaning “longer,” *’od*, with the first possessive suffix, “my” attached; a very complex idiomatic saying. The “great” in verse 2 are “nobles,” sometimes royal offspring, hence “princes” in other translations. In verse 4 “Rebekah’s line” replaces “Jacob.” The nature of God’s support for widow and orphan in verse 9 is unclear; the verb there is only used there and its derivation is unclear. NRSV’s “uphold” derives from the LXX and provides the basis for my “bear up.” Similarly, the Peshitta has “nourish/support.”

In Mark 7:26, “Greek” is used as the equivalent of “Gentile,” demonstrating the categorization of people into a binary: Jewish/Judean and not. The woman “asks” Jesus and does not “beg” as so many others have translated, erasing her dignity. “Healer” replaces “Lord” in verse 28, where it is simply used as a courteous greeting and not as a religious confession. (“Lord” is a slaveholding title that dominates the scriptures as human and divine address; it is used sparingly in this project.) In verse 30, the use of *beblemenon* indicates the little girl is “put” or even “tossed” on the bed (by the demon?).