

February 10, 2019

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Something Will Happen"

—The Deeds of Love—

Texts: James 2:25,26

2:25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Introduction

Humans are mysterious beings. Nowadays, we come to understand how precisely a human body is created through development of biology, medical science, chemistry, technology and AI (artificial intelligence). Things that we could not illuminate in the past are becoming understood rapidly.

In a sense, it may be a good thing, because we come to understand how God, who created human beings, is the Great One. However, on the other hand, it might let people who do not know God (those who do not accept God's presence) become conceited.

Let consider the very important thing that we need to understand.

It is that a man is created with a visible part (body) and an invisible part (soul).

To put it concisely, soul refers to conscience and even a small child can clearly realize it.

If these two parts separate, it results in death of a body. We contain these two things in us.

Like this, if faith and deeds separate, it results in dead faith. It is the point that James, the writer of the epistle, wants to teach. It means that when these two things work with good balance, **something will happen**, that is today's theme.

Let's listen to the Lord's Voice according the following two points.

Main Points

1 . Learning A Lesson from Rahab the Prostitute

2:25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

1) Rahab's Deed

James took Father Abraham for the example as the living faith. Today he takes Rahab the prostitute for the second example. They are quite opposite. Prostitutes were hardly regarded in all nations, societies and times, because of their job that had moral and ethical problems. Therefore, they were in the lowliest position and often despised.

The relationship between the sexes in the Jewish society was strictly restricted by the law. Prostitutes who worked in the Jewish society had some serious problems. They were some of the most helpless people in the society. James took the prostitute as the second example. But, why did James take Rahab the prostitute here? (Rahab was a prostitute before she was saved.)

The Bible records Rahab as below—

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.

Rahab received two Israelite spies not as mere spies but as messengers from God for her family and herself. Therefore, she helped and rescued the two spies.

Joshua 2:3 So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: “Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land.”

2:4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from.

2:5 At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, they left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them.”

Like this, Rahab the prostitute helped the two spies.

2:15 So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall.

Rahab's deed meant to betray her fellow people in the city of Jericho. Then, why did she help them even by betraying them? It was **a deed done** at the risk of her life. She risked her life to save the two spies, because she had faith in God. The Bible records that she was considered righteous for what she did. It means that she was considered **good** before God.

2) Why Was Rahab the Prostitute Used By God?

Now we come to ask why God used such a lowly person like a prostitute. God surely had another way to save them, however He used Rahab the prostitute.

The reasons why He used her are as follows:

① **God's Love**

God chose a woman who was of the lowliest class in the society. God did not use a person of high status to rescue the spies or a strong and brave man. He chose Rahab. It teaches us that God's love reaches people who are in the lowliest positions. We find another important point. Why was Rahab used by God?

② **David's Genealogy**

The genealogy of Jesus Christ is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 1 as below. What does it record?

1:1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Historia - Historic Anecdote is one of NHK T.V. programs with a high audience rating. It traces back two, three and four generations of a main character and researches his/her background. However, no one could trace back ten generations even in the program.

The Bible records the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The Bible is the real **Historia - Historic Anecdote**.

1:17 Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

The Bible records the genealogy of Jesus Christ that traces back to forty-two generations in all. Rahab appears among it.

1:5 Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse,

1:6 and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife

Let's read the following Scripture.

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

My friends. We find the name of Rahab the prostitute in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. It is unbelievable that Rahab the prostitute appears in the genealogy (Historia) of Christ. It means the status of Christ (the Messiah). Jesus Christ has such a person in his lineage. We understand

that God's love is hidden in it.

My friends. Rahab was given the privilege to join in the genealogy of Christ that is the salvation for human beings. Why was she given such privilege? ⇒ Because she feared the living God and helped the spies in faith with **deeds**. Her desperate act to help them was caused by her fear in God.

God greatly appreciated Rahab's **deed**, and James also highly evaluated her.

Let's consider faith and deeds again.

2 . The Relationship between Faith and Deeds

James records as below—

2:25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

Certain people insist that no one is saved without faith and deeds because the Bible records that Rahab was considered righteous for what she had done. However, the Scripture does not necessarily mean that.

The deeds are delivered from faith that leads to salvation. They do not meet the conditions for salvation. If we need deeds as the conditions for salvation, we will never come to have confidence in salvation.

The Bible teaches that all we need to do for salvation is to believe the Gospel.

1 John 5:5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Those who have faith in Jesus Christ are given the salvation of soul. Then they begin to live their Christian lives in various ways. The Bible teaches that the Christian life is like building a house.

1 Corinthians 3:11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

3:12 If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,

3:13 their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work.

What does the Scripture above teach us? It means our houses of faith should be built on Jesus Christ who is the foundation. It teaches that there are people who build houses using gold, silver, costly stones that God gives through faith and the other hand there are people who build houses with wood, hay or straw.

The former is the treasure that lasts forever, and the latter is useless and disappears. The latter vanishes in an instant. What do you think today's message? Our lives are precious ones and we can live them only once. What houses do we want to build?

The works that each one achieved will be revealed in the End of Days. They are not only words but also deeds. Gold, silver and costly stones do not change, and they are gifts for believers. These deeds are very precious ones.

In this way, Rahab the prostitute had no social status, however her deed (her work, her love story) is like a treasure that is told after more than 3000 years.

James teaches us that **deeds** derive from believing in Christ. Faith and deeds are closely connected to become one thing.

2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Conclusion

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James took Rahab the prostitute as the second example of living faith. Her status was one of the lowliest ones and her job was shameful, but she feared the living God. She did the deed in love to save the two spies by risking her life. This is what would be called service to God.

Rahab's deed in love that she courageously carried out by trusting God the Almighty seemed to be one of gold, silver and costly stones that last forever. Faith and deeds are one thing.

These two things are not to be separated like the soul in the body. Let's think about faith and deeds again.

I would like to conclude today's sermon with the following Scripture.

2:26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

* God bless you!