



Do you remember the throw rugs your mother and grandmother used to make? My mother never forgot the lessons of her childhood. Not only did her father die when she was seven, she ended up for five years in an orphanage because her own mother had no way to provide for 3 children with no husband. She married my dad during the depression, and they used to walk across Memphis once a week to visit my Grandmother. Grandma would give them a nickel to ride the streetcar back home. They would thank her, put the nickel in Daddy's pants pocket and walk as though they were headed for the bus stop. Out of Grandma's sight, they would change direction and walk the long walk home. That nickel would be put to a great use: they would buy a can of beans with it, and Mother would make several meals out of that can of beans along with some bread.

By the time I came along, our family had moved north and lived in a converted lake cottage. We had a coal stove that heated our little cottage home in the winter, and windows that opened for fresh air in the summers. That house had one large area rug. I don't remember when we got it. But I remember that the living room was the only one with carpet. It didn't fit wall to wall, but was about 18 inches away from all four walls. (When I was supposed to sweep the floors around the rug, I still remember more than once lifting up a corner of the rug and sweeping the dust under it. My little brother and I often did that when no one was looking. It shortened our

“chore” time and we were able to go outside and play more quickly that way!) The bathroom and 2 bedroom floors were graced with braided cloth rugs Mother made from scraps of material.

Thanks to her upbringing, virtually nothing was wasted in our home. Every scrap of sheeting or bedding, every leftover piece of cloth that simply couldn't be mended or darned or patched again went into Mom's scrap basket. When she had time, she'd tear those scraps into long strips. Then somehow, she would braid them into the longest single piece you might imagine. After they were all braided, then she'd make them into oval-shaped throw rugs. When completed, those rugs were multicolored and rather beautiful. If you looked long enough at them, you could find threads and patterns that you knew came from some special piece of cloth. And need I say these throw rugs were nearly indestructible. Let me tell you, when my Dad said, “Rise and shine! It's time to get up!” on a cold, winter morning before the coal stove had been stoked to blaze again for the day, you were blessed big-time to put your tiny feet on one of those rugs instead of the ice-cold linoleum floor! I wish I had just one of them to keep as a precious memory of my childhood.

I got to thinking recently about the beautiful red thread or red cord that is woven in the Scriptures from Genesis to the Book of Revelation. It's a cord of a promise given, a promise fulfilled and a promise offered from God to man. It is a red cord for a particular reason. Have you ever considered this?

In the Book of Genesis we read about how God created our world and then us. We read how His plan has always been to be friends with us. Without going into great detail, it is recorded in this first book of the Bible how our first parents decided to deliberately disobey God. Though they had been told that disobedience would break their relationship with their God, they did it anyway, perhaps hoping that the consequences of their rebellion wouldn't be so bad after all.



Of course it was. The great “sin” chasm opened up, separating man from His God who loved him so. Their sin had immediate consequences in their personal lives also, one being that they suddenly realized that they were naked and utterly ashamed. Shame now gripped them. God dealt with their rebellion first. Then He promised to do for them what neither they nor their descendants could do – bridge that gap between them and Himself. Of course you know that he did this in the person of His Son Jesus. But He did a most interesting thing. He started the **red cord**. What, you say?

He covered their “shame.” He covered their naked state. I have wondered if that shame was not more of a painful awareness of their new fallen state than of anything else. Anyhow, here was the God who made everything, the God who could have spoken a Nordstrom’s outfit for both Adam and Eve. He could have used marsh grasses in the Garden to weave a skirt for Eve and a kilt for Adam. He could have done so many things. The two of them had already tried to cover their nakedness using fig leaves - - - but apparently they were really small leaves!!!! So here comes God to the rescue. And what does He use? Here it is: He used the skin of an animal!
Genesis 3:21

God killed a perfectly innocent animal to cover a perfectly sinful couple. Talk about injustice! But that is what He did. You know, every time Adam and Eve saw an animal like that one, I imagine that they remember that one of them died so they could be covered. It’s like that animal’s sacrifice became a sign of God’s promise to someday restore them to Himself.

And then throughout all of human history and specifically as noted in the Scriptures, the beautiful red cord, the red thread is woven into God’s relationship with men. Every time God makes a promise, He “seals” it, or signs His name on the promise “covenant” with blood. And man came to learn that God’s promises were always sealed in the blood of sacrifice. Time doesn’t allow me to name them all, but it is wonderful to see this beautiful **red thread** in Noah, **Genesis 8:20** in Abraham, **Genesis 15:9** and in so many others in the Old Covenant. It is fabulous to see the innocent sacrifice again in Abraham’s life in the story of God’s call for him to sacrifice his only son Isaac to God **Genesis 22**.



One particularly interesting mirror picture of this is comparing God’s dealing with the Hebrews when they were still under the horror of slavery under Pharaoh in Egypt. On the night before they left for the promised land, God sent an angel of death throughout Egypt after Pharaoh refused to honor and obey God’s demands spoken by Moses. **Exodus 12:1-f, 22-f, 29** Lest His own people, the Hebrews be killed by this angel, God had the people divide into family units. Each family was to kill a perfectly innocent lamb, and take its blood and coat or paint all the doorway entrances of their homes. Each member of each family was instructed to stay in their houses that night; they were not to stray outside to see what was happening. But God said that when the angel of death came to kill the first-born in all of Egypt, wherever the angel saw that doorway of blood, it would literally “pass over” that house and not kill anyone or anything in it. Thus the blood of an animal served as another reminder that God would save those who were His own, and who obeyed Him; that someday He would completely rebuild the bridge that man had destroyed by his own sin.

Contrast this picture with the one we see in the Book of Joshua. Here in **Chapter 2** we have Joshua, the successor of Moses, ready to appropriate the land God had promised Abraham long ago. The whole nation had left Egypt, wandered through the wilderness for 40 years, then finally crossed over the Jordan to the outskirts of the Promised Land. Their objective was to take the first big city, Jericho. But how to do it? They needed to case the place out, to see what kind of enemy they were up against. So Joshua sent two guys into the city as spies.

They left the rest of the Jews encamped somewhere not too far from the Jordan, and headed for Jericho. They walked through the city gates, somehow. Trying hard to “blend” into the crowd, they walked into a prostitute’s “house.” Her name, Rahab. Sinner? You bet. Hebrew? Not on your life! Their looks or their accents must have given them away, because by the time they got there, a posse was trying to find them. They had been spotted going into this house of ill repute. Rahab, probably hearing the bang on her front door, took the two men up to her roof and hid them under some stalks of flax. When the Jericho Secret Service demanded to know where her

“clients” were, she told them they had already left and gone “that-away!” Off they went (in the wrong direction, of course) pursuing the Hebrew spies.



Rahab got these two guys and said, (in essence) “Now, look. I just saved your lives. Those guys were looking for you. Now I know your God is really on your side and that you and your people are going to wipe us out. But since I helped you, would you save me and my family when you come in here?”

The spies replied, “Yes, we will. You’ve got a **red cord**. When you hear us coming, put that **red cord** out your window. We’ll give orders to our people that they are not to harm anyone in the house with the **red cord** draped out the window. Make sure your whole family gets in here, and don’t let any of them out to see what’s going on, because if they step outside your house **which is protected by the red cord (or red thread, if you will)**, they’ll be dead! And of course we all know that is exactly what happened!



Of course we couldn’t possibly do justice to the fact here, but have to mention that in the fullness of God’s timing, Jesus, His Sinless, Perfect Lamb of a Son, voluntarily laid down His life and let His Blood be shed as punishment for our sins. Jesus is our Lamb of Sacrifice! Those who would come in under His Blood by believing His words and surrendering their lives to Him are literally passed over by the angel of death and damnation! Hallelujah! But here is really where I want to get to.

God has continued to weave this **red cord** of faith into the fabric of our lives and of our families. Do you realize that just a few days after Jesus ascended to heaven, the entire world only had living on it about 120 people who had come under the **red cord** of Jesus' blood? Only 120 people had embraced Him as their Lord and Savior. What has that got to do with you and me? Everything! **Acts 1:15 and 2:41**

This is so exciting to me. Think of this: On the day of Pentecost, that number jumped from 140 to 3,120 not counting women and children. The moment a person embraces Jesus' gift of Himself for their personal deliverance from sin, death and hell, the blood of Jesus as it were, begins to flow in their spiritual veins. The **red cord** stretches to them! Now they hold the secret of life for all the rest of the world! How did those 3,000 plus on Pentecost move from wherever they were spiritually to being disciples of Jesus on that day? **They were told by others who had already come into relationship with Him!**

Now, my dear friend, I want you to wrap your heart around this. Think about how many people may have lived and died since Pentecost. Think about how many came to be Christians, came to be, if you will, Christ-bearers, (those in whom He lived). Think about how many of these shared the **red cord** of faith that they received from the generation before them. (Think too how many may have died "just being private" about their faith!!!!)

This is what blows me away. **I have living in me, right now, that red cord of faith!!** Jesus Christ's blood is flowing through my spiritual veins. I am a disciple of His. And I am so because someone shared that **red cord** with me! What about you? Have you seen the **red cord** of Jesus? Have you embraced Him as your only hope, as your very life? If so, how happy and blessed you are!

Oh by all means, the days are drawing near! Let's throw out the **red rope!** Let's gather our families and our friends under our households of faith! Let's take the strips of our old life and dip them into the scarlet blood of His wondrous love for us! Let's permit Him to clean us up, heal us up, grow us up, clothe us in His robes and let's be wise virgins! Let's have our lamps lit, our robes of righteousness on, our eyes peeled out in anticipation of our Bridegroom's arrival! And in the meantime, shine! Shine! Throw open the doors of your home, your heart, your circle of friends. Get to know and love those God has given you! Share Him! Share Him! Let's pass the **Red Cord** down to what may indeed be the last generation!

When you put us all together, think what a beautiful throw rug we are, woven together by our Beloved, held together by His **Red Thread**..... Altogether lovely, full of His glory, beautiful to those who behold us, and a joy unspeakable to His heart!