

The Third Strand

An open letter to Holy Word Explained on qavah, tikvah, and the scarlet cord

Jørn André Halseth



Dear Holy Word Explained

This letter answers the video [THE HEBREW WORD FOR "WAIT" THAT ISN'T ABOUT WAITING](#) by Holy Word Explained. Every quotation of the speaker below is word-for-word.

Dear friends at Holy Word Explained,

Before writing you I checked your central claim against the Hebrew text, because it sounds too good to be true. It is true. In Joshua 2:18 the word for Rahab's «line of scarlet thread» is *tiqwâ* תִּקְוָה^{H8615} — the lexicon's own entry reads *literally a cord; figuratively, expectancy, hope*. The word your Bible translates «hope» all over the Old Testament is, in its first physical appearance, a red rope hanging out a window in Jericho. You built the study on solid rock: *qāvâ* קָוָה^{H6960} from the root that means to twist strands together; the waters *gathered* into one place in Genesis 1:9 before the word ever means wait; *hālāp* הָלַף^{H2498} in Isaiah 40:31 as *exchange*, not top-up; the descending honesty of fly, then run, then walk; the *tikvah* that snaps in Lamentations 3:18 and is found again — not because the city was rebuilt but because His mercies are new every morning. And you ended where every true word study ends, at the person of Jesus.

The waiting is not the dead time before the miracle. The waiting is the gathering. It is the part where the chaos becomes a coastline.

— *Holy Word Explained*, [THE HEBREW WORD FOR "WAIT" THAT ISN'T ABOUT WAITING](#)

That sentence will outlive the video. So will your last one — «The morning is not a maybe. The morning is a person.» I am not writing to correct any of this. I am writing because your own rope image reaches for a verse the video never quotes, and because the cord you traced has an anchor point you left unnamed. Both were already lying on your workbench.

The verse your rope was reaching for

Near the end you gave the physics of the image: a rope is not just stronger than one thread — «a rope is stronger than all of its threads added up separately», because the twisting shares the load across the strands. Scripture says exactly that, in so many words, and it says it with a number:

Ecclesiastes 4:12, WEB · If a man prevails against one who is alone, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

A *threefold* cord. Not two strands — you and God, as the video frames it — but three. Solomon's arithmetic runs one, two, three: the lone thread snaps, two withstand, three is not quickly broken. The waiting soul is not a private rope of two. The qavah that holds is twisted together with God *and with His people* — Rahab did not hang the cord for herself alone; the same verse that names her tikvah commands her to gather her father, her mother, her brothers, and all her father's household into the house beneath it (Joshua 2:18). Hope, in Scripture, fills a house. A cord of two that refuses the third strand is still a cord — but Solomon wrote the promise over the threefold one.

And there is a second thing your image almost said. You told us to «take the loose, frayed, exhausted strands of your life, and let them be twisted together with the very strength of God» — and the passive voice there is exactly right, more right than the video had time to prove. Because in the Hebrew Bible it is never the strand that does the twisting. It is God who binds:

Hosea 11:4, WEB · I drew them with cords of a man, with ties of love; And I was to them like those who lift up the yoke on their necks; And I bent down to him and I fed him.

He draws. He binds. He bends down. The watchman on the wall does not manufacture the dawn, and the thread does not braid itself into the rope. Waiting on the Lord is consenting to be twisted by hands stronger and kinder than your own — cords of a man, ties of love.

Where the other end is tied

You closed with Hebrews 7:25 — Jesus alive, holding the other end of the cord. There is one more verse in that same letter, two chapters earlier, and it is the New Testament's direct heir of *tikvah*. It tells us not only *who* holds the other end, but *where* it is fastened:

Hebrews 6:19-20, WEB · This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; where as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hope as an anchor — and look where the anchor line runs. *Within the veil*. Rahab's cord hung out the window of a condemned city; our cord runs the other direction, through the torn veil of the temple, into the Most Holy Place, and it is made fast there — not to a promise about the future but to a Person already inside. The scarlet thread you followed from Jericho to Matthew 1 to the cross does not stop at the cross. It goes through the veil His flesh tore open (Hebrews 10:20) and is anchored to Him where He now stands. That is why the cord holds in the Lamentations seasons: the far end is fastened in a room no storm has ever entered.

And that gives Rahab's window its final answer. Her hope was not that she admired the cord from the street — she bound it, she went inside, she gathered her house under it, and when the walls fell, hers stood. The scarlet line asks to be entered, not applauded. If any soul watching your video is still on the street side of the window, the door is the same as it has always been: come in under the scarlet cord, and bring your house with you.

The pool named Hope

There is one more child of your root, and I almost hesitate to hand it over, because it completes the study so cleanly. From *qāvâ* קָוָה^{H6960} the Hebrew Bible also builds *miqweh* מִקְוֶה^{H4723} — and the lexicon entry reads like the summary of your video: *something waited for, i.e. confidence; also a collection of water, a pond*. One word, both meanings. It appears one verse after your Genesis proof text:

Genesis 1:10, WEB · God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas. God saw that it was good.

The gathering together of the waters — *miqweh*. In Leviticus 11:36 the same word names the gathered water that cleanses. And in later Hebrew, *miqweh* — the *mikvah* — is the

immersion pool, the very bath John was administering in the Jordan, the pattern behind Christian baptism. Then Jeremiah takes the word and prays it:

Jeremiah 17:13, WEB · Yahweh, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be disappointed. Those who depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken Yahweh, the spring of living waters.

The hope of Israel — miqweh Yisrael. Jeremiah is punning on purpose, and the second half of the verse proves it: forsaking the Hope means forsaking *the spring of living waters*. The immersion pool and the word for hope are the same word, and Jeremiah says both of them are a Person. So the chain your video traced runs one link further than the video took it: wait, cord, hope — and then the gathering of waters, the mikvah. When a believer goes down into the water of baptism, he is stepping bodily into a word that means hope, to be joined to the One Jeremiah calls by its name. Rahab bound the scarlet tikvah in her window; the believer enters the miqweh — and both are the same Hebrew root doing the same thing: binding a life to the God who gathers scattered things into one place so that new life can stand up out of the deep. I have traced that water — the mikvah, Noah, the Red Sea, the Jordan, and the letters beneath them — from creation to the Great Commission in [Through the Waters](#), and what the water asks of a believer in [Believe and Be Baptized](#). Your root built all of it.

Come further in

Your closing image — that every thread you trace «keeps leading back to the same place, to the same person» — is a book on my shelf before it was a sentence in your video. Its foreword states your thesis outright: *He is not merely mentioned in some passages and absent from others. He is the scarlet thread that runs through every book, every covenant, every sacrifice, every promise.* From Rahab in the genealogy to the scarlet of the veil to Melchizedek within it — the whole trail is walked, verse by verse, in [Jesus in Scripture](#). And for the one your video leaves standing on the wall asking how the binding begins — how a single frayed thread gets taken into the cord at all — that beginning has a name, and a book: [Born Again](#).

You said the morning is a person. He is. And the cord is already scarlet, already anchored within the veil, already held from the other end. Wait, I say, on the LORD — and wait *bound*.

With respect and in the same hope,

Jørn André Halseth

How this was made

This is the author's own work. It was composed with [junifye](#) and an AI assistant, drawing its Scripture and original-language work (Greek, Hebrew, cross-references) from [Darash](#) (Hebrew *darash*, “to seek, inquire, study”), a tool and reference work for the Bible in its original languages.

A gift of support — [Stripe](#)



Scan to read this book online