

JOSHUA BIBLE STUDIES

THEME: **CONQUERING: JOURNEYING WITH JOSHUA**

Lesson #5

A WOMAN TO THE RESCUE
Joshua chapter 2 – Part 2

It is interesting that although chapter 2 is an account about a secret spying mission, most of the chapter is about a woman named Rahab. Notice the contrast between the two main personalities in chapter 1 and 2:

- In chapter one it is a man, Joshua, who stands out as the main personality. In chapter two, it is a woman, Rahab, who is the main personality.
- In chapter one, we have a man whose past is flawless. In chapter two, we have a woman whose past is flawed.
- In chapter one, a Hebrew; in chapter two a Gentile.

It is part of the greatness of God that is magnified in these two lives so dissimilar! It is a great God Who can recruit a Joshua and at the same time receive a Rahab!

In our last study we concentrated on the Under-Cover Agents that Joshua sent into Canaan to spy out the land. Let us see how the story of Rahab is woven into the main plot about the spies. Let's find out more about the woman who came to the rescue of the spies.

I. WHO WAS RAHAB?**A. Rahab Was A Citizen Of Jericho.** Joshua 2:1**B. Rahab was A Canaanite – a Gentile.** See Exodus 23:23-24**C. Rahab was A Prostitute.**

In Joshua 2:1; 6:17; 6:25; James 2:25; Heb. 11:31 Rahab is referred to as a "prostitute"- five times Yet, in Heb. 11 she is listed along with those whom we consider great heroes of faith. The heroes of faith listed in Hebrews 11 were far from perfect people. They all had failures in their lives and we are not surprised when we read about them. But we are surprised when we read that "*By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.*"

D. Rahab was Declared Righteous. James 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?*" (niv)
The story of Rahab demonstrates the grace of God.**E. Rahab was an Ancestress of Jesus.** She is listed in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:5 "*Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab.*"**F. Rahab Was a Woman of Faith.** Heb. 11:31. She is mentioned 2 other times in the New Testament in addition to Hebrews 11.(Matt. 1:5 & James 2:25 above).

II. WHAT DID RAHAB KNOW AND BELIEVE ABOUT GOD?

- A. She knew that God had given Israel the territory of Canaan. V. 9**
- B. She knew that God had miraculously delivered Israel from Egypt. V.10**
- C. She knew Israel had defeated the Amorite Kings. 2:10. See Num.21:21-35.**
- D. She knew that Jehovah was the true God of heaven & earth. V.11**

III. WHAT DID RAHAB DO? Rahab's faith led to action! She took 3 actions:

- A. She lodged the spies. 2:1**
- B. She hid them. 2:6.**
- C. She helped them escape. 2:15.**
Her lies are not to be overlooked. Remember, she was part of a heathen culture that did not know better. The Canaanites were a debauched people. History tells us that they were involved in all sorts of orgies and atrocities. That is why God destroyed the city.

IV. WHAT ARE SOME FAITH CHARACTERISTICS AS SEEN IN RAHAB?

- A. True faith is more than intellectual knowledge – it leads to trust in God.**
Twice she said, ***“we have heard”*** 2:10,11 & therefore said, ***“I know”*** 2:9.
Rom. 10:17 ***“faith comes by hearing”***. She acted decisively out of her convictions. She wanted to be on God's side. This took great courage.
- B. True faith is demonstrated by actions.**
 - 1. Read James 2:20-26 in nkjv.**
 - 2. Greatest evidence of Rahab's faith was the scarlet cord she put in her window! See Josh. 2:18-21.**
- C. True faith results in salvation. Cf. 2:12-13 & 6:21-23.**
Rahab's family was also spared.
- D. True faith is faith that continues to trust. 6:25**
At the time of the writing of the book of Joshua, which was years after the destruction of Jericho, Rahab was still living with the Israelites.
Col. 1:23 ***“.....continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard”*** NKJV

FOUR DEGREES OF FAITH

- 1. Faith that receives –**
This faith is demonstrated by an empty-handed beggar who comes to Jesus Christ and accepts salvation. John 1:12 ***“As many as receive”***
- 2. Faith that reckons -**
This faith counts and has no doubts. It counts on God to fulfill His promises, it

is a persuaded faith. II Tim. 1:12 *"I know whom I have believed and am persuaded"*

3. **Faith that risks** -

This faith obeys God regardless of the risk involved and is demonstrated and again in Hebrews chapter 11.

4. **Faith that rests** -

This faith, even in the midst of hardship and suffering, trusts in the loving Heavenly Father for deliverance. *"Rest in the LORD and wait patient for him."* (Ps 37:7)

EXTRA LESSONS FROM RAHAB

1. *God Cares About Individuals.* God is not only concerned about nations and cities, but He is also concerned about individuals.

2. *God's Grace Is Available To All.* God is no respecter of persons. Can a sinner be saved from *the house of shame* and be put into *the Hall of Fame* in Hebrews 11? Yes! Here in the story of Rahab we see John 3:16 illustrated.

3. *Salvation Changes Ones Lifestyle.*

Rahab risked her very life when she gave lodging to the spies. No doubt, Jericho had its Own surveillance system for, as I mentioned, the king knew all about the two Israeli spies and knew they had been to Rahab's house. When the men of Jericho came to arrest the spies, she had already hidden them on her roof as if she expected her house to be searched. And why would she risk not only her life, but her parents and brothers and sisters as well in order to save the lives of these two strangers?

To me, the answer is obvious. Rahab was no longer a harlot. Her life had been changed and her allegiance was now to Israel's God. Why do I believe that? For several reasons:

- a. Because of her actions on behalf of the spies.
- b. Because of her testimony to the spies which we will examine later.
- c. Because of the facts about the flax. Consider:

The scarlet rope or cord is very significant. It, no doubt, points to the fact that Rahab had already changed her life-style and entered a new vocation. To understand the meaning more clearly, we need to know something about the flax upon the roof of her house (2:6).

Getting flax was a very laborious task. Industrious women would spend hours getting These stalks to make cloth. In fact, the book of Prov. describes one characteristic of a Virtuous woman as one who "looks for wool and flax, and works with her hands in delight." (Prov. 31:13)

If Rahab had still been practicing her old profession, chances are she would not need to spend time and back-breaking labor gathering flax. Prostitutes are not famous for the time they spend in doing honest and regular work.

It 's important to note that Rahab had gathered enough flax to cover up two grown men.

Evidently, she had been in the cloth business for some time. The average woman would not have had that much flax.

But where does the red rope fit in? This, even more than the flax, points to a change of Vocation. When they made dye, they would boil it out of rocks. Since liquid dye was difficult to transport and store, they would put a piece of flax rope into the dye to absorb it.

Cloth makers then would buy pieces of the rope to dye their cloth. While the cloth was boiling in water, they would drop a piece of the dyed rope in the container and the color would transfer from the rope to the fabric. Usually, a very small piece of rope, 6" or so, - would dye a large quantity of cloth. This is an important point. Rahab had enough rope to hang all the way over the wall and it was strong enough so that the men could climb down it.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the wall was 30 feet high! For the average house and average wife and mother, that is a lot of rope and a lot of dye! Evidently, Rahab was in the clothing and dyeing business.

Rahab was no longer a prostitute, but a cloth and dye maker. Her faith in the One True God, the God of Israel, had changed her lifestyle!

Her faith had been accompanied by deep repentance of the sinful practices from which she had derived the name "harlot." This demonstrates the precious truth that "God is no respecter of persons" **and** "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" **and** "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

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*****END CHAPTER 2 – PART 2*****