



RAHAB: A HARLOT WITH A MISSION

INTRODUCTION

The Lord was on a mission to free His people, whom He had redeemed from slavery in Egypt and led for forty years across the wilderness. They would soon cross the Jordan River into the land He had promised them. This promise had been given long ago, since the time of Abraham, and was also made known to Moses (Exodus 3:6-8). Now Moses their leader had died and God appointed Joshua as their new leader, commanding him to conquer the land. The attack against the fortified city of Jericho would be the starting point of the campaign.

Joshua was to send his spies into the midst of the city and God would use an unlikely candidate to help aid them, Rahab the harlot. She would later join the ranks of God's people, and God would use her to accomplish the greatest mission of all the coming of Christ to this earth. He would thrust her into the bloodline of the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest (Joshua 1:9).

Names Given to Rahab

Rahab *And they [two spies] . . . came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there* (Joshua 2:1b).

Rah was the name of an Egyptian god. Her name means insolence, fierceness, broad or spaciousness.

Harlot Harlot in Hebrew is *zana* and in Greek *porne*. A woman who yields sexually to any man for money.

SECTION 1 - A Leader with a Mission

READ Joshua Chapter 1.

1. Who was Joshua (v. 1)? _____

2. What did God command Joshua to do (v. 2)? _____

3. What did God promise Joshua (vv. 3-5)?

4. WRITE God's *instruction* and *encouragement* to Joshua, His new chosen leader.

v. 6 _____

v. 7 _____

v. 8 _____

v. 9 _____

5. What did Joshua command the officers of the people to do (vv. 10, 11)? _____

6. SUMMARIZE in your own words the instructions Joshua gave to the Reubenites, to the Gadites and to half the tribe of Manasseh ¹ (Joshua 1:12-15).

vv. 12, 13 _____

v. 14 _____

v. 15 _____

7. What was the people's answer to Joshua, their new leader (vv. 16, 17)? _____

8. What were they going to do to the people who would not listen to Joshua (v. 18)? _____

How did the people encourage Joshua? _____

LOOK DEEPER

What do the Scriptures teach us about honoring and encouraging those who are in leadership over us in I Timothy 5:17, 19 and Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24?

¹ Reubenites, Gadites, Manasseh: three of the twelve tribes of Israel, the nation of God's chosen people.

SECTION 2 - Two Spies Sent on the Mission

READ Joshua 2:1-7.

1. What did Joshua send the two spies to do (v. 1)? _____

²

Jericho, the *City of Palms*, was the strongest of the fortified cities of Canaan. The people who lived there worshipped Baal, to whom they offered rites of fertility and human sacrifices. They also worshipped Asheroth in a sensuous and cruel manner.

Whose house did they stay in? _____

Traveling merchants stayed in these houses of prostitution bringing news from the outside world.

2. Someone spied on the two spies. What was told to the king of Jericho (v. 2)? _____
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LOOK DEEPER

Who always spies on God's children in order that he may destroy them (I Peter 5:8)? _____

What are we to do (vv. 8, 9)? _____

How are we to do this (Ephesians 6:10-18)? _____

Who is our enemy (v. 12)? _____

² Jericho – Hebrew from *Yareach* moon: moon city, may be the oldest city in the world and likely was dedicated to the worship of the moon god. It was the oasis of the Dead Sea area; located about five miles west of the Jordan River.

3. What did the king of Jericho order Rahab to do (Joshua 2:3)? _____

4. What did she do (v. 4a)? _____

PERSONAL

Have you ever been challenged by evil associates or evil people who have rule over you? If so, what do you do?

5. What did Rahab, the harlot, say to the king of Jericho (vv. 4b, 5)? _____

6. What did she do instead to hide the spies of God's people (v. 6)? _____

Flax was an important crop grown in Egypt and Canaan. It was pulled up by the roots and spread to dry on the housetops. It was often customary for women to perform this task and considered the mark of a virtuous woman (Proverbs 31:13). The flax's woody stems furnished fibers of fine linen for clothing. The priest's of the Lord wore garments of fine linen (Leviticus 16:23) and Christ has prepared a garment of fine linen for His Bride, the Church (Revelation 19:8).

PERSONAL

Rahab used what she worked with in order to help God's people. How can you serve the Lord and God's people with your work?

7. Where did those pursuing the spies go (Joshua 2:7)? _____

What was done to the city gate? _____

SECTION 3 - A Harlot Joins the Mission

READ Joshua 2:8-24.

1. Rahab came to speak with the spies before they laid down on the roof. What important information did she give the spies? What was her personal knowledge of God?

vv. 8, 9 _____

v. 10 _____

v. 11a _____

v. 11b _____

This was Rahab's declaration of faith in the LORD God of the children of Israel. The title LORD is *Jehovah* in Hebrew which means Self-Existent or Eternal One.

PERSONAL

What is your declaration of faith in God? _____

2. What was Rahab's request or warfare strategy when she joined the armies of the Lord (Joshua 2: 12, 13)?

3. What did the spies promise her if she kept silent about their business (v. 14)? _____

4. What did she then do with her own hands (v. 15)? _____

Where was her house located? _____

5. What was God teaching her to do with the things available to her (Psalm 144:1, 2)? _____

Jericho was surrounded by two walls for protection. The walls were about fifteen feet apart. The houses were made of sun-dried bricks supported by wooden beams which were built between the gaps. Rahab's house was one of these.

6. What further instruction does she give to the spies (Joshua 2:16)? _____

7. What life saving instructions did the spies give to her (vv. 17, 18)? _____

3

The cord stood as a symbol of Rahab's redemption from the power of Satan. It became the means of escape from the grip of the world and its idols and a sign to the outside world that she now belonged to God's people. The scarlet cord speaks of the sacrificial redemptive work of Christ (John 3:16). A scarlet cord weaves its way through the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, symbolizing the blood of Jesus that was shed for the forgiveness of man's sins which brought salvation to him.

LOOK DEEPER

What does God's Word teach concerning the salvation that comes through the blood of Jesus?

Matthew 26:27, 28 _____

4

Acts 20:28b _____

³ scarlet [cord] – Hebrew *shanity* crimson: an insect or its deep red color which was used to dye cloth.

⁴ the cup: the cup in communion symbolically represents the shed blood of Christ. It is to be held in remembrance of the blood of Jesus shed once and for all for our sins.

Romans 5:8, 9 _____

5

I Peter 1:18-20 _____

What did the Apostle James write about Rahab under divine guidance by the Holy Spirit (James 2:25, 26)?

Through faith in God, which was demonstrated by her actions, Rahab was justified.

8. What further warning did the Lord's spies give to Rahab (Joshua 2:19)? _____

9. What would happen if Rahab told anyone of their warfare strategy (v. 20)? _____

10. What did Rahab do (v. 21)? _____

11. How persistent were the pursuers in trying to find the spies (v. 22)? _____

PERSONAL

Where can we hide when Satan is seeking to destroy us?

Psalm 27:5 _____

6

⁵ justified: to render just or innocent.

⁶ pavilion – Hebrew *soke* a hut (as of entwined boughs): a cover; from a Hebrew root word meaning to fence in, protect, defense, and hedge in; tabernacle.

Psalm 31:20 _____

Proverbs 14:26 _____

Proverbs 18:10 _____

12. Who did the spies immediately report to (Joshua 2:23)? _____

13. WRITE out what they said (v. 24)? _____

SECTION 4 - God Accomplishes His Mission

READ Joshua 5:13 – Chapter 6.

Joshua, under the direction of the living God who commands all the armies in the heavens and on the earth, led His people to the brink of the River Jordan. As the Lord did to the Red Sea so God miraculously cut off the waters of the Jordan until His people walked across on dry ground. They passed over right against Jericho and camped in Gilgal, on the east border of Jericho.

1. Who was the Man with His sword drawn that appeared to Joshua? What did He command Joshua to do (Joshua 5:13-15)?

2. What was going on in Jericho (Joshua 6:1)?

3. How did the Lord encourage Joshua for the battle ahead (v. 2)?

PERSONAL

WRITE down a Scripture that God is using in this lesson to encourage you. _____

4. SUMMARIZE how Joshua and his men of war were commanded by God to take the city (vv. 3-15).

Joshua gave the people the Lord's instructions to follow exactly; and he reminded them to keep silent until the seventh day (vv. 6-15).

5. What did Joshua then command the people (vv. 16)? _____

6. Who and what was to be spared in the city (v. 17-19)? _____

Why? _____

7. What was destroyed in the city of Jericho (vv. 20, 21)? _____

8. What exactly did Joshua tell the spies to spare besides Rahab and her family (vv. 22, 23)? _____

Where did they take Rahab and her household? _____

9. What were the only things spared that were put in the treasury of the house of the Lord (v. 24)? _____

10. Where did Rahab and her family dwell from that day on (v. 25)? _____

Why? _____

SECTION 5 - The Mission of the Coming Christ

1. According to the divinely inspired writing of the apostle Paul, why did the walls of Jericho fall and Rahab not perish (Hebrew 11:30, 31)?

2. What is faith (Hebrew 11:1)? _____

3. Who do you find mentioned in the genealogy⁷ of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5)?

8

Because of Rahab's faith in God, she became a part of an even greater mission. Rahab became the wife of Salmon, who was a prince in Israel. Salmon could have even been one of the spies she sheltered! Rahab then became the mother of Boaz, who married Ruth, whose son Obed became the father of Jesse, the father of King David, from whose bloodline Jesus came. God used Rahab who was most unworthy to become a part of His great mission by His grace⁸.

LOOK DEEPER

What do the following Scriptures say is Christ's great mission?

Matthew 20:28 _____

Luke 19:10 _____

John 1:29 _____

⁷ genealogy: bloodline.

⁸ Rahab: King James Version renders her name, Rachab.

⁹ grace: the unmerited favor of God to unworthy sinners.

John 3:16, 17 _____

PERSONAL

What one Scripture spoke to you the most at this time? Why? _____

MEMORY VERSE

Finally, remember there will never be a time in your life when God is not with you. WRITE out Joshua 1: 9.

Rahab was a woman, who despite her background of harlotry, possessed tremendous spiritual insight and wisdom. She recognized that Israel's God was the Supreme Almighty God, unlike the wicked and perverted gods she and her people served and worshiped. She feared the Lord, the God of the spies, more than she feared those in Jericho who sought to kill God's people.

She demonstrated great courage and faith in God, and He became her refuge. By taking the initiative in seeking deliverance for herself and her family, she was included in God's great plan, the ancestry of Jesus that brought the Savior into the world. Through her example, we see how gracious and merciful God is to those who truly place their faith and trust in Him. God is able to forgive all those who turn to Him and use them in a mighty way.

NOTES: _____

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