

Joshua 2 • The Covenant with Rahab

Introduction

The format of this particular study is going to be a little bit different. After reading the chapter, we're going to discuss the basic characteristics of Rahab, a woman about whom more is written in Scripture than even Mary. It's important to understand how Rahab represents a greater spiritual picture of every believer's spiritual history in Christ, and that in her we see the mirror of God's salvation at work in our own life.

¹Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there.

²It was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land."

³And the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land."

⁴But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." ⁵It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." ⁶But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

⁸Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹²Now therefore, please swear to me by the

[Read Chapter 2]

Q: What is Rahab's obvious spiritual condition in the very beginning?

A: She was a sinner.

Point: It does not matter that her particular sin as a harlot was moral impurity, for Scripture teaches that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God". (Rom. 3:23) She starts out exactly as **WE** start out.

Q: What was the spiritual condition of the place where Rahab lived?

A: Jericho had already been declared condemned by God and it was just a matter of time before His final judgment would be executed against it.

Point: Whether the people in Jericho "felt" condemned or not did not matter because everything and everyone in the city would be destroyed. However, they were aware that something was not right and did not feel fully confident nor peaceful, and yet did nothing to change their spiritual circumstance. Although they sense the end was near, they remained hardened until the very end.

Q: How long had the city been set aside by God for judgment?

A: God first identified their predicament more than 470 years earlier. (Gen. 15:13-16) This included the 430 years Israel lived in captivity in Egypt and the additional 40 years Israel wandered in the wilderness after leaving Egypt.

Point: God provided an extended period of grace, many centuries of opportunity for them to repent and be saved.

Q: How do we know that God extended a second period of grace beyond the first one promised in Genesis 15?

A: In v.10 the residents of Jericho admit they heard about the Exodus from Egypt that took place some 40 years prior. In fact, Joshua 4:19 and 5:10 indicate that there were even a few additional days of waiting leading up to the final week when Israel would march around the city providing an **additional** opportunity for them to repent.

Point: Rahab represents the remnant, the few who respond the right way to the signs of God and repent, whereas the others typify the condemned who steadfastly refuse to change their ways even though presented the opportunity to do otherwise time and time again.

Q: What is implied about Rahab where the Word of God is concerned?

A: Rahab heard the Word and acted upon it. Note that in her conversation with the spies that she refers to God as "LORD", not merely as "your God" or "the God of Israel".

LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth,¹³ and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death."

¹⁴So the men said to her, "Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."

¹⁵Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. ¹⁶She said to them, "Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way."

¹⁷The men said to her, "We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear,¹⁸ unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household. ¹⁹It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. ²⁰But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear."

²¹She said, "According to your words, so be it." So she sent them away, and they departed; and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²²They departed and came to the hill country, and remained there for three days until the pursuers returned. Now the pursuers had sought them all along the road, but had not found them. ²³Then the two men returned and came down from the hill country and crossed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they related to him all that had happened to them. ²⁴They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
Romans 10:17*

Q: How do we know for certain that it was Rahab's faith in God's Word which saved her?

A: Not only does she state in v.9, "I know that the LORD had given you the land", but it's confirmed for us in Hebrews 11:31...

By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

Point: *It is faith and commitment to God's Word which causes people to understand and properly respond to End Times situations. Just as by God's Word Rahab was able to act in faith during the last days of Jericho, so is the example for us in these very Last Days before Christ's return.*

Q: How did Rahab prove and act upon her faith?

A: By her works. The fact that she risked her own life to protect the spies is proof she trusted God, identifying herself with God's people rather than the heathen unbelievers around her.

In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

James 2:25

Point: *Faith is not merely believing the truth of God's Word – that's only the first step. Faith is proved by taking action on those beliefs.*

Q: How is Rahab a type of Christian in the way she considered others?

A: Rahab sought to win others. She had to take the risk of sharing the Word with her family.

Point: *When people trust Christ, their first desire will be to share it with others, especially their own family. (Jn. 1:35-42; Mk. 5:18-20)*

Q: So how do the end results for Rahab mirror those of all believers from any age?

A: She was delivered from the wrath of judgment.

Point: *Rahab and her family experienced the initial shaking that destroyed the city and then the fire which destroyed all of its contents, but Rahab and her loved ones were protected by God from the ultimate death and destruction. This represents the typology of the Rapture, when believers will be rescued by God prior to the expression of His ultimate wrath of judgment*

and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 1:10

For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Thessalonians 5:9

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Q: What special place will Rahab ultimately be found to hold within Israel's history?

A: The genealogies record that through her is not only descended King David, but eventually Christ Himself. This illustrates biblically that both the Jew and the Gentile are to be reconciled in Christ as they are both participants in His lineage.

Q: But what does this imply about Rahab that we know will happen to all believers?

A: Rahab went to a wedding feast! Just as in Rev. 19:7-9 and 17-19, all believers will go to a wedding feast.

Overall Application

Rahab was saved the only way that God saves people, by faith and not by character or religious works.

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9