

# Rahab

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a **Joshua 1**

b 1:1,2 Entering the Promised Land

<sup>1</sup>After Moses, the servant of the LORD, died, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said, "My servant Moses is dead. Now you and all these people go across the Jordan River into the land I am giving to the Israelites.

c 1:5-9 God's Promise

<sup>5</sup>[The Lord said to Joshua,] "No one will be able to defeat you all your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forget you.

<sup>6</sup>"Joshua, be strong and brave! You must lead these people so they can take the land that I promised their fathers I would give them. <sup>7</sup>Be strong and brave. Be sure to obey all the teachings my servant Moses gave you. If you follow them exactly, you will be successful in everything you do. <sup>8</sup>Always remember what is written in the Book of the Teachings. Study it day and night to be sure to obey everything that is written there. If you do this, you will be wise and successful in everything. <sup>9</sup>Remember that I commanded you to be strong and brave. Don't be afraid, because the LORD your God will be with you everywhere you go."

d **Joshua 2**

e,f 2:1 Two Jewish Spies & Rahab -- Rahab's "profession"

<sup>1</sup>Joshua son of Nun secretly sent out two spies from Acacia and said to them, "Go and look at the land, particularly at the city of Jericho."

So the men went to Jericho and stayed at the house of a prostitute named Rahab.

Rahab was a Canaanite Gentile, not Jewish. She "business" was selling her body for sex.

g 2:2-7 Rahab's deception to protect the spies

<sup>2</sup>Someone told the king of Jericho, "Some men from Israel have come here tonight to spy out the land."

<sup>3</sup>So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house. They have come to spy out our whole land."

<sup>4</sup>But the woman had hidden the two men. She said, "They did come here, but I didn't know where they came from. <sup>5</sup>In the evening, when it was time to close the city gate, they left. I don't know where they went, but if you go quickly, maybe you can catch them."

Yes, this was a lie. Rahab understood that this was a time of war. She lied to protect the lives of those whom she was hiding -- and to protect her own life.

<sup>6</sup>(The woman had taken the men up to the roof and had hidden them there under stalks of flax that she had spread out.) <sup>7</sup>So the king's men went out looking for the

*spies on the road that leads to the crossings of the Jordan River. The city gate was closed just after the king's men left the city.*

**h 2:8-11 Why she did it: The reputation of Israel's God**

*<sup>8</sup> Before the spies went to sleep for the night, Rahab went up to the roof. <sup>9</sup> She said to them, "I know the LORD has given this land to your people. You frighten us very much. Everyone living in this land is terribly afraid of you <sup>10</sup> because we have heard how the LORD dried up the Red Sea when you came out of Egypt. We have heard how you destroyed Sihon and Og, two Amorite kings who lived east of the Jordan. <sup>11</sup> When we heard this, we were very frightened. Now our men are afraid to fight you because the LORD your God rules the heavens above and the earth below!"*

Wow! It looks like Israel's enemies believed in the God of Israel, more than Israel did! Remember: This story happened 40 years after God led Israel out from Egypt. Rahab was eager to help the Israeli spies, because she wanted to be on the winning side.

**j 2:12-14 The Spies' promise**

Rahab made the spies swear an oath to God to protect her when they conquer Jericho.

*<sup>12</sup> "So now, promise me before the LORD that you will show kindness to my family just as I showed kindness to you. Give me some proof that you will do this. <sup>13</sup> Allow my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all of their families to live. Save us from death."*

*<sup>14</sup> The men agreed and said, "It will be our lives for your lives if you don't tell anyone what we are doing. When the LORD gives us the land, we will be kind and true to you."*

**k 2:15-23 Escape & Rahab's promise**

*<sup>15</sup> The house Rahab lived in was built on the city wall, so she used a rope to let the men down through a window. <sup>16</sup> She said to them, "Go into the hills so the king's men will not find you. Hide there for three days. After the king's men return, you may go on your way."*

*<sup>17</sup> The men said to her, "You must do as we say. If not, we cannot be responsible for keeping this oath you have made us swear. <sup>18</sup> When we return to this land, you must tie this red rope in the window through which you let us down. Bring your father, mother, brothers, and all your family into your house. <sup>19</sup> If anyone leaves your house and is killed, it is his own fault. We cannot be responsible for him. If anyone in your house is hurt, we will be responsible. <sup>20</sup> But if you tell anyone about this, we will be free from the oath you made us swear."*

*<sup>21</sup> Rahab answered, "I agree to this." So she sent them away, and they left. Then she tied the red rope in the window.*

*<sup>22</sup> The men left and went into the hills where they stayed for three days. The king's men looked for them all along the road, but after three days, they returned to the city without finding them. <sup>23</sup> Then the two men started back. They left the hills and crossed the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.*

l 2:24 The Spies' report

<sup>24</sup> *They said, "The LORD surely has given us all of the land. All the people in that land are terribly afraid of us."*

m **Joshua 3,4** Israel crosses the Jordan River

The next three chapters are only about Israel, nothing about Rahab. [If you are leading a Bible study group, the group does not need to take time to read Joshua 3-5. You may briefly summarize these chapters.]

This event looks similar to Israel crossing the Red Sea 40 years earlier. The priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant stepped into the river -- a dangerous thing to do because the river was at flood stage -- and the river stopped flowing. While the water piled up upstream, the Israelites marched across to the other side on the river bottom. The priests carrying the Ark stayed in the middle of the river until everyone had crossed over.

One representative from each of the 12 Tribes of Israel each picked up a stone from the middle of the river and carried it across. They made a stone pile as a monument.

Then finally, the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant out from the middle of the river, and the water flowed again.

n 5:1-9 Time out for circumcision

Israel did not immediately attack Jericho. They delayed to take care of important business. The delay also increased the anxiety among the Canaanites.

<sup>1</sup> *All the kings of the Amorites west of the Jordan and the Canaanite kings living by the Mediterranean Sea heard that the LORD dried up the Jordan River until the Israelites had crossed it. After that they were scared and too afraid to face the Israelites.*

The first business was to circumcise the men of Israel. In spite of God's command...

<sup>7</sup> *...But none of the sons born on the trip from Egypt had been circumcised, so Joshua circumcised them.* <sup>8</sup> *After all the Israelites had been circumcised, they stayed in camp until they were healed.*

This was not only an act of obedience. It was also an act of faith. For several days, the Israelite men were in pain from their circumcision, and they were not able to fight any battles. If they had been attacked, they would have lost and many would have died. (See Genesis 34, especially verses 24-25, for a story about Israelite ancestors who used that tactic against other men.)

o 5:10 Time out for Passover

<sup>10</sup> *The people of Israel were camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho. It was there, on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, they celebrated the Passover Feast.*

p 5:11,12 Manna stops

*<sup>11</sup> The day after the Passover, the people ate food grown on that land: bread made without yeast and roasted grain. <sup>12</sup> The day they ate this food, the manna stopped coming. The Israelites no longer got the manna from heaven. They ate the food grown in the land of Canaan that year.*

q 5:13-6:5 Instructions for the march

Here Joshua meets "the Commander of the Lord's Army." Who is he? Obviously he is not human. Some Bible teachers believe that he is the "pre-incarnate Christ" (The Son of God, 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, before He was born into human flesh 1,400 years later.) More likely, the "commander" was an angel, possibly Michael the Archangel (see Daniel 10:13,20-21).

The angelic Commander gives Joshua instructions about marching around Jericho:

*<sup>3</sup> March around the city with your army once a day for six days. <sup>4</sup> Have seven priests carry trumpets made from horns of male sheep and have them march in front of the Ark. On the seventh day march around the city seven times and have the priests blow the trumpets as they march. <sup>5</sup> They will make one long blast on the trumpets. When you hear that sound, have all the people give a loud shout. Then the walls of the city will fall so the people can go straight into the city."*

r **Joshua 6**

s 6:6-21 The march... and walls fall

You know the story. But it is a good idea to read it again, to refresh your memory.

t 6:22-25 Rahab and family rescued

*<sup>22</sup> Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house. Bring her out and bring out those who are with her, because of the promise you made to her."<sup>23</sup> So the two men went into the house and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all those with her. They put all of her family in a safe place outside the camp of Israel... <sup>25</sup> Joshua saved Rahab the prostitute, her family, and all who were with her, because Rahab had helped the men he had sent to spy out Jericho. Rahab still lives among the Israelites today.*

That last sentence means that the book of Joshua was written while Rahab was still alive. Rahab, a gentile, not only became an Israeli citizen; she also worshipped the God of Israel. Did she continue her prostitution? Not likely, as she married a Israeli man and...

u **Matthew 1:5 Rahab's family tree**

Rahab became an ancestor of King David, and of Jesus.

*<sup>5</sup> Salmon was the father of Boaz. (Boaz's mother was Rahab.)  
Boaz was the father of Obed. (Obed's mother was Ruth.)  
Obed was the father of Jesse.*

*<sup>6</sup> Jesse was the father of King David.*

v **Hebrews 11:31 Hero of Faith**

Hebrews 11 (in the New Testament) offers a long list of Old Testament saints who are examples of faith in God. Near the end of that list we find Rahab.

*<sup>31</sup> It was by faith that Rahab, the prostitute, welcomed the spies and was not killed with those who refused to obey God.*