

RAHAB

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Person of Shame to a Person of Honour.

[Joshua 2:1-24](#)

"1 And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.

2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country.

3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. "

The Nation of Israel have spent 40 years in the wilderness because they would not trust the promise of God, [Numbers 14:1-45](#).

Now they were ready to enter into the land promised by God. The Israelites are camped to the East of the river at Shittim, also called Acacias, a plain or valley in the land of Moab, this is where the Israelites were encamped after their two victories over king Sihon and king Og, at the end of their 40 years of desert travels. It was from here that Joshua sent out the two spies to "view" the land and Jericho.

Jericho is a very ancient city, it is found at the northern end of the Dead Sea which is over 1,000 feet below the surface of the Mediterranean Sea, so Jericho was probably the lowest city in the world.

Rahab or Rachab, was a Canaanite, who were to be destroyed as part of God's plan for Israel.

[Deuteronomy 7:1-3](#)

"1 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

*2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and **utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them:** 3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. "*

Rahab worked as a **"harlot,"** this has also been translated as a **"prostitute,"** she was a very second class woman, it is possible that the word "harlot" also indicated that she probably combined the trade of lodging-keeper for travellers. The act of being an "harlot" is totally against the Word of God.

[Deuteronomy 23:17;](#)

"17 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. "

Rahab would have worshipped the gods of Baal, the principal male sun-god of the Phoenicians, and **Ashtoreth** the moon goddess of the Phoenicians. It was very common for there to be prostitution and sexual facilities in the temples of these gods. This Baal worship was also known to often sacrificed children to the gods in these temples.

Rahab was a very unlikely person to want to help the people of the Jewish nation. Yet God was using her to protect His people, why?

When the two men arrive in Jericho they ended up at the home of a woman "prostitute" called Rahab. Strangers visiting the place of a prostitute would have been fairly common at the time and would not attract checks, however, somehow the king of Jericho heard of the two strangers and was suspicious of their actions, probably due to the nearby Israelite camp.

The Jericho guards came to the house of Rahab and were told that the men had left already. so they went off searching for them. However, Rahab had hidden the two spies under the flax which was stored on the house roof.

[Joshua 2:4-7.](#)

Rahab protects the Spies.

" 4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were:

5 And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate."

We do not have any information as to why Rahab was willing to protect these two spies but it is very obvious that she knows all about the God of the Jews, it was planned by God that the Canaanites and Jericho were about to be destroyed, but these events show that God is full of Grace for this Canaanite woman, Rahab. This woman had everything against her, why should God be prepared to use her for His glory, love and grace, and these have been offered to the world through Jesus, all she needed to do was turn to God for protection.

Rahab acknowledges the Power of God.

"8 And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;

9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

It was forty years in the past when Israel crossed the Red Sea, Rahab knew about this event, she also knows about the way God had led the Israel nation against the nearby Amorite nations and destroying the nation including the two kings, OG,(a 13 foot giant) and Sihon,

[Number 21:21-35](#); Deuteronomy 3:1-11.

The final point Rahab knew that God *"hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us."* She has realized the power of the Jewish God and has developed a faith in Him for her protection.

Rahab has realized that Jericho and her family are about to be destroyed and asks the two Jewish spies to protect her.

Rahab, the spies set future conditions.

" 12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token:

13 And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

14 And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.

18 Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

19 And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his

blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.

20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window."

The spies accept that they will provide protection for Rahab and her family, but she had to fulfill very specific conditions, her faith required that she displayed a "*scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by:*", and her family must be in the house and not leave the building. The final condition is that she must not tell anyone else of the protection arrangement.

The Spies return.

" 22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. 23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them:

24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us. "

Jericho is Destroyed.

[Joshua 6:21-25.](#)

"21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Why Rahab? What significance is she?

Rahab is mentioned in three other places in scripture:-

[Hebrew 11:30,31.](#)

"30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. "

Rahab is listed as one who had faith in serving God, she is listed with many important Biblical people like Moses.

[James 2:25.](#)

"25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?"

Rahab is referred too as part of a demonstration of faith by the Old Testament people like Abraham.

[Matthew 1:5.](#)

"5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;"

Rahab or Rachab became the wife of Salam and was one of the ancestors of King David and therefore part of the Messianic family line.

[2 Corinthians 5:17,18.](#)

"17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;"

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