

SONG: O Happy Day; Grace Greater Than Our Sin (Marvellous grace of our loving Lord)

CLOSE: Work For The Night Is Coming

## Rahab – Not the Girl She Used to Be

Joshua Series: 4 of 18 – (GOOD FOR MISSIONS)

**Text: Joshua: 2 (Read 1-7)**

**Aim: To show the history of a sinner converted to faith in God.**

### INTRODUCTION:

*Once there was a rough, uncultured man...*

...Who for some unknown reason fell in love with a beautiful vase in a shop window? Eventually, he bought the vase and put it on the mantelpiece in his room. Once it was there though, it became a kind of judgment on its surroundings.

He had to clean up the room to make it worthy of the vase. The curtains looked dingy beside it. The old chair with the stuffing coming out of the seat would no longer suffice. The wallpaper and the paint needed redoing. Gradually the whole room was transformed.

This kind of transformation we witness when we put Christ on the mantel of our heart – our whole life is transformed as well.

- A. The mission of the spies in Joshua 2 occurred during the brief period of time **AFTER** God's charge to Moses and **BEFORE** Joshua led Israel across the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. READ >> Joshua 1:11.**

Israel was to begin its campaign into the Promised Land. BUT right smack in the middle of its path loomed (for that day and time) the large and strongly walled town of Jericho, the city of palm trees (Deut. 34:3; 2 Chr. 28:15). This was the **KEY citadel** of the Jordan Valley, which commanded control of all the passes to the highlands of the country.

Joshua, while having confidence in Jehovah, used all natural means at his disposal to assure success! Like any other good commander, before attacking, he wanted complete information regarding this fortress—the layout, approaches, gates, fortified towers and weaknesses of the city, as well as the military force, resources and morale of the inhabitants.

Facing westward Joshua looks across the turbulent Jordan and viewed the land God promised His people. He contemplated how he was to occupy the land God promised to give them for an inheritance. It was only natural for him to want to secure information necessary for a successful battle. This battle was to be the first in a long and difficult war. So, during this **3-day wait period** mention in **1:11, two trusted men** were chosen and sent to spy out the land.

40 yrs. earlier, Joshua was one of the 12 spies sent out from Kadesh Barnea (Num. 13:1-14:4). He was one of **ONLY two**—the other being Caleb—who came back with a good report. The discouragement of the other 10 spies, reporting of fortified cities and of “giants” in the land incited the people to rebel against God's will.

**THIS TIME**, instead of sending out 12 men to spy on the land of Canaan, only 2 spies were sent out on this delicate and dangerous task. They had to enter the city, reconnoitre the landscape and bring back a report of the conditions found there. Joshua sent them out **secretly** instead of **publicly**, as were the previous 12 spies.

- B. One can only speculate Joshua's reasons as to the purpose for only sending 2 spies.**

It is quite likely he did so to keep down evil rumours, from starting in Israel's camp and dishearten or cause panic among the people, should the finding of the spies be unfavourable.

The spies left their camp at Shittim, located 7 mi. east of the Jordan, and a little south of Jericho. Travelling north the spies probably swam across the river, which was flooded during this time of the year (cf. **3:15**). Approaching Jericho from the West Side, they soon were inside the city gates moving along its streets, mingling with the people.

Joshua would soon come to realise that surveying the area was unnecessary—for nothing learned in this clandestine reconnaissance was used in the capture of Jericho.

Jericho's down fall was to be brought about later by supernatural powers, as we will see in chapter 6!

Therefore, it seems the sole purpose of God allowing Joshua to send these two men to cross the Jordan and secretly enter Jericho was God's way of securing the salvation of a woman named Rahab for Himself.

**Our God is a tremendous God! —He will never forsake those who fear Him.**

**C. How often we hear people express a concern for the unfortunate people in foreign lands who never read the Bible.**

*"It's unfair for People who never had a chance to hear and respond to the Gospel to be condemned."*

**BUT NOTE**, this woman in Canaan NEVER saw a Bible either, but that didn't prevent her from getting saved.

We need to understand that God loves us and wants people every where, of every walk of life to be saved! Anyone, who'll acknowledge the light they have, God will give more.

Jesus said, *"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness"* (John 12:46).

There just doesn't seem to be any special need to send anyone out to snoop around Jericho. Eventually, it becomes crystal clear the spies were sent there to secure **MORE THAN** military information. These two men were providentially directed in their steps to house on the wall of a **prostitute** named Rahab—a sinfully shamed woman, who God, in His grace purposed to spare the judgement soon to fall on the city.

**D. For a certainty, Rahab was a woman with a prepared heart.**

She like Cornelius in Acts 10 had a hunger to know more about God. It was Lydia in Acts 16 *"whose heart the Lord opened"* and who *"attended unto the things"* which Apostle Paul spoke concerning God (vs. 14), She was like the Thessalonians of Acts 17:11 who *"received the word with all readiness of mind."* So, it was by no accident, the Lord moving in a mysterious way brought the spies of the Israel's army to Rehab's house—for she was a woman who was ripe for salvation!

God could not go in and destroy Jericho and be true to Himself, **BEFORE** He **FIRST** did something to secure the deliverance of Rahab. This action by God reminds us of Lot and the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. **BEFORE** God could pour out His wrath of fire and brimstone in judgement on those vile people, the angel said to Lot in Gen. 19:22, while both of them were in the city, *"Haste thee ... for I cannot do any thing till thou be come hither."* Lot had to be delivered from the city of Sodom by God and **BEFORE** the fires of brimstone were to descend and to destroy that wicked place.

Likewise, **BEFORE** God could bring the judgement of sin upon the wicked Canaanite City of Jericho preparations had to be made to deliver Rahab from that place.

Archaeologists tell us the city covered about **8 acres** and was surrounded by **two 30 ft. walls**: the **INNER wall** was **12 ft. thick**; **OUTER wall** was **6 ft. across** and there was a **space of about 12-15 ft.** between them. On these two walls houses were constructed and Rehab's was one of them.

Of the thousands of people, who lived in Jericho, we know of only the name of one — **"Rahab the harlot"**! (James 2:25; Heb. 11:31) The word **"harlot"** in both of those verses means, *"a woman who sells her body for sexual uses; a prostitute, a harlot, one who yields herself to defilement for the sake of gain."* So, clearly, Rahab was a wicked woman who lived a defiled lifestyle.

In this true account concerning Rahab and the spies, we find the story of a lost soul who was delivered from judgement through faith in Israel's God. Rahab *pictures* to us the spiritual history of the believer who has found saving grace in Christ. She is an example of the grace of God at work. Her salvation was not based on her character or merits: she lived in a doomed city (Lev. 18:24-26), practiced a condemned profession, engaged in subversive activities (vs. 4-5), and falsified her actions. Nevertheless, she turned to God in faith (vs. 9-12), acted upon that faith (vs. 15-21), and was spared the judgement of God, which was executed at the hands of the Israelites (6:15-25). **Heb. 11:31** – *“By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.”*

**FIVE points of truth to notice in this chapter:**

- |                        |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Rahab was Condemned | 2. Rahab was Convinced | 3. Rahab was Concerned |
| 4. Rahab Confessed     | 5. Rahab was Confirmed |                        |

**I. RAHAB WAS CONDEMNED**

**A. She was CONDEMNED along with her nation.**

1. **In Deut. 7**– God's command to Israel was to cast out from Canaan all the occupying nations. God would deliver Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Pezizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—seven nations mightier than Israel—ALL were to be delivered into Israel's hands. **NO** mercy was to be shown, **NO** covenant was to be made. ALL these nations were to be utterly destroyed! **Rehab's city was doomed!**
2. **Lev. 18:3, 24-25** – God warned Israel – *“After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwell, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: ...Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.”*
  - a. **BELIEVE IT OR NOT the Canaanite's religion is the basis of every pagan religious system that has ever existed!**
  - b. Perversion & immorality of the basest kind formed their religious worship.
    - 1) Male and female temple prostitutes were a part of their worship.
    - 2) The system was full of demonic practices

**FOR ISRAEL'S SAKE, THESE PEOPLE HAD TO BE DESTROYED!**

Can you imagine what would have happened to have ALL of Israel and ALL the Canaanites living together in the same areas, in the same towns, down the same streets and same roads from one another?

The nation of Israel—God's chosen people to represent Himself to the pagan world, would soon tolerate, accept and absorb this religion. Contaminated by the ungodliness of their neighbours they would fall under the same judgement—**BTW, that is precisely what happened later on**, when Jezebel introduced Baal worship into the nation of Israel.

3. Jericho and the land of Canaan is a picture of the world today—**IT IS CONDEMNED**
  - a. The ungodly religion and the sinful practices of the land condemned them in the eyes of a holy God.
  - b. The city of Jericho was condemned AND everyone and everything was to be utterly destroyed **SEE >> 6:21**. According to **Deut. 20:16**, **NOTHING** was to be saved alive that breathed.
    - 1) These people, thinking they were secure behind the thick walls were under the sentence of death, whether they “felt” condemned or not.

- 2) They may have been content with the way they were living, but that is not a substitute for being at peace with God!
- c. The sentence of death had been passed upon this ungodly religious system & the ungodly people who practised it.  
*Rahab also had the sentence of death on her.*

### **B. She was personally CONDEMNED – Not Only for her Religion, But also for her Sin.**

1. After all, she was of the human race, therefore by default, she was condemned – *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:23). *“They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one”* (Rom. 3:12).
2. **Vs. 1** informs us she practised a condemned profession. **Rev. 21:8** – *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”*
  - a. She was a harlot. She was a very wicked and immoral woman.
  - b. She ran a house of ill repute. It was not uncommon for harlots to run inns.
  - c. Her house was likely near the gate >> **SEE 2:5**.
3. **BUT NOTE:** She was **NO MORE** condemned than the self-righteous churchgoer today, or the moralist, or the religionist, or **NO MORE** than you would be, if you were not saved.
4. There is no difference between ANY OF THEM – ALL are sinners alike, regardless of the degree of their sin.

### **C. She was given a Grace Period**

1. **Deut. 7; 12:2-3** tell us that the city of Jericho had been set aside for judgement many years prior to this event. **READ >> Gen. 15:13-16** – here we are reminded God waited 400 years before he permitted judgement to come to Canaan. The **Amorites** were the inhabitants of Canaan.
2. Jericho had heard about Israel’s Exodus from Egypt 40 years earlier according to **Joshua 2:10** << **READ**
3. **READ >> Josh. 4:19; 5:10** – To these 40 yrs. we can add the days of Israel’s waiting, wondering what Israel would do, plus the week they heard and saw Israel marching around the city.
4. How patient God is waiting for people to respond – **God surely is gracious!**

## **II. RAHAB WAS CONVINCED >> VS. 8-10**

### **A. A. She was Convinced That She and Her People Were Doomed to Condemnation**

1. **Vs. 9** – *“I know that the LORD hath given you the land”* i.e. “I know we are all gonna die.”
2. She was convinced she was under condemnation as the city was condemned and all its inhabitants, of whom she was one—ALL were doomed!

### **B. She was Convinced Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the One & Only True God.**

1. **Vs. 10** – She heard about God and FEARED Him.
  - a. In effect, Rahab told the spies that the city had concluded, “the conquest is as good as over.” *“And as soon as we had heard these things, **our hearts** did melt”* – **OUR HEARTS** meant ALL the Citizens of Jericho. **READ >> Vs. 11**

- 1) Can you imagine the kind of conversations they had, when only about 10 miles away there is encamped millions of Jews who have the reputation of being continually delivered by God?
- 2) What would you be talking about, if you knew that one day soon – based upon information you have received – an immense army would be crossing the river heading toward your town? An army who would be out to destroy you and everybody else in the land in order to secure the land as their own possession?

**Prov. 9:10** – *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*

**Again Prov. 1:7** – *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”*

Do you know the demons have more smarts than most people do?

**James 2:19** – *“The devils believe their is a God, AND TREMBLE!”*

**Solomon tells us in Eccl. 12:13** – *“Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”*

2. Rahab heard about the message of judgement and feared it, but it was a merciful message in that it introduced her to the true God who would forgive and save her.
3. She calls God LORD = *“Jehovah”* in vs. 9-12. **EMPHASISE >> vs. 11** – *“For the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.”*

### **C. What did it mean for her to be CONVINCED that Jehovah was God?**

1. It meant she renounced her sin and the practice of it.
  - a. It was the sin of being a harlot
  - b. It was the sin of being in rebellion to the God of Creation
  - c. Being convinced that Jehovah was her God was to renounce any other known sin she was practising —no matter how small. Any hoarded SIN of any kind that would separate her from the God of salvation.
2. It meant she renounced the sin of idolatry and the ungodly religious systems she grew up with.
  - a. She had to admit her countrymen were wrong.
  - b. Harder yet, she had to admit her family was wrong.
  - c. She had to turn from all of it: admitting her gods, her religion was false and the only true God was Jehovah!
3. What was the base of her faith? **Vs. 10-11** – *“WE HEARD”* – **Rom. 10:17** – *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”*
  - a. This woman was convinced of Who God was because of what she heard! **Heb. 11:6** – *“Without FAITH it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarded of them that diligently seek Him.”*
  - b. She was convinced of impending doom because of what she heard!  
**Know what? That’s how I got saved!**

- EVERYONE in Jericho had the same OPPORTUNITY
- EVERY PERSON had the same PRIVILEGE
- EVERY INDIVIDUAL was given the same MESSAGE
- They ALL had the same tremendous OPPORTUNITY to say, “I know that Jehovah is God!”

IF EVERYONE in Jericho had said in unison “We know that Jehovah is God,” —What would God have done to Jericho? Jericho could very well have remained standing, they could very well have co-existed in the land with God’s people because they would have been agreed in that final element that there is only one God and He is Jehovah.

**Let’s compare Rahab and the other inhabitants of Jericho.**

<b>RAHAB</b>	<b>Citizens of JERICHO</b>
Rahab heard and was convinced that Jehovah was God.	Citizens heard, but remained unconvinced that Jehovah was God.
Rahab feared and repented	Citizens feared, but repented not.
Rahab saw Israel as her only hope of salvation.	Citizens saw Israel as a threat & a conqueror.
Rahab saw Israel’s as God’s will.	Citizens saw Israel as an enemy out to destroy them.
Rahab saw Israel as God’s tool and put her soul and its fate in the care of their God.	Unfortunately, they decided to resist God’s instrument, trust in their ability & gods.

The entire city could have been saved—just as every individual in Noah’s day could have been saved—**ONLY IF they had chosen to be saved!** The city of Sodom—everyone could have been spared, if only 10 souls believed in response to Abraham’s prayers. I wonder how many God would have required to repent and be convinced as Rahab in Jericho for God to have spared that city?!

**Can you see why God had to send those two spies?** Because of the soul of that one woman, a harlot—one who the world would not think was worth saving, not worth the time, not worth an effort, **BUT WHO GOD** considered precious and worthy of the effort. God told Joshua *“within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan”* (1:11). Two men were sent to spy-out the land—but behind it all, I am firmly convinced God wanted to visit that woman, Rahab, and to bring her salvation.

**III. RAHAB WAS CONCERNED**

When a person realises the blessedness of their salvation and understands they have been spared from judgement, they naturally get concerned for others!

**A. She had a CONCERNED For Her Family >> vs. 12-13**

1. Here was a saved woman that appreciated God’s grace.
2. Here was a woman who was grateful that God was going to deliver her.
3. Here was a woman who was burdened—**she desired to see her family saved!**
4. **ALL** she had was a promise! The word of **two** entirely strange & foreign men.
5. She knew she didn’t have to fear about her safety, **BUT** “What about my Daddy? My brothers, my sisters and their children? What about their safety?”

**Wouldn’t it be good that every person who got saved had that kind of burden for their family?**

My immediate family professes to be saved and my Mom and Dad are believed to be in heaven, but if that were not so, I’d have a burden for them. If my relations were not assured of eternal life, assured that they’d be delivered when the fires of judgement and the walls of this world come crumbling & tumbling down around us, I’d want to think that I made every effort to see that my family were saved! How about you?

### **For years I prayed for my brother, Charlie...**

Charlie was a professed agnostic. Being in Ireland, I had not seen him for over 8 yrs. On a furlough our family drove from the East Coast of the US to the West for a family reunion in California. After we all had been together for about 2 hrs. on a Tuesday, Charlie expressed a desired to talk with me longer on Thursday about spiritual things. BUT unfortunately, it was not to be so, as he had a massive heart failure and died at 5 a.m. that very morning. I wish it weren't so, but of what I do know, Charlie is in hell now, BUT not for the lack of me trying to see otherwise!

#### **B. The spies gave *CONDITIONS* to Rehab; yet, these provisions were there for all – Vs. 14-20.**

1. They said to her, "If you don't report our mission we will protect you and your family or forfeit our own lives."
2. They guaranteed a place of protection, the same as assigned to Rahab, to her loved ones, if they would also come – they'd be saved also!
3. The burden was on her. "YES! We'll spare them, BUT, if they are to be spared, they'll have to be in the same position, behind the same door, in the same house as you are."

#### **C. She Then Had To Go to Work and Convince Others**

*She Got Busy in a Hurry! She Didn't Know How much Time She Had!*

#### **How much time do you think you have to win your relatives?**

**She went to see her Mummy & Daddy, her brothers & sisters.** "Mom & Dad, I love you and you my find it hard to believe this, but those folks out yonder are worshipping the ONLY true God. He is a God that loves us. He is a pure, merciful & gracious God. —He's not like the cruel, perverted and vulgar gods that we serve here. He is a holy God and will judge us, but He is also compassionate and wants to save everybody, if only we will worship Him and Him alone. Won't you come with me? God's going to judge this city, but only those in my house, which will be marked with a scarlet cord tied in the window—it alone will be spared. Will you please come?"

**Mommy & Daddy replied,** "We believe you daughter dear! We can see a change in you. We don't understand everything your saying, but we do understand you're different. You don't talk the same, you don't act the same, you don't look like a harlot, and you surely don't talk like a harlot."

**Daddy,** I'm not a harlot, that's what I used to be. **But not now!** Won't you come with me?

**Rahab then went down the street to her brother's home!** "You know how I've lived and the mess I have made of my life, but God has saved me. God loves you and wants to save you, if you'll come with me!"

The brother got convinced, the sister-in-law got convinced, and nephews and nieces got convinced. She didn't worry that she didn't know enough Bible, or if it wasn't the designated church time to go on visitation, or if it were a convenient time to call on her relatives. She didn't quit after an hour. She didn't care what day it was. **She kept on, and one, she kept busy because she didn't know how much time she had.**

She had a burden! She knew God would provide Salvation for WHOSOEVER WILL—**But she had a burden and she had to tell them and it must be YOU who will have To Go Tell Them!** You'll have to convince them to come, you will have to convince them of what God says, and if you do, He says, "I'll save them too!"

#### IV. RAHAB CONFESSED

##### A. NOTE that she Confessed VERBALLY

1. >> Vs. 9 – *“I Know”* – That God has given you the land!
2. >> Vs. 11 – *“I Know”* – The JEHOVAH your God is God!

##### B. The VERACITY or truthfulness of her confession is revealed by Her Works - i.e. she demonstrated her faith by:

1. Protecting, hiding, helping the spies to escape – Vs. 6, 14-17
2. Saved by faith. Heb. 11:31 – *“By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.”*
3. Rahab proved her faith by her works! James 2:25-26 – *“Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26] For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*

##### C. VISUALLY, people knew she was saved – LOOK at the scarlet cord hanging from the window – Vs. 18-21

1. Think of the risk she took in sharing the word!
  - a. Everyone in town could see this cord.  
Anyone who passed in and out the gate could see it hanging there.
  - b. The Cord wasn't hung in the closet, NOR was it hid from public view, but she advertised it!
2. Little doubt the sign of the SCARLET cord chosen by the spies came from what was taught to them by their forefathers 40 yrs. prior when they left Egypt.
  - a. In the Passover the doorposts were sprinkled with blood, to mark the houses, which were not to be visited by the destroying angel.
  - b. Scarlet was symbolic of the shedding of innocent blood for the guilty.
  - c. In the Passover, BY FAITH, they could look to the future when the Christ, the Son of God, would give His life and shed His blood for sinners.
3. The sign of our deliverance and rescue from the judgement of this world is also found in the colour scarlet – **THE BLOOD OF CHRIST!**
  - a. 1 Thess. 1:10 – *“We are to wait for ... Jesus, which will deliver us from the wrath to come.”*
  - b. 1 Thess. 5:9 – *“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

##### D. She Was VINDICATED By Her Confession >> READ Joshua 6:22-23

#### V. RAHAB – CONFIRMED AS A FOLLOWER OF ISRAEL'S GOD – JOSH. 6:25

##### A. God Confirmed her as One Of God's Family – As are the Gentiles GRAFTED into the Olive Tree in Rom. 11; Rahab pictures this grafting.

##### B. Her Greatest Confirmation is found in >> Matt. 1:5-6

1. Rahab (Rehab) married a Jewish fellow named Salmon and they had a son – Boaz (1 Chron. 2:11).
2. Salmon – *Could he be one of the spies who visited her house?* You see we find 1 Chron. 2:50-51 that Caleb had a son named Salma (Salmon)

3. Salmon & Rahab had Boaz, their son – he married Ruth and they had Obed who was the father of Jesse the father of David.
4. In case you didn't know, **Matt. 1:1-17** – lists for us the genealogy of Jesus Christ is the Son of David that I quote here.

Rahab is a demonstration of the power of God to transform lives. Let us rejoice in learning from this text how the Lord takes sinners who will place their faith in Him and completely changes them by His power. The historical *facts* presented to us in this passage should give everyone tremendous hope. If you are saved you should rejoice in the great change Jesus has made in your life. If you are not saved, realise what the Lord did for Rahab, and consider coming to Jesus Christ that you might be saved and changed by His power.

**LESSON: It doesn't matter how sinful you are! God can and will transform you into a saint and use you in a way you'd never believe. NOW THAT IS A GREAT GOD!**

Rahab was saved by faith, **NOT** on the basis of her character or merits, nor family or connections, **NOR** by her diligence in following her religion or anyone's religion. No one was or ever will be saved by the works of religion.

Salvation is the work of God by our faith in what God has done – it is the **ONLY** way God has ever saved people >> **Eph. 2:8-9** – *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

Have you trusted in God's word that salvation only comes through faith in Jesus Christ's shed blood, as Rahab trusted God through the word of the spies?

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