

“The Courageous Faith of Rahab”

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Rahab declares her faith in the Lord God to the two spies -- Joshua 2:9-11 -- Used under license -- FreeBibleImages.org

"I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us ... for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth below." (Joshua 2:9-11 excerpts)

"By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace." (Hebrews 11:31)

This lesson explains how Rahab of Jericho demonstrated courageous faith in the Lord God. Despite the idolatrous and sinful culture around her, she welcomed the two Israelite spies that Joshua sent, expressed her faith in the Lord to them, and followed their instructions resulting in her deliverance and the deliverance of her family from the destruction of Jericho.

Read. Please read the Bible story of Rahab, the two spies, Rahab's faith, and the deliverance of Rahab and her family in Joshua 2:1-21 and Joshua 6:15-25.

Consider. In what ways did Rahab demonstrate her courageous faith in the Lord by her actions and words?

The scripture quotations in this lesson are taken from the New American Standard Bible (NASB 1995 version) unless noted otherwise (Ref. 1).

1. Rahab's courageous faith in the Lord

Rahab courageously chose to put her faith in the Lord God despite the "idol trusting" culture in which she lived

Rahab's choice to put her faith in the Lord resulted in her being protected and rescued through the coming destruction that the Lord was bringing upon sinful Jericho. Recall that God had instructed Moses and the Israelites to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan because of their sin (Exodus 23:22-24, 27; Deuteronomy 7:1-4, 18:9-13). The inhabitants of Jericho all had heard about the Lord's deliverance of the Israelites through the Red Sea about 40 years prior (Joshua 2:10, Exodus 14:21-22, Joshua 5:6). However, only Rahab turned to faith in the Lord God. Rahab courageously chose to put her faith in the Lord despite being surrounded by the culture of sin and "idol trusting" in which she lived.

Rahab not only turned to faith in the true God, but also put her faith into action. Rahab welcomed in peace the two spies that Joshua had sent (Joshua 2:1, Hebrews 11:31). She, at risk to herself, also hid the two spies from the

king's men (Joshua 2:2-7). James, the writer of the epistle that bears his name, commended Rahab for advising the two men to hide in the "hill country" for three days to avoid capture instead of attempting to cross the Jordan and return to Joshua immediately (Joshua 2:16, Joshua 2:22-24, James 2:25-26).

As a result of hearing about how the Lord "dried up the water" of the Red Sea before the Israelites, the hearts of Jericho's inhabitants "melted," and "no courage remained in any man" (Joshua 2:11). Even though the scriptures say "no courage remained in any man" [literal *male individual*] in Jericho, Rahab was a woman of courage, and she turned to the Lord in faith (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance - Ref. 2). Rahab said to the two Israelite spies, "I know that the Lord has given you the land" (Joshua 2:9), and, "the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath" (Joshua 2:11).

Rahab's faith also was commendable in her conversation with the two Israelite spies because she negotiated protection and deliverance not only for herself but also for her family. Rahab requested, "spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death" (Joshua 2:13). On the day of Jericho's destruction, Joshua spared the lives of Rahab's entire family including her father and mother, her brothers and sisters, and all who belonged to them (Joshua 6:22-25).

Rahab faithfully accepted and executed the three conditions set by the two spies:

- a. Condition 1 - That she tie "this cord of scarlet thread" in the window through which she had let them down (Joshua 2:15, 2:18, 2:21). For more information about the literal and symbolic meaning of indelible scarlet dye, check the lesson, "Come Now, Let Us Reason Together (Isaiah 1:18)" (Ref. 3).
- b. Condition 2 - That she would gather to herself into her house her father and mother and her brothers and her sisters and all her father's household (Joshua 2:12-13, 2:18, 6:22-23).

c. Condition 3 - That she would not tell [*inform*] this business of the two spies (Joshua 2:14, 2:20, Brown-Driver-Briggs Ref. 4).

2. The rest of the Rahab Bible story

a. *Rahab is in the ancestral lineage of Christ*

The rest of the Bible story about Rahab has a very good outcome for Rahab. After Rahab's deliverance from Jericho, the Bible tells us that Rahab, a Gentile believer in the Lord God, "lived in the midst of Israel" (Joshua 6:25). The Bible does not mention Rahab's marriage to Salmon of the tribe of Judah. However, the Bible does say that Salmon and Rahab became the parents of Boaz (Matthew 1:5, Ruth 2:1). Subsequently, Rahab became the great-great-grandmother of king David (Ruth 4:21-22, Matthew 1:3-6). The Bible refers to our Savior, Jesus Christ, both as the Son of God (Luke 1:34-35) and as the son of David (Matthew 1:1). Since Rahab is in the ancestral lineage of king David, she also is in the ancestral lineage of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

b. *Rahab is in the faith "Hall of Fame" (Hebrews 11)*

"By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace" (Hebrews 11:31).

In Hebrews chapter 11, the author includes Rahab in the honorable list of people who exemplified great faith. Rahab's inclusion in Hebrews 11 is exceptional in that she is only one of two women mentioned by name in this chapter along with the patriarchs, judges, and prophets that are included. Hebrews 11:11 describes Sarah.

In the Greek in Hebrews 11:31, there is an interesting contrast in the words translated as "faith" and "disobedient."

(1). *"By faith Rahab"*

The Greek word translated as "faith" in Hebrews 11:31 is *pistis* (pronounced *pis'-tis*). We think of faith as *believing in, trusting in, having confidence in* (Strong's Concordance - Ref. 5). However, digging deeper,

we see that the root meaning of faith is *to be persuaded* (HELPS Word-studies - Ref. 5). Rahab was *persuaded* that the Lord was the true God (Joshua 2:11), and by courageously trusting in him instead of the local idols she and her family were delivered through the destruction of Jericho. See Hebrews 11:6, "And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

(2). "Those who were disobedient"

And now, the surprise. The Greek word for "disobedient" in Hebrews 11:31 is *apeitheó* [pronounced *ap-i-theh'-o*] and means *refuse to be persuaded* (HELPS Word-studies - Ref. 6). Rahab had *faith* (she was *persuaded* that the Lord "He is God" - Joshua 2:11), and she was rescued from the destruction of Jericho. Other than Rahab's family, the other residents of Jericho *refused to be persuaded* about (believe in) God, and they perished (Hebrews 11:31).

Apply. Are you persuaded that "God is" and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him? (Hebrews 11:6). Turn away from trusting any idols in your life (religious idols or secular idols such as money). Put your faith and trust completely in the Lord God and his Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah (Exodus 20:3, Matthew 6:24).

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Related Lessons

"Come Now, Let Us Reason Together (Isaiah 1:18)"

This lesson explains the meaning of "scarlet." Rahab tied a cord of scarlet thread in the window (Joshua 2:18).

"Faith Comes from Hearing" - Romans 10:17

References

1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/New-American-Standard-Bible-NASB1995/>
2. <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/376.htm>
3. <https://www.scriptureway.com/home/come-now-let-us-reason-together-isaiah-118>
4. <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5046.htm>
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