

Joshua 2:1-24 (1)

Introduction

Joshua 2 is a great spy story. Two men from Israel with concealed identities infiltrate the city of Jericho but their cover is blown. A search party is deployed to capture them but they are hidden and helped to escape by an inhabitant who turned traitor to her own people. The spies discovered that the people of Canaan were afraid. This encouraged Israel to march forward to conquer.

Summary

In Joshua 2:1-24, we see God's saving acts both compel and strengthen the faith of his people and melt the hearts of their enemies.

1. Operating Faith vv. 1-7

From east of the Jordan, Joshua launched a covert reconnaissance mission into Canaan to prepare for the coming invasion (**Josh 2:1**). At Jericho, the two spies went to Rahab's house which provided good cover for their surveillance operation. Something went wrong, however, and their cover was blown. The king of Jericho immediately dispatched a search party to look for these Israelite spies (**Josh 2:2-3**). Having already hidden the spies (**Josh 2:4a; 6**), Rahab diverted the king's men out of the city toward the fords of the Jordan River (**Josh 2:7a**). By so doing she clearly evidences a new commitment and a radical shift in loyalty (**Heb 11:31**). With regard to her diversionary tactic, it is perhaps best to recognize Rahab's faith and thank God for it rather than trying to solve all the detailed ethical questions.

Verses 1-7, never mention the Lord explicitly but His providential presence is unmistakable. God moves behind the scenes from Shittim to Jericho to the rooftop. Yet the fact that God was providentially controlling all of these events did not mean that the spies would be free from difficulties or immune to trying and stressful circumstances. They could look back, however, and testify to God's goodness to them every step of the way.

Is not this the way we, as believers, so often experience life too?

As the men of Jericho left the city in pursuit of the spies, the gate of the city closed for the night (**Josh 2:7**).

2. Confessed Faith vv. 8-14

Before the men lay down, Rahab went back to the rooftop to speak with them (**2:8**). It is now we learn suddenly that Rahab has quite a grasp of Israel's theology (**2:9-11**). **First**, she knows that the God of Israel; He is the LORD (**Josh 2:11**). **Secondly**, Rahab knows that 'the fear of you has fallen upon us and all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you' (**Josh 2:9b**).

Rahab summarized all that the Lord had done for the Israelites: from the Exodus to the defeat of the Amorite kings (**2:10**). When the inhabitants of Jericho heard about these mighty saving acts of God for Israel, they lost all courage to fight (**Josh 2:11**). For Rahab, however, the effects of hearing about God's power went one step further. She now recognized that the Lord is the only God (**Josh 2:11b**)

After confessing faith in the one true God, Rahab wanted some assurance from these men that her loyalty to them will be repaid by rescuing her and her family when the invasion comes (**Josh 2:12-13**). The spies will save Rahab and her family if she does not reveal the reason they came to Jericho (**Josh 2:14**).

Hebrews 11 recognizes Rahab's kindness to the spies as an evidence of faith. Her recognition of the Lord alone as God and her desire to be saved alive among his people clearly demonstrated a willingness to turn from her old life to the one true God. Rahab came to saving faith.

Every Christian should know and believe the core biblical truths found in Rahab's statements (**Heb. 9:27; Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Rom. 10:9-10**).

Have you ever confessed Christ as Lord and Savior?

If not, it is time for you to turn, like Rahab. and trust in him?

Rahab's confession is also a confirmation of God's covenant with Abraham.

A key part of that covenant was the promise of land (**Gen. 15:18-21**) but another crucial component was the guarantee that through Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed (**Gen. 12:1-3**).

That promise finds its fulfillment in Christ who brings the Gentiles to faith.

In Rahab's conversion, we find a kind of first-fruits of that fulfillment.

You and I are a part of the fuller harvest! God brought a Gentile woman (a prostitute) into his kingdom. Not only did she become a part of Israel, she was an ancestor' of David and of David's great son, Jesus (**Ruth 4:18-22; Matt 1:1-6**).

In response to her request and fidelity to them, the spies swore to 'deal kindly and faithfully' with Rahab (**Josh 2:14**).

The words 'kindly' and 'faithfully' translate two of the most important theological terms in the Old Testament.

Loyalty is a covenant word, a word that means 'merciful faithfulness.'

Truth is the revelation God's character and purposes.

These terms placed together occurs several times in the OT, and comes over into the NT as the phrase 'grace and truth' (**John 1:14; 17**).

Joshua's secret agents promised to Rahab what all of God's people ultimately find in the Lord Jesus. All the promises of God find their "yes" in Christ (**2 Cor. 1:20**).

In him, we have a Saviour who deals kindly and faithfully with us.