

220629-4 Jos 2, Rahab Received the Two Spies–CThurman

In the previous chapter the LORD commanded Joshua to go into Canaan (vss.1-9). Then Joshua commanded the officers or overseers to have the host of Israel to prepare for crossing the Jordan River in three days. Then Joshua reminded Reuben, Gad and the ½ tribe of Manasseh of the agreement they had made with Moses in order for them to have the land of Gilead which is on the eastern side of Jordan. It seems to me that immediately after the LORD had commanded Joshua to go up into Canaan that he must have sent forth two men to view the land, particularly gather intelligence of the city of Jericho. That account is now given in this second chapter.

- Joshua sends spies to Jericho, which make contact with Rahab. (vss.1-7)
- Rahab's faith in God. (vss. 8-11)
- Rahab and the spies make a covenant. (vss.12-21) And,
- The spies return to report to Joshua their findings. (vss.22-24)

Chapter 2

Joshua sends spies to Jericho, which make contact with Rahab. (vss.1-7)

1 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly,
craftily

to spy, Piel (intensive act.) part. of the verb רָגַל, rah, gal, tss. *to spy*,
to spy out, *to view*, *to search*.

secretly, שְׁחָרַץ, a masc. noun tss. *secretly*, *craftsman*, *artificer*.

The spies were young men.

Jos.6.23 And the young men that were spies went in ...

Shittim is also called Abelshittim (Meadows of Shittim). At this time Abelshittim is the northermost reach of the camp of Israel, now in the plains of Moab. The southernmost part where Israel is encamped is at the city of Bethjesimoth. (cf. Nu.33.49)

Israel's camp was from Bethjesimoth, located on the N.E. corner of the Dead Sea to Abelshittim, which would have been the camp's northernmost position.

Nu.25.1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. (24,000 died in the plague which the LORD sent upon the nation.)

So, from Shittim, the northernmost part of the camp, Joshua sent two spies over to Jericho.

saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.

harlot, lit. a woman, an harlot, אִשָּׁה זֹנָה; *harlot* Qal part. Poel of the verb זָנָה, tss. *harlot, whore, whorish, to commit fornication, to play the harlot, to play the whore, to fall to whoredom.*

view, the verb רָאָה, to see.

With the mention of the name of Rahab Israel is but five generations from David: Salmon marries Rahab and fathers Boaz. Boaz marries Ruth and fathers Obed. Obed fathers Jesse, and Jesse fathers David.

Mt.1.5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias ...

How could these spies have known to come to Rahab? (cf. Lk.7.36-50, *a woman in the city, which was a sinner*) Of all the people of the city, why her? No matter what we think, whether it is as some say, that the spies actually met with Rahab at some place outside the city first and then came to her house later; or, that they only just now met her here, we understand God's electing grace at work. We would ask, why her? Or, why her house? And we could ask, why me and why you? Why anyone? God would have

been just to have passed by the entire lot of the human race. It is wholly of the grace of God that *any* are saved. Any! That the spies came to Rahab was nothing less than the outworking of God's eternal purpose to save her and her house.

'But a Divine influence directed them in the choice of that lodging-place.' *J-F-B Bible Commentary*, vol.1, Joshua, p.4

Everything, every detail good and evil conspired to work to her salvation. There was no *happenstance* involved: the time she lived, who she was, what she did, the city she lived in, who her family was; the LORD used everything to bring her and her family to a place where they would be saved. There were no accidents.

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,

In this day the cities were for the most part rule by city-kings, מְלֶכֶךְ, or meleks.

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.

[Reason:]

4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them,

and hid them, Qal fut. of the verb תָּצַח, tzah-phan, tss. *to hide* (Ex.2.2, 3, of Moses' mother hiding her son), *to esteem, to lay up, to privily set, to lurk privily*. Verse 6 is a different Hebrew word.

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.

Yes, Rahab deceived the men which the king sent to her. She is acting by faith according to the knowledge that she has in the God of Israel. Is there sin in what she did? There's no question that she is a sinner. Did she have an imperfect faith. Certainly. The main point here, and that which the Scriptures attest to is her faith in God.

He.11.31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Ja.2.25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? (Her faith showed through her actions that she was a child of God.)

Rahab behaved wisely so as to protect her visitors. I would compare this to King David, when he changed his behavior before king Achish so that Achish thought that David was nothing more than a mad man.

1Sa 21:13 And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

Our Lord Jesus also acted wisely so that He didn't reveal to His own family His real intentions.

*Jn.7.8 Go ye (His brothers in the flesh) up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.
9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.
10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.*

This much we know, Rahab's actions were right before God and good for His elect people.

**6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid
concealed**

and hid them, Qal fut. of the verb תָּמַן, tah-man tss. to hide, to lay privily; and so to conceal.

them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

It was the time of harvest. (cf. Jos.3.15) The LORD working in the most seemingly minute details to prosper both the work of the spies, the nation of Israel, and the salvation of Rahab and her family.

7 *And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords:*
passages

fords, fem. noun מַעְבְּרֹתַיִם, mag-bah-rah, tss. ford (3), passage (5).

and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

Rahab's faith in God (vss. 8-11)

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.*

terror, אִי־מָה, eh-mah, a fem noun tss. an horror [of great darkness], a fear, terror, dread, and terrible.

do faint, Niphal (simple pass.) pret. of the verb מָגַע, mug, tss. to faint (Jos.2.9, 24), to consume, to dissolve, to be fainthearted, to be soft.

Only a few weeks ago the LORD commanded Israel to descend into the plains of Moab. Then He put the fear and dread of Israel upon the nations.

Due.2.24 ¶ Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.

25 This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.

And what stirred great fear and dread in the nations moved Rahab forward in faith. What repulsed the unbelieving (the gospel), drew Rahab. Whether we consider the parables of the sower of the seed; some fell by the wayside, some fell on stony ground, some fell among thorns, and some fell on good ground. (cf. Mk.4.3-9)

2Co.4.3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

In other words the gospel is opened to them that are *found*.

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt;

Rahab's faith is better than some that profess faith in Christ today. She received by faith the report that God had divided the Red Sea for Israel to cross over on dry land. Christians today hardly believe that God created the heavens and the earth in 6 literal days, that there was a world-wide flood that destroyed all but eight souls with water in the days of Noah, and that God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage and brought them through the midst of a divided Red Sea so that they might cross on dry ground.

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 is noteworthy, too, that the same reports which work faith and conversion in the harlot, cause only terror and astonishment amongst her countrymen.' *Barnes' Notes, Exodus to Esther*, p.355

he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath – In other words she believed that God sovereign and does whatsoever He pleases to do.

Da 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Rahab confessed faith in the God of Israel! She knew that Israel's God was the only God and that He is God in heaven and earth.

Rahab and the spies make a covenant. (vss.12-21)

12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD,

swear, of the verb שָׁבַע, shah-vag, tss. to swear (Jos.2.12, 17, 20), to charge, to charge with an oath, to adjure.

since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness

done

do

shew, of the verb שָׁעַר, [g]ah-sah, tss. to do (Jos.2.10), to shew (Jos.2.12), to deal (Jos.2.14).

unto my father's house, and give me a true token:
right, faithful sign

true, אֱמֶת, e-meth, a fem. noun tss. truth, true (Jos.2.12), truly (Jos.2.14), right, faithful, etc.

token, אֵימָה, ohth, a common noun tss. a sign, a mark, a token, ensign.

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.

[perhaps meaning their children & servants]

Rahab desired to see her family saved, her father, mother, brothers and sisters, from the inevitable destruction that was coming. (Obviously she had no husband or children as yet; she marries after being received into the nation of Israel. [cf. Mt.1.5])

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.

do pitifully, mercifully right

kindly, **רַחֲמִים**, *ch*-sed, a masc. noun tss. *mercy, favor, pity, lovingkindness, kindly.*

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window:

by a cord, **לְבַבֵּל**, *che*-vel, a common noun tss. *a region* (Deu.3.4), *a country* (Deu.3.14), *a lot* (Deu.32.9), *a cord* (Ez.27.24), *a portion* (Jos.17.5), *a coast* (Jos.19.29), *a company* (1Sa.10.5), *a line* (Am.7.17), *tackling* (Is.66.7), etc.

This *cord*, **לְבַבֵּל**, *che*-vel, is also called a *line*, **תֵּיקָוָה**, *tiq*-vah (vss. 18, 21), and scarlet thread, **שָׁנִי**, *shah*-nee, (v.18).

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.

This mountain probably refers to a particular mountain in the background, to the west of the city of Jericho. (Rising about 1,000 ft.) This would be in the opposite direction that the pursuers would expect. Doubtless they would have expected the spies to set out directly to camp, and so they

headed (v.7) ... *the way to Jordan unto the fords*. But from this vantage point the spies might have been more apt to see when the pursuers returned to Jericho.

17 And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath
exempted, free

blameless, the adj. נָקִי, nah-kee, tss. *clear, blameless* (Jos.2.17), *quit* (Jos.2.20), *innocent, guiltless* (Jos.2.19), *free, exempted*.

oath, שְׁבוּעָה, sh^e-voo-[g]ah, a fem. noun, tss. *oath* (Jos.2.17, 20), *sworn, a curse.*,

which thou hast made us swear.

18 Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line
hope

thou shalt bind, Qal fut. of the verb קָשַׁר, qah-shar, tss. *to bind* (Jos. 2.18, 21), *to work, to conspire, to be strong*.

line, תֵּקוּוּהָ, tiq-vah, a fem. noun tss. *line* (Jos.2.18, 21), *hope* (Ru.1.12) *the thing I long for* (Job 6.8), *expectation* (Ps.9.18).

of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by:

scarlet thread, שָׁנִי, shah-nee, a masc. noun tss. *scarlet* (Jos.2.21), *scarlet thread* (Jos.2.18), *crimson* (Jer.4.30).

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:*
free, exempted

and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.

Our life for yours (v.14) – This speaks of substitution; their lives put in the place of the lives of Rahab and her family should the oath on the part of the spies by broken. Like the blood that was applied to the door posts and lintel of every house that hoped in God’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage so this scarlet thread was hanged out the window on the side of the city wall. In both instances they must remain in the house.

Ex 12:22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

Consider these three things, whether it is deliverance from Egyptian bondage or being saved from the coming destruction of Jericho:

First, all they need do is nothing and they die. They are condemned already.

Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Sinners are condemned already. To do nothing is to continue in unbelief and condemnation for sins against God.

Second, in both Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and the deliverance of Rahab’s father’s house it assumes they entered through the Door.

Ex.12.22 ... none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning ...

Jos.2.19 ... whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house ...

That Door is Jesus Christ.

Joh 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

And third, there is the idea that for *continuance* they will live out their lives according to the will of God.

Joh 10:10 ... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

In both cases whether it is the blood applied or the scarlet thread tied, the punishment for sin is removed from the child of God. And an evidence of a real salvation is a changed life; repentance (a change of mind from our former, Christless manner of life) and faith in God. And genuine saving faith acts in obedience to the will of God.

Ac 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle Peter states in both negative and positive terms the Christian's salvation experience:

1Pe 4:2 That he ¹. no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but ². to the will of God.

20 And if thou utter this our *business*, then we will be *quit*
word, matter exempted, free

business, of the masc. noun דַּבָּר, dah-vahr, tss. *speech, word, manner, thing, errand, business, case, sentence*, etc.

of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

For Rahab and her family to disclose what it is that the spies were doing would be an indication, not of faith, but of unbelief. Unbelief would be like

Judas Iscariot traitorous act, a betrayal and evidence of hatred for Christ and His elect. If such were the case the spies would be exempted from the oath.

We see that Rahab and her family, by this act of faith have forsaken all to follow Christ. This is what true believers do.

Mt 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

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

crimson hope

The spies return to report to Joshua their findings. (vss.22-24)

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

hath delivered, נָתַן, a verb, to give.

all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

do faint, מָוָה, mug, tss. to faint, dissolve, melt, became fainthearted, were consumed.