

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Hebrews Message 33*

*September 2, 2018*



Rahab and the Two Spies by James Tissot

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# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Thirty-Four

FAITH CHAMPIONS III

September 2, 2018

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THE FAITH OF JOSHUA AND RAHAB

Hebrews 11:30–31

*<sup>30</sup> By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. <sup>31</sup> By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace (KJV).*

General Joshua was one of only two people left from the first generation of Israelis that made it through to the Promise Land at the end of the Exodus. The Lord gave him explicit instructions and a promise that it was He who was giving them the power to acquire of the land of Canaan. Joshua by faith accepted the command and promises of the Lord and carried them out.

Joshua 1:2–9

*<sup>2</sup>Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. <sup>3</sup>Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. <sup>4</sup>From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border. <sup>5</sup>There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup>Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them. <sup>7</sup>Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest. <sup>8</sup>This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. <sup>9</sup>Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest (ASV, 1901).*

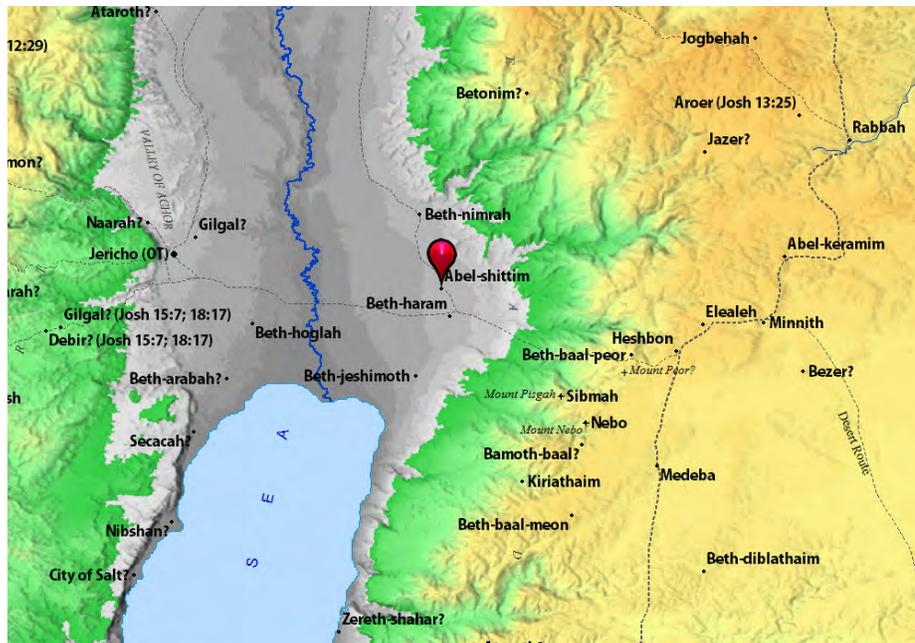
This passage demonstrates six principles that our Lord is making clear.

1. He gave the whole land of Canaan to the Israelis.
2. Joshua was chosen to be the instrument that God would use to bring the people into the Land.
3. This was a fulfillment of a prophecy that God made first to Abraham (Genesis 12:7).

4. The Whole council of God must be studied (Acts 20:27).
5. Bible study included a daily meditation on the Word of God.
6. The results are an easier path through life and Godly success in life.

#### GOD MIRACULOUSLY MAKES THE PATH FOR JOSHUA'S SUCCESS

The children of Israel numbered about two million at Kadesh Barnea then moved to Shittim. From there they needed to cross the Jordan river in order to enter the promise land.



Maps Created using Biblemapper from [https://bibleatlas.org/full/valley\\_of\\_shittim.htm](https://bibleatlas.org/full/valley_of_shittim.htm)

General Joshua gives the first command to his officers.

Joshua 1:10–11

*<sup>10</sup>Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, <sup>11</sup>Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which Jehovah your God giveth you to possess it (ASV, 1901).*

The officers of the army were to instruct all the people to prepare the entire nation that they would soon pass over the Jordan river and possess the Land. There were at least 600,000 men available to staff the army (Exodus 12:37–38) but only 40,000 would be assigned to this battle (Joshua 4:13). The victuals spoken of in these verses consists of everything equipping them for journeying. This was arms for war, with which they were supplied from the spoils of their enemies, the Egyptians at the Red sea, Amalek at Rephidim, and the Amorites and Midianites lately smitten by them. When it was time for the army to invade Canaan, the soldiers would leave their families and livestock safely on the east side of the Jordan (Joshua 1:14).

## Joshua Send out Spies to Jericho

### Joshua 2:1

*And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men as spies secretly, saying, Go, view the land, and Jericho. And they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lay there (ASV,1901).*

Joshua chooses two spies to enter Jericho, in order to locate a safe house and conduct surveillance of the intended armed conflict and their adversaries. They were not timid as the spies in the times of Moses, to see what sort of land it was, and what sort of people lived there. They were to observe the trails leading to Jericho, which would be the first city they would conquer. The two spies left Shittim for a very dangerous mission. They were, seven miles east of the Jordan, and probably traveled north, swimming across the flooded river (Joshua 3:15) at shallow locations. Turning south they approached Jericho from the west side and soon were moving along its streets, mingling with the people. They were trusting in God to direct them as they came to the house of Rahab the harlot and set up their headquarters from which to conduct strategic operations.

Rahab was a sinful woman. Some have tried from the time of Josephus on (first century AD) to claim that she was only an innkeeper softening her nature due to her position in the Messianic line. Our text here in Hebrews chapter eleven and James 2:25 as well make it quite clear that she was an immoral woman. She eventually married Salmon of the tribe of Judah and was the mother of Boaz. She was the grandmother of Jesse and the great grandmother of king David who all are in the Messianic line to our Lord Jesus the Messiah (Matthew 1:5–6). So, it is quite clear given her position in the Messianic line that she was chosen by God to aid the spies and pave the way for the Israeli invasion of the promise Land. She hid them on her roof.

### Rahab's Faith

#### Joshua 2:8–21

*<sup>8</sup>And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; <sup>9</sup>and she said unto the men, I know that Jehovah hath given you the land, and that the fear of you is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. <sup>10</sup>For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, unto Sihon and to Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. <sup>11</sup>And as soon as we had heard it, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you: for Jehovah your God, he is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath. <sup>12</sup>Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by Jehovah, since I have dealt kindly with you, that ye also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a true token; <sup>13</sup>and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and will deliver our lives from death. <sup>14</sup>And the men said unto her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business; and it shall be, when Jehovah giveth us the land, that*

*we will deal kindly and truly with thee, <sup>15</sup>Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the side of the wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. <sup>16</sup>And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers light upon you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. <sup>17</sup>And the men said unto her, We will be guiltless of this thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. <sup>18</sup>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 gather unto thee into the house thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household. <sup>19</sup>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 shall be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. <sup>20</sup>But if thou utter this our business, then we shall be guiltless of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. <sup>21</sup>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 (ASV, 1901).*

She lets the spies stay in her home hiding them up on the roof away from the king's messengers. She explains that *by faith* she accepted the stories of their Exodus. She says that in Canaan there is a general fear and dread of Israel as a result of the miraculous events of the Exodus including the drying up of the Red Sea for them to pass over it on a dry sea bed. She makes one request for helping them. That is, to save her and her father's house, when the city should be taken, and to have a sure sign of it given to her. That sign is the scarlet line. The spies solemnly promised, and gave her a sign of it, with a charge not to reveal their presence and plan to any. She then let them down by a cord through the window of her house, they made their escape to a mountain, where they stayed for three days, and then returned to Joshua, and made their report.

### God Stops the Flow of the Jordan

#### Joshua 3:7–13

*<sup>7</sup>And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. <sup>8</sup>And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, ye shall stand still in the Jordan. <sup>9</sup>And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of Jehovah your God. <sup>10</sup>And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Hivite, and the Perizzite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Jebusite. <sup>11</sup>Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into the Jordan. <sup>12</sup>Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, for every tribe a man. <sup>13</sup>And it shall come to pass, when the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of Jehovah, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan*

*shall be cut off, even the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand in one heap (ASV, 1901).*

So, God stopped the flow of the Jordan and they passed over it to the other side. After they got over on the west side on dry ground the river assumed its natural flow and so Joshua was a man admired and followed all the days of his life (Joshua 4:14).

### God Brings the Walls of Jericho Down

Joshua 6:1–7, 16–17

*Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. <sup>2</sup>And Jehovah said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. <sup>3</sup>And ye shall compass the city, all the men of war, going about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. <sup>4</sup>And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. <sup>5</sup>And it shall be, that, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall go up every man straight before him. <sup>6</sup>And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Jehovah. <sup>7</sup>And they said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let the armed men pass on before the ark of Jehovah; <sup>16</sup>And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city. <sup>17</sup>And the city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to Jehovah: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent (ASV, 1901).*

The faith in God to do as He said by Joshua and by Rahab to help the spies was born out. Just as God promised, the walls fell down, the Israelis entered the city and Rahab and her family escaped the slaughter of the inhabitants. These are facts not just entertaining stories. The purpose of the inclusion of these historical facts in the book of Hebrews is to strengthen the faith of the first century Hebrews in the Church and our own faith in the God we serve. In order to add credence to these facts some archaeological evidence supporting the biblical text is helpful to consider.

Archaeological evidence has produced factual data in support of the Biblical text. The following quotations from men acquainted with or conducting archaeological expeditions provide a firm basis for support of the veracity of the Biblical text through archaeology.

“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference.” The renowned Jewish archaeologist continued

in commenting “the almost incredibly accurate historical memory of the Bible, and particularly so when it is fortified by archaeological fact.”<sup>1</sup>

“On the whole, however, archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record.”<sup>2</sup>

“Old Testament archaeology has rediscovered whole nations, resurrected important peoples, and in a most astonishing manner filled in historical gap, adding immeasurably to the knowledge of biblical backgrounds.”<sup>3</sup>

“Archaeological and inscriptional data have established the historicity of innumerable passages and statements of the Old Testament.”<sup>4</sup>

“We pointed out that numerous passages of the Bible, which long puzzled the commentators, have readily yielded up their meaning when new light from archaeological discoveries has been focused on them. In other words, archaeology illuminates the text of the Scriptures and so makes valuable contributions to the fields of Biblical interpretation and exegesis. In addition to illuminating the Bible, archaeology has confirmed countless passages which have been rejected by critics as unhistorical or contradictory to known facts.”<sup>5</sup>

During the excavations of Jericho (1930-1936) John Garstang found something so startling that a statement of what they found was prepared and signed by him as well as other members of the team. In reference to these findings Garstang says:

“As to the main fact, then, there remains no doubt: the walls fell outwards so completely that the attackers would be able to clamor up and over their ruins into the city.”<sup>6</sup>

Why so unusual? Because walls of cities do not fall outwards, they fall inwards. And yet in Joshua 6:20 we hear “. . . the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city every man straight ahead, and they took the city.”

Next message: THE MANY OTHER HEROES OF THE FAITH

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<sup>1</sup>Glueck Nelson. *Rivers in the Desert: History of Negev*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cadahy, 1959, 31.

<sup>2</sup>Burrows, Millar. *What Means These Stones*. New York: Meridian Books, 1957,

<sup>3</sup>Unger, Merrill F. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1954, 1.

<sup>4</sup>Albright, W.F. “*Archaeology Confronts Biblical Criticism*” *The American Scholar*, April 1938, 181.

<sup>5</sup>Free, Joseph P. *Archaeology and Bible History*, Wheaton: Scripture Press, 1969, 1.

<sup>6</sup>Garstang, John. *Joshua & Judges*. London: Constable, 1931, 146.