

BY FAITH RAHAB PERISHED NOT

HEBREWS 11:31 & JOSHUA 2:1-24

Text: Hebrews 11:31

Hebrews 11:31

³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Introduction:

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is an often preached from passage on “faith” or more exactly on some of the great heroes of the faith. In this chapter only two women are mention by name.

Sarah – Abraham’s wife

Rahb – A prostitute

Rahb is mentioned twice in the New Testament

Hebrews 11:31

³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

James 2:25

²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

The Bible doesn't have a whole lot to say about the life of this woman. It seems that the only account we have of her is found in Joshua chapter 2.

Initially, it seems that Rahab isn't exactly heroine material. She is first introduced as a prostitute – not someone you would expect to be praised in the scriptures!

There are many lessons for us in this 2nd chapter of Joshua.

Tucked away in this chapter is the fascinating story about two spies and a prostitute named Rahab.

Two things that we can learn from this is:

- God can use anyone who is available
- God can save anyone – even a prostitute

As the 2nd chapter of Joshua opens, we find the nation of Israel – under their new leader Joshua – poised to enter the Promised Land. A land they had waited over 40 years to enter. Israel is camped just a few miles across the Jordan River from Jericho.

Joshua sends out 2 young men to spy out the land that enter the city of Jericho and find lodging in an inn run by Rahab – a prostitute.

This is where our story begins.

Notice:

1. GOD HAS A WAY OF WORKING THROUGH VERY ORDINARY AND VERY UNLIKELY PEOPLE (VS. 1-7)

Joshua 2:1-7

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. 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, 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. ⁴ And the woman took the two men, and hid them, 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. ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. ⁷ And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

A. He used two young men to spy out Jericho

Who were these two men? – We don't know. They were unnamed – anonymous.

We need to be constantly reminded that God works this way – thru ordinary people.

B. He used a young woman who was a prostitute

Rahab had at least three strikes against her.

- Rahab was a Canaanite – not a Jew

The Canaanites were a wicked people, a people so wicked and so evil that God used Israel as his instrument to judge them.

The Canaanites were Idolaters.

- Rahab was a woman

Women at that time were often treated as second class people.

In many instances they were treated as property. Yet God worked through this woman.

- Rahab was a prostitute

She sold herself for money. God sees potential in every single one of us, no matter what our past.

Rahab had all this going against her and yet she had one great redeeming factor in her favor – FAITH – She believed God.

2. GOD CAN SAVE ANYONE (vs. 8-24)

Notice 5 particular qualities in Rahab's life:

A. Rahab had an openness to the truth (vs. 8-11)

Joshua 2:8-11

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

She had heard about Israel and Israel's God. But what was it that made her believe in Israel's God.

- It could have been fear
- It could have been dissatisfaction
- Maybe she was a religious person seeking true spiritual reality

It's exciting to talk to an open minded person, to someone searching for the truth.

B. Rahb had the courage to make a tough decision (vs. 12-16)

Joshua 2:12-16

¹² Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: 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. 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. ¹⁵ Then she let them down by a cord through the window: 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.

She didn't have a lot of time to think about it.

She had to make a decision then.

C. Rahab had a willingness to join a new family (vs. 17-21)

Joshua 2:17-21

¹⁷ And the men said unto her, We *will be* blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. ¹⁸ 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 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: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him. ²⁰ And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. ²¹ 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.

The spies told her to hang from her window a scarlet thread.

Did she understand it's significance. I doubt it.

Sometimes God asks us to do something that we don't understand. To Rahab the scarlet thread was an outward sign of what God was going to do.

Her faith was not in the rope – it was in God.

D. Rahab had a concern for her family (vs. 12-13)

Joshua 2:12-13

¹² Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: 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.

She was willing to persuade her own family to trust in her newfound God.

Our loved ones need to know what we believe.
Mothers and fathers need to teach their children about
Jesus.

Rahab cared about her family.

E. Rahab had a lasting faith; A preserving faith
(6:22-25)

Joshua 6:22-25

²² But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. ²³ And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. ²⁴ And they burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵ And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel *even* unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

Rahab had to follow thru on her faith.

No longer was she a prostitute in Canaan.

She was now a part of the people of God.

A believer in the true and living God.

No longer an idolater.

Close:

What else do we know about Rahab?

Hebrews and James tell us that she was a woman of faith.

We also read in Matthew1:

Matthew 1:5-6

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;

Rahab was the great grandmother of King David and a part of the lineage of Christ.