

Heroes of the Bible: Rahab

Joshua 2:1-21, 6:17-25

^{2:1}Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. ²And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, “Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.” ³And the king of Jericho sent *word* to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” ⁴But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.” ⁵“And it came about when *it was time* to shut the gate, at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” ⁶But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

⁸Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. ¹⁰“For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹“And when we heard *it*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; **for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.** ¹²“Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father’s household, and give me a pledge of truth, ¹³and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” ¹⁴So the men said to her, “Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.” ¹⁵Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. ¹⁶And she said to them, “Go to the hill country, lest the pursuers happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days, until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way.” ¹⁷And the men said to her, “We *shall be* free from this oath to you which you have made us swear, ¹⁸unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father’s household. ¹⁹“And it shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *shall be* free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head, if a hand is *laid* on him. ²⁰“But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear.” ²¹And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” So she sent them away, and they departed; and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

^{6:17}“And the city shall be under the ban, it and all that is in it belongs to the LORD; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. ...²²And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the harlot’s house and bring the woman and all she has out of there, as you have sworn to her.” ²³So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she

had; they also brought out all her relatives, and placed them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴And they burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵However, Rahab the harlot and her father’s household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

I. Rahab saved the spies in Jericho 2:1-21

Read 2:1-13

Rahab gives us a wonderful picture of faith:

A. Rahab had faith – Heb. 11:31

Where is Rahab’s “statement of faith?” _____

Could there be any greater statement of faith in that day? _____

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

B. Rahab proved her faith by her works – James 2:25

But James in the New Testament would ask, “Was her faith real?”

How did Rahab prove her faith? _____

Jas 2:25 And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

Rahab’s faith was her belief in God, proven by actions in line with that belief.

The scarlet cord is significant. It is the basis for the “Scarlet Cord of Redemption” – the idea that throughout Scripture, and throughout history there is the *****

Was Rahab’s faith a “saving” faith?

II. Rahab was saved by the spies from Jericho 6:17-25

Read 6:17-25. Was Rahab’s faith a saving faith? _____

The spies saved Rahab and her family, just as they had promised.

What was the sign that offered her protection from death? _____

Is there any significance to the color? _____

No different than the blood on the mantle saved Israel’s firstborn children. Blood has always been the only way to atonement, but not just any blood – only the blood of Jesus.

III. Rahab was in the lineage of Jesus Mt. 1:5

Mt 1:5 and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by Ruth; and to Obed, Jesse;

Rahab married Salmon, Obed's father, and ended up being David's great-great-grandmother!

The five women specifically mentioned in Jesus' lineage:

- Tamar – Gen. 38:6-26 – Got pregnant by her father-and-law Judah to have Perez.
- Rahab – Joshua 2:1-21, 6:17-25 – Harlot, helped and later saved by the spies in Jericho. Married Salmon and bore Boaz, David's great-grandfather.
- Ruth – Ruth – Moabitess, stayed with her mother-in-law Naomi after her husband died. Snuck in to bed with Boaz when he was "feeling merry" in order to attract his affection. Bore Obed, David's grandfather. Was David's great-grandmother.
- Bathsheba – 2 Sam. 11:1-5 – Referred to as "*her who had been the wife of Uriah.*" Bathing within sight of the Palace. Committed adultery with David, then married David after David had Uriah killed. Mother of Solomon.
- Mary – Matt. 1:18 – Became pregnant during her engagement, and not even by her fiancé. The only one of the five who was innocent.

Is there a common thread through these five women's lives? _____

Why would God go to the trouble not only to put Rahab and these other less than upstanding women in Jesus' lineage, but also to make sure we knew about it? _____

What difference should it make to us and the way we act toward others? _____

Story from Breakout Churches about the Memphis church where a large number of people resisted and then finally left the church because the pastor wanted to reach outside of the comfortable, successful group he had built.

Summary:

What lessons can we learn from Rahab's story?