

# Bible Story Time 4 - The Battle of Jericho

*Joshua 2 pg. 102*

*1 And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. 2 And it was told to the king of Jericho, "Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." 3 Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." 6 But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. 7 So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.*

- Joshua sends spies into Jericho to gather intelligence for the coming attack on the city
- The spies find an unlikely ally in Rahab and she hides them at her house
- Notice the king was told that spies were seen entering the city, not that they went to Rahab's house. This gives us insight into the kind of reputation Rahab and her "business".
- Rahab leads the investigators away from her house and the spies she hid. This is high treason against the king of Jericho and was at great risk of her life if they find out she lied.
- The reason for this is revealed in the next paragraph.

*8 Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof 9 and said to the men, "I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt 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 devoted to destruction. 11 And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. 12 Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign 13 that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." 14 And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the Lord gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."*

- Rahab hides the spies because she has heard the stories and believed how God miraculously saved them in Egypt and through the 40 years they wandered in the desert.
- Given what little information she had, she fully believed in God.
- Based on that belief she asks the spies to save her and her family when they conquer the city.
- For her, the city was already lost.
- The spies agree and promise to save her and her house.

## Joshua 6

*1 Now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel. None went out, and none came in. 2 And the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty men of valor. 3 You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. 4 Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. 5 And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up, everyone straight before him." 6 So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord." 7 And he said to the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the Lord."*

- Joshua's army arrives outside of Jericho and the city is prepped for war
- God talks to Joshua, He tells him the outcome before giving him the battle strategy
- The instructions are odd for warfare, march around the city once for six days
- On the seventh day they are to march around seven times, blare the trumpets, and shout. This is how they will defeat the city's defenses.

*8 And just as Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the Lord went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the Lord following them. 9 The armed men were walking before the priests who were blowing the trumpets, and the rear guard was walking after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. 10 But Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." 11 So he caused the ark of the Lord to circle the city, going about it once. And they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp.*

*12 Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord. 13 And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord walked on, and they blew the trumpets continually. And the armed men were walking before them, and the rear guard was walking after the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets blew continually. 14 And the second day they marched around the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did for six days.*

- Joshua commands the army to do as God had instructed him to.
- This is obviously an unconventional way to wage war.

15 On the seventh day they rose early, at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. 16 And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city. 17 And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. 18 But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. 19 But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord." 20 So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. 21 Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

- They follow God's instructions for the seventh day around the city
- After being obedient to God, the walls of the city fall down, just as He promised

22 But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." 23 So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. 24 And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. 25 But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

- The spies keep their promise to Rahab and save her and her family
- The text she is alive to this day, obviously only correct at the time of writing the book of Joshua. This gives credibility to the story.
- She could confirm or deny this story to the original readers if they doubted what they read or heard.

#### Hebrews 11:30-31

30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. 31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.

- This mention here in Hebrews shows us the reason the Israelites were successful in the conquest of Jericho and why Rahab was saved
- It was not because of what she did, but because why, they acted in faith and obedience to God
- The people of Jericho were destroyed because of their disobedience to God, Rahab was saved because she acted in faithful obedience.

Matthew 1:1-6

*1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

*2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, 3 and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, 4 and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5 and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, 6 and Jesse the father of David the king.*

- Rahab is named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.
- Her story is part of the great story that God was telling about how He would bring about the savior of the world.
- This is proof that not only are all people welcome into God's family by faith, they do not have to completely know or understand everything in order to be accepted.
- Rahab didn't know much but what she did know she believed in fully.
- God honored her and her faith so much that she is great, great, great, etc. grandmother of Jesus

# Discussion Questions

- If this is the first time you heard this story, what stuck out most to you?
- If this is not the first time to hear this story, what is something new you learned from it?
- Based on what you know about Rahab, how much did she know about God?
- How does your knowledge of God compare to what Rahab knew when the spies came to her town?
- How does Rahab show us what is most important to God?
- How does God's instructions to march around the city compare to more conventional strategies for attacking a well defended city?
- What do you think might have happened if Joshua lead the army to attack the city using conventional tactics rather than being obedient to God?
- Imagine you were a soldier in the army marching around the city, how might you have felt awkward or uncomfortable even though you were being obedient to God's instructions?
- What are some things today that you know God wants his people to do but for you they are awkward or uncomfortable?
- Have you ever had something you know God wanted you do but you didn't really want to do it?
- How does our faith, or lack of faith, influence our obedience in situations like this?
- How did God respond to Rahab, Joshua, and the army's faith and obedience?
- In your own words, how does God respond in similar way to our obedience today?