

New Beginnings, Joshua, 2026 – #2 – Rahab: From The House Of Shame To The Hall Of Fame

Joshua 1:1-10a

We continue New Beginnings with Joshua and the People Of God.

Our Focus Today: Rahab!

She is Highlighted in Joshua 2 and 6.

She is prominent in the New Testament!

- **Matthew 1:5 – The Lineage of Jesus!**
- **Hebrews 11:31 – Among the heroes of the Old Testament - Faith's Hall Of Fame!!**
- **James 2:25-27 – A lesson in grace and the change that it brings**

I thought a good title might be -

"From the House Of Shame To The Hall Of Fame"

So, **what waits** for us to learn today as we continue New Beginnings?

Rahab's story is one we all relate to, one way or another.

It raises uncomfortable questions about grace and truth, failure, and **whether real change is truly possible. Most of us tend to lean too far one direction, either grace without truth, or truth without grace.**

Rahab leads us to consider whether God can truly redeem what seems beyond repair.

I. The Story

A. Joshua and the people were **gearing up to begin their journey** to the Promised land. **One of the clear, near challenges was the **fortress of Jericho**.**

Jericho was **rich, powerful, heavily fortified**, and symbolized everything standing between Israel and God's promise.

B. Joshua sent two spies to get into the city to gather intel. Peculiar. We'll talk about it later.

C. The spies...

- They went through the gates into the city, thinking they were disguised, but almost immediately word got out that they were there

- They went to a place that was prominent on the wall.

***Any business established on the wall- would be prominent, powerful, rich, protected, prosperous...

Destination: the house of prostitution owned and run by Rahab.

D. Rahab:

We already know her business.

She obviously was good at it. She was smart. Tough... Prominent.

She was very successful, living very sinfully in a very wicked place.

Add in Race, Culture... Definitely not preferred. *In fact, she was barred from Israel and Israel's God. The law was clear. She was an enemy!*

Some serious questions.

- *Can someone that wicked, that messed up, really be loved by a Righteous God?*
- *Can they really be saved and become His child?*
- *Can they really change?*
- *With the stains of the past, a reputation that would follow for life, can they ever be someone, something different?*

Grace. Truth. *Can they co-exist?*

E. The Rescue: Rahab...

- Hid them
- Lied for them
- Helped them escape

This is an unusual story. Not the normal PG Sunday morning rating.

Why in the world would God include it? What is so important for us to learn?

As we tell the story, we begin to see

II. Shadows of the Divine

A. A strange situation. Let's ask some simple questions.

Joshua **sent them...** (Remember that!)
Their **stated mission was to gather intel.**

- *Did the intel they gathered ever figure into future discussion and plans? All the way through Joshua 6 with the fall of Israel?*
- *Does anything they learned and risked their lives for factor into any of God's plans for the conquest?*
 - Marching around the city
 - Shouting and trumpets blowing
 - Massive walls falling – not tumbling outward as the old song says but literally dropping into the earth!
 - Total destruction of Jericho...

No! In fact, what they saw when they went in wasn't there any more when they returned!

B. So... *why?*

Why were these men sent, at great risk, for something they didn't really need? **Maybe it wasn't for their need; maybe it was for another need entirely.**

C. We call it Divine Providence.

God seeing... loving... providing an answer for those hopelessly lost.

- A city condemned
- Every inhabitant doomed to die

Rahab **told** the "spies" that she and the entire city had **heard of Israel's God...** **She feared and wanted to know about that God!**

They told her!

She believed! How do we know?

Heb 11:31 - By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not..

- **By what she said.**
- But more- **by what she did.**

Rahab –

- Hid them – at her own risk!
- Lied for them – at her own risk!
- Helped them escape – at her own risk!
- Later- put a scarlet cord in the window of her house as directed – as evidence of her faith

Show me a faith that doesn't risk, doesn't cost, and I'll show you

1. A faith that really doesn't exist. Or
2. A faith that needs to get back to Jesus!

Paul teaches us in the New Testament,

- We are not saved by works; we are saved by faith in Jesus. Ephesians 2:8-9
- However, if we are really saved, that same passage tells us we are saved **“unto good works”!**

James mentions Rahab in James 2:25 as he admonished believers to understand **that faith without works at best is questionable.**

Real faith always moves. It risks. It obeys. It acts. Not to earn salvation, but because salvation has already taken root.

As great as this story is, does it maybe resemble the shadow of a greater story?

- **A world condemned to die with no hope.**
Every single person condemned and lost with no hope.
- **And yet, God provided!**
 - **God sent...** just as Joshua sent... **A greater than Joshua, into the evil place. Dangerous place. This time, there was no escape. He died that those lost in sin might be saved!**
 - **God sent messengers** to those in peril with the news of Jesus!

Jesus said to “Search the Scriptures... they testify of me”
In this story we see – His Story! The Shadow Of The Gospel.

Finally, let’s consider

III. Significant Lessons From Rahab.

New Beginnings...

1. Rahab heard... and believed... and nothing was ever the same!

“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” Romans 5:20

Bill Gaither wrote a song years ago –

*“Twas a life filled with aimless desperation
Without hope walked the shell of a man
Then a hand with a nail print stretched downward
Just one touch, then a new life began.
And the Old Rugged Cross made the difference!”*

Can God save, *you?* Will God save, *you?* Absolutely!

2. Rahab not only survived, but changed into a “Hall of Famer!”

- She married... became a part of Israel. (Joshua 6:25)
- She kept the tag “harlot” or “prostitute” – not as a scarlet letter of disgrace, but as a testimony of grace!
- Rahab became great(x) grandmother of King David and generations later – Jesus! **From Prostitute to Real Prominence!**

A life saved by grace will evidence that grace in change. In service. In faithfulness.

God loves us as we are but too much to leave us as we are!

If we are His children, we are His works of grace!

He’s working in us to make Hall of famers this very morning!

3. Grace and truth.

The truth of the past didn't change. Grace transformed it. God took ashes, and made beauty!

Learning from Rahab, and what is recorded about her, **we rejoice in it! We say it's great. Yet-** **do we really believe it? If we do, His grace working in truth...**

- **Will affect how we see others.**

Beware of labels. Of judging them and limiting God by their mistakes!

- **Will affect how we see ourselves.**

Sometimes the most brutal struggle is ***the one within ourselves*** as we carry the guilt of the past.

Grace is waiting for us to see ourselves as He sees us –

- Cleansed by the blood of His Son
- Indwelt by His life changing Spirit
- A Divine work in progress
- Maybe a future hall of famer!
- Not because of who we are, but because of Jesus!

Walls fell. A city of shame burned.

New Beginnings became real for Rahab!

Some of us today need to stop living in a house of shame God has already burned down. Grace is still speaking. New beginnings are still possible.