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Rahab, The Woman of Faith
Josh. 2:1-14

Every person who is ever born into this world must make a personal decision regarding faith in the True and Living God, Jesus Christ.

The age, circumstances and situations will vary but each person will be held responsible for their personal decision based on the measure of light they have received.

Some have made their decision regarding eternity under very favorable circumstances.

Others under horrific, dangerous and inhuman situations.

Man is without excuse from the evidence of creation, conscience and crucifixion of Jesus, the gospel message.

And God has been sufficient and faithful to both extremes, for He is not willing that any perish but that all come to repentance. 2Pet. 3:9

Rahab the harlot is a perfect example of God's willingness to save sinners, whose account is

introduced at the sending out of the spies to Jericho, which unfolds in three movements.

- I. The sending out of the spies brought them to the house of Rahab. Vs. 1-2
- II. The inquiry about the spies at the house of Rahab. Vs. 3-7
- III. The covenant of the spies with Rahab. Vs. 8-14

I. The sending out of the spies brought them to the house of Rahab. Vs. 1-2

A. The departure and arrival. Vs. 1

- 1. Joshua sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly. Vs. 1a
 - a. The place was the last encampment under Moses' leadership, opposite of Jericho, at the foot of the mountains. Num. 25:1
 - b. The reference to being secret "cherish" means silent and with craftiness, not regarding their enemies but regarding the people of Israel
 - c. The last time twelve spies went out they reported to the congregation and discouraged them. Num. 13:28-14:4
 - d. The spies as we will see reported back directly to Joshua. Vs. 23
 - e. They also were the ones who brought Rahab and her family out. Josh. 6:22-23

- * Their names are never disclosed, the prominent figure is Rahab.
2. Joshua gave specific instructions, “saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” Vs. 1b-d
 - a. Some see a lack of faith in Joshua in the sending out of the spies because God had already told him he had given them the land but this is nothing in the text nor does God charge Joshua, besides it has been thirty-eight years, things have changed.
 - b. The time was different now when the people of the land were more aware of their presence and coming to possess the land, so two spies was a wiser choice, rather than another twelve.
 - 1) Kiel says, “The help of God does not preclude human action, but rather presupposes it”.
 - 2) To be presumptuous and careless is the seed for failure, not faith!
Xavier
 - 3) Joshua’s focus was Jericho, the key first stronghold and citadel of the Jordan Valley, to begin to possess the promise land.
 3. The men left and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there. Vs. 1e-g

- a. Some again find fault with the spies coming to a harlot’s house which was probably also an inn, a good place to gather intelligence and not be easily detected.
 - b. The text does not say they knew it was a harlot’s house or that they went there to seek harlots, but rather that they came to lodge there, having sleeping accommodations.
 - c. Others have taught that the word for harlot “zana” means an “innkeeper” but there is no evidence to this, it means illicit heterosexual intercourse, always it refers to women, only twice for men and it can be used literal or figurative. Ex. 34:16, Num. 25:1
* The LXX and New Testament clearly understood her to be a harlot by the word “porne”. Heb. 11:31, Ja. 2:25
- B.** The King in charge of Jericho was informed of the security breach. Vs. 2
1. The informants were very prompt regarding the security of the city and told the king immediately. Vs. 2a-b
 - a. They were very aware of the presence of Israel.
 - b. They knew they would sooner or later attempt to infiltrate it.

2. The information given to the King was very efficient, they gave the exact time of the infiltration, “Behold, men have come here tonight”. Vs. 2c-d
3. The individuals were identified as “from the children of Israel”. Vs. 2d
4. The indicated purpose was stated, “to search out the country”. Vs. 2d

Illustration

Andrew Jackson used to say to his men, “Pray and keep your power dry”.

Application

1. When God is leading and guiding a person, it does not excluded good common sense preparations in our lives.
 - a. In other words, God said He was going to save Noah and his family but Noah had to build the ark.
 - b. Some people believe God is leading them to marry a person and it may be so, but they not do prepare themselves in the word and prayer and good pre-marital counseling.
 - b. The result is instant problems that if are not dealt in obedience to the word and dying to self, what God intended for good could be destroyed by being proud, self-willed, presumptuous and disobedient.
 - * “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our

admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” 1Cor. 10:11-13

2. When a person begins to believe the things they hear or read about God, they are acting in faith and God uses that opportunity make Himself know for salvation.
 - a. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17
 - b. Those that come to God must believe and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Heb. 11:6
 - c. By faith the harlot **Rahab** did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace. Heb 11:31
3. There will always be opposition to the person who believes the gospel.
 - a. People will mock and ridicule you about your consideration of the gospel being credible!
 - b. Love ones will think the worst thing that could ever happen to you has happened, “You believe there is a God, who is the

person of Jesus Christ and that you are a sinner saved in His name, having eternal life”

- c. People will tell you not to take Christianity too serious or to extremes, thinking that you no longer can drink, talk dirty, fornicate, because you still need to enjoy yourself
 - * But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 2Cor. 4:3-4

The sending out of the spies brought them to the house of Rahab, was common sense!

II. The inquiry about the spies at the house of Rahab. Vs. 3-7

- A. The king sent men to the house of Rahab. Vs. 3
 - 1. The men arrive to speak to Rahab. Vs. 3
 - a. The message of the king was very direct and to be obeyed, “To bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house”. Vs. 3a-d
 - 1) The woman had to of been uneasy.
 - 2) The men were in the house.
 - b. The reason for these men coming was stated clear to her, “For they have

come to search out all the country.”
Vs. 3e

- 1) She was a citizen of Jericho.
- 2) She was an inhabitant of Canaan.

- B. The woman Rahab lied to the men. Vs. 4-5
 - 1. She first hid the men. Vs. 4a
 - a. She knew she was acting treasonous to the king.
 - b. She knew these men were her enemies.
 - 2. She then acknowledged the men came to her but she stated she was ignorant as to where they were from. Vs. 4b-d
 - a. Perhaps having been a prostitute, it probably was second nature to her to lie?
 - b. Perhaps it was the sheer understanding of all she had heard and knew about the God of Israel that cause her to fear God more than the king and his men?
 - c. But clearly her measure of light regarding God and the truth of Scripture was not much.
 - 3. She stated that the men at dark slipped out of the city before the gates were shut and did not know of there whereabouts. Vs. 5a-c
 - a. She definitely had made a choice to protect her enemies.

- b. She gave them a decoy to distance them from the two spies.
- 4. She told them to pursue them quickly so as to overtake them. Vs. 5d-e
 - a. The obvious lies should not be defended, they are wrong nor were they ordered or condoned by God.
 - b. There are a number of instances recorded in the Scriptures where people lie and they are true accounts of what took place but in no account are they condoned by God as being right.
 - 1) The midwives in Egypt, fearing God they saved the male infants.
 - 2) David lied to Abimelech, Uriah the husband of Bathsheba, Jeremiah to the men that wanted to kill him?
 - 3) The Bible is very real to record the failures and human weakness of man through sin nature, so we have to be careful not to fall into the trap of “situational ethics” but be true to the Scriptures and our integrity.
 - 4) Lying is always wrong, yet when human life is at stake such as Core Tenboon did in hiding the Jews, they honored God rather than man.

- C. The woman Rahab had hid the men on the roof. Vs. 6
 - 1. The stalks of flax is good evidence that Rahab had abandoned her old life-style and begun to earn her living by making linen clothes. Deut. 22:8, Prov. 31:13
 - a. This as hard and honorable work by gathering these stems about three feet long, drying and spinning to make cloths.
 - b. It ripened early in March. Ex. 9:31, 32
 - 2. She is called the Rahab the harlot because that was her reputation in the city of Jericho.
 - a. She would be known in no other way.
 - b. She, regardless of her change would carry that stigmatism with her in life. Josh. 2:1, 6:17, 22, 25
 - 3. James calls her a harlot yet seems to imply her change already when he says, “Likewise, was not **Rahab** the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? Ja. 2:25
 - * He is talking about works after salvation to verify one’s faith!
 - 4. The men pursued the spies. Vs. 7
 - a. They pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. Vs. 7a-c
 - b. They shut the gate as soon as they had gone out. Vs. 7-e

Illustration

The Chinese character for crisis is made of two words, danger and opportunity!

* How descriptive it is of every person who is brought to question of their faith in salvation!

Application

1. We as believers should not lie when we are confronted with accurate information and truth.

- a. At times when believers are confronted with the facts, they tell half truths, full blown lies or worst yet they attempt to spiritualize their disobedience or lies.
- b. Some times they will freely express their position and their accusations of the leadership. while refusing to come in and do Matthew 18 and they just go to another church, without resolving the problem.
- c. Confidentiality is not lying, some information is private and no one's business.
- d. The Scriptures speak very direct to lying and liars.
 - 1) "Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another." Eph. 4:25

* The implication is clear some Christians at Ephesus were lying, as well as other churches!

- 2) "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him." Col. 3:9-10
- 3) "But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth." Ja. 3:14
- 4) "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight." Prov. 12:22
- 5) "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Rev. 21:8

2. Each person will have to make a decision regarding their allegiance to this world or the Kingdom of Christ.

- a. We must count the cost be it family, friends or nation, when they would stand against Christ.
 - * "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." Matt. 10:37
- b. We must even be willing to loose our lives for the gospel.

* “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? Matt. 16:26

c. You may of come out of a life-style that people still to this day label you with, the old reputation, so you are to live in such a way as to prove them wrong Peter says. 1Pet. 2:12-15

* “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.”, Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.” Lk. 11:23, 17:33

3. Now we must be careful to not speak against situational ethics and then do them ourselves as believers.

a. If your son is wanted by the law and he is hiding in your home and they ask you if he is there, you do not lie, **he has broken the law**, we are subject to the laws of the land.

b. If your son and daughter are hiding under the bed when a thief brakes into your home and asks you if there is anyone else in the house, you say no, because **he has broken the law** by breaking in to your house and **you are protecting innocent life.**

c. If you steal food from a grocery store, you are guilty, **you have broken the law** but if there is a national disaster and you are starving and you come upon a store and help

yourself to some food, you are not guilty of braking the law for human survival takes precedence.

d. The “situational ethics” of humanism would violate moral and ethical Biblical principles, example, “Like three men in a boat with only enough food foe two”, which the believer would not go along with!

* The principle is whenever earthly laws contradict God’s word, then we obey God, as when the apostles were told not to preach in the name of Jesus, “But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29

The inquiry about the spies at the house of Rahab, was a crisis of faith for Rahab !

III. The covenant of the spies with Rahab. Vs. 8-14

A. The report of Rahab to the spies. Vs. 8-11

1. The common knowledge of Rahab and the people of the land. Vs. 8-9

a. Rahab came to the spies prior to them laying down, up to them on the roof. Vs. 8

1) She knew the danger of her choices, able to loose her life, being very courageous.

- 2) She knew her choice was the right one, being strong and not dismayed.
* The very things Yahweh had exhorted Joshua, Rahab was exhibiting by faith!
- b. Rahab proclaimed the basis of her faith to the spies. Vs. 9a-c
- 1) “I know that the LORD “Yahweh” has given you the land”. Vs. 9a-b
* She stood alone and believed the revelation of God’s judgment to come!
- 2) “That the terror of you has fallen on us”. Vs. 9c
* She had witnessed the dread as a result of God’s revelation to occupy the land!
- c. Rahab revealed the faithfulness of God to the spies. Vs. 9d
- 1) “And that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you”. Vs. 9d
- 2) Yahweh had told them this beforehand. Ex.15:15b-16
- 3) Rahab attested that all in the land had the same information!
a) Her faith condemned all who rejected the revelation in Jericho and the entire land!

- b) Her faith was greater than many of the Isrealites who had a greater evidence by what they saw, heard and experienced, yet perished in the wilderness!
- c) Her faith joined her in the genealogy of Jesus, “Salmon begot Boaz by **Rahab**, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse”. Matt. 1:5
* The grace of God is all-sufficient for all sin, where sin abounds, much more does grace abound!
Rom. 5:20
2. The clear communication that had reached Jericho. Vs. 10-11
- a. The power of their God Yahweh was incomparable. Vs. 10a
* The people had heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for them when they came out of Egypt”. Ex. 14:21-31
- b. The progression of Israel was unstoppable. Vs. 10b-d
- 1) The people heard what Israel did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed”. Num. 21:21-35
- 2) The term “utterly destroyed” “charam” means that which is

completely dedicated for
destruction in warfare to a deity.
Josh. 6:17

- c. The personal morale of the people was low and unreliable. Vs. 11
 - 1) Their fear was immediate, “And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted”. Vs. 11a
* To dissolve or waste away!
 - 2) The extent of their fear, “Neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you”. Vs. 11b
 - 3) The reason for their fear, “For the LORD “Yahweh” your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.” Vs. 11c-d
* Incredible confession of faith by this pagan woman!

B. The request of Rahab to the spies. Vs. 12-14

- 1. The plead to the spies was to return kindness to her, in like manner. Vs. 12
* Kindness “hesed” mercy, lovingkindness with the idea of reciprocal caring and is a key covenant word for the people of God.
- a. She requested an oath, “Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD”. Vs. 12a-c

- b. She requested the same protection she had given to them, “Since I have shown you kindness”. Vs. 12d
- c. She requested for her family, “That you also will show kindness to my father's house”. Vs. 12e
* She was interesting in the salvation of others and her life had been the only evidence of salvation change!
- d. She requested a token, “And give me a true token”, a pledge, sign or guarantee. Vs. 12f
- e. She specifies the individuals, “And spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.” Vs. 13
 - 1) They without any doubt had observed the change of life in their daughter and sister.
 - 2) Salvation in the Bible is always a family matter, God desires to save entire families but it is an individual decision. Josh. 24:15, Acts 16:31
- 2. The answer of the spies. Vs. 14
 - a. The condition, “So the men answered her, “Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours.” Vs. 14a-c

- * The entire family would have to keep the agreement a secret!
- b.** The promise, “And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you.” Vs. 14d-e

Illustration

The Spirit of God told Philip to go to the desert and there he met an Ethiopian eunuch, “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.” Acts 8:35-38

Application

- 1.** The man or woman of faith must make a judgment about what they hear and know about God through the gospel.
 - a.** A rejection of the gospel message places a person at risk of being eternally separated from God, if they die in their sins.
 - b.** No decision is a decision to reject the gospel as well, the consequences are the same.

- c.** A choice to believe and except the witness of people about God through the Scriptures is to agree that God is telling the truth about man and sin through the gospel.
 - * “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” Amos 3:3
- 2.** The only covenant God excepts is the one His Son has made provisions for the forgiveness of sins, the New Covenant.
 - a.** Salvation is in no other person but Jesus Christ as incurring God’s judgment for us. Acts 4:12, Rom. 1:16-17
 - b.** Salvation is not merely feeling sorry about one’s sins but repenting from them, a change of mind with a change of life. 2Cor. 7:10
 - * “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”
 - c.** Salvation means an acknowledgment of one’s sins, the confession of one’s sins, the abandonment of one’s sins and whenever possible the restitution due to one’s sins!
- 3.** Salvation is the imparting of eternal life to an individual. Jn. 3:16
 - a.** This eternal life begins here and now on earth by a quality of life, a God-like life as we learn and grow in the word of God.
 - b.** The Holy Spirit illuminates a person’s understanding, guides, convicts, reproofs

and corrects according to the gospel. 2Cor. 5:17

- c. The sins of one's past are cast as far from the east to the west and buried in the deepest ocean. Ps. 103:12, Mic. 7:19
- d. The person becomes a son or daughter of God with a new divine nature. 2Pet. 1:3-4

The covenant of the spies with Rahab, was redemptive in nature!

Conclusion

Rahab has demonstrated a perfect example of God's ability to save sinners by the sending out of the spies to Jericho, evident by these three movements.

- I.** The sending out of the spies brought them to the house of Rahab, was common sense!
- II.** The inquiry about the spies at the house of Rahab, was a crisis of faith!
- III.** The covenant of the spies with Rahab, was redemptive nature!