

Joshua 2:1-24 Group Discussion

Passage Summary

Joshua 2 introduces us to one of the most surprising people in the story of Israel: Rahab. She is a Canaanite woman living in Jericho, part of the very people Israel has been told will come under God's judgment. She is also identified as a prostitute, which would have placed her on the margins of society. By every outward measure, she seems like an unlikely recipient of God's covenant mercy. And yet, this is exactly where God's kindness reaches.

Rahab tells the spies that she has heard what the Lord has done (v. 8-12). She knows about the Red Sea. She knows how God delivered Israel from Egypt. She knows what He did to the Amorite kings. And most importantly, she has come to a conclusion about the God of Israel: **"The Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath."** These are remarkable words. Rahab has not grown up among God's covenant people. She does not come with a respectable spiritual résumé. Yet she sees the mighty works of God and responds in faith.

This is the kindness of God on display. His grace reaches farther than we expect. No past is too stained, no reputation too damaged, no sinner too far removed from His mercy. Rahab's story reminds us that God is not reluctant to save sinners. He delights to draw unlikely people into His promises.

But the passage also turns the spotlight back onto Israel. The spies themselves enter Rahab's house, and the text does not allow us to romanticize God's people as though they are somehow naturally better than the Canaanites around them. The same grace being extended to Rahab is also continually needed by Israel. That is an important reminder for the church. Grace is not merely a message for "those people out there." It is the ongoing need of God's own people. We never graduate from the gospel. The same mercy that first rescued us is the mercy we continue to need every day.

Finally, the scarlet cord becomes a visible sign of Rahab's rescue. Her household is marked out for deliverance. The imagery strongly echoes the Passover, when blood on the doorposts marked God's people so that judgment would pass over them. Rahab is being brought under God's protection. And her story does not end there.

Later Scripture refuses to let us forget her. Hebrews 11 remembers her faith. James 2 points to the way her faith produced action. Matthew's genealogy places her directly in the line that ultimately leads to Jesus. The woman who appeared to stand outside the promises of God becomes part of the very line through which the promised Savior

comes. That is the glory of God's grace. He does not merely forgive sinners. He brings them into His family, gives them a place in His story, and uses their lives for purposes far greater than they could have imagined.

Theological Highlights

1. God's Grace Reaches the Unlikely

Rahab reminds us that no sinner is beyond the reach of God's mercy.

2. Faith Responds to What God Has Revealed

Rahab hears about God's mighty works and entrusts herself to Him. Her faith is not merely intellectual agreement; it leads to action.

3. God's People Still Need Grace

Israel's failures remind us that the covenant community is not made up of people who have moved beyond sin, but of sinners continually dependent on mercy.

4. The Scarlet Cord Points Toward Rescue

Rahab's household is marked for deliverance, echoing the Passover and ultimately pointing forward to the saving blood of Christ.

5. God Uses Redeemed Sinners in His Redemptive Plan

Rahab becomes part of the lineage of Christ. God's grace does not merely erase a past; it gives a new future.

6. Salvation Displays God's Glory

Rahab's story leaves no room for boasting. Her rescue highlights the wisdom, kindness, and faithfulness of God.

Reflection Questions

God's Kindness

1. Rahab would have seemed like one of the least likely people to receive God's promises.
 - Who are the kinds of people we are tempted to assume are "too far gone" for God?
 - What does Rahab's story say to that assumption?
2. Rahab had heard about what God had done for Israel and responded in faith.
 - What stories of God's faithfulness have most shaped your trust in Him?
3. Where are you tempted to believe that your own past makes you less welcome before God?

God's Grace

4. The spies themselves are not presented as morally superior heroes.
 - Why is it important to remember that God's grace is not only for the "world out there" but also for the church?
5. Where are you most tempted to become self-righteous toward others?

6. How would our relationships change if we remembered that everyone in the church is deeply in need of God's grace, (including our own hearts!)?

God's Glory

7. Rahab's rescue becomes part of the larger story that eventually leads to Jesus.

- What does that teach you about God's ability to redeem broken stories?

8. Is there a part of your own story that you assume God could never use?

9. The scarlet cord marked Rahab's household for rescue.

- How does that image help you think about the covering and protection we receive through Christ?

10. What does Rahab's story teach us about who gets the glory in salvation?

Living as People of Grace

11. If God has shown you this kind of mercy, how should that shape the way you treat people whose lives are messy or broken?

12. Who in your life may need to experience the kindness of God through your hospitality, patience, or presence?

Prayer Points

1. Thank God for His Kindness

- Praise God that His mercy reaches unlikely and undeserving people.
- Thank Him that no past is beyond His ability to redeem.
- Ask Him to deepen your confidence in His compassion toward sinners.

2. Confess Self-Righteousness

- Confess the ways you have looked down on others or assumed yourself to be spiritually superior.
- Ask God to remind you of your own ongoing need for grace.
- Pray for humility in the way you relate to others.

3. Rest in Christ's Covering

- Thank Jesus for bearing your sin and giving you His righteousness.
- Bring your guilt, shame, and past failures before Him.
- Ask for assurance that your acceptance rests in Christ and not in your record.

4. Pray for Courageous Faith

- Ask God for faith like Rahab's: faith that acts on what it believes.
- Pray for courage in places where obedience feels costly.
- Ask for trust in God's promises even when the future feels uncertain.

5. Ask God to Redeem Your Story

- Bring the broken or painful parts of your past before Him.
- Ask God to use your story for the good of others and the advancement of His kingdom.

6. Pray for Those Who Seem Far from God

- Name people you are tempted to think are beyond reach.
- Ask God to pursue them with the same surprising grace He showed Rahab.
- Pray for opportunities to reflect His kindness and mercy toward them.

7. Give God the Glory

- Thank Him for being faithful across generations.
- Praise Him for accomplishing salvation through unexpected people and circumstances.

Closing Reflection

Rahab's story is surprising because grace is surprising. She is a Canaanite. A prostitute. An outsider. And yet God sees her, draws her in, covers her, and gives her a place among His people. But the surprise goes even further. God takes this unlikely woman and weaves her into the very lineage through which Jesus Christ will come. That is what grace does. It reaches farther than we expect. It forgives more than we imagine. And it redeems stories we would have written off long ago. Rahab's story reminds us that salvation has never rested on the worthiness of the sinner. It rests on the kindness, grace, and glory of God.