

Rahab the Prostitute

I. Announce:

A. Welcome to those watching from home.

II. Slide1 Intro: *Rahab the Prostitute*

A. Slide2 Ch.1 speaks of *the preparation for entry* (into promise land); Ch.3 records *the entry itself*. Ch.2 stands in the middle of this continuous story, and thus it stands out. But why is it here, what does God want to show us?

B. I'm going to be using the word *prostitute*. Though I don't like it today as we work in Anti-HT. In a 1998 study, 88% of the prostituted women surveyed stated that they wanted to leave the sex trade industry. [it's what's been done to them. it's such abuse. it's force, fraud, or coercion]

C. Prayer:

III. Slide3 COMMISSION BY JOSHUA (1) Read

A. Rahab the gentile Canaanite prostitute gets "one of the longest uninterrupted statements by a woman in a biblical narrative." Hess

IV. Slide4 PROTECTION OF THE SPIES (2-7) Read

A. This section builds an incredible tension, making you "feel" the story.

1. As we read, the spies choose to stay at a prostitutes house! Uhh why?
2. The word *lodge* up to this point in scripture it has always been translated "*lay*" (*down*), and when used of couples, it's used in a sexual connotation. [I'm not saying the 2 spies slept w/her, we're talking *tension*]
3. Next, you have a king that wants to kill them.
4. The Jericho Police arrive, and we don't know Rahab very well yet. Unexpectedly she hides them and goes to talk with them. What will she

say? She crafts this story that the author **does not condemn her, nor condone, this story.** Will it send them away, or will she be found out?

5. Vs.6 by the way *she hid them up on the roof.* Tension still building.

6. **The critical point is the beginning of vs.7.** The Jericho Police launch their search in the direction where it might be expected that the spies would go, back across the Jordan River.

a) Note vs.7 closes with the *city gate shut.* More questions. **How will the spies escape? How will they survive God's judgment on Jericho?** (airstrike's been called in).

B. **So, let's put this together ...** they're staying at a prostitutes house. The King wants to kill him. They are on Jericho's most wanted list. The gates of the city are locked shut. How will they escape.

1. **This is how the story begins, and the rest of the chapter will resolve all the issues.** Proving their holy service. Providing God's compassion to Rahab. And finding escape from the city with Rahab's faithful assistance.

C. ***Let's go back to this lie and deal with it. Wait, should we?**

1. The focus on Rahab should reflect **the faith she confessed, not the truth she concealed.**

V. Slide5a **CONFESSION OF FAITH (8-14)** *Read*

A. In vs.8 all eyes are turned to Rahab and the Spies.

1. **The king and his henchmen** are no longer in the picture.

2. The rest of the chapter focuses on the words of **Rahab** and the **Spies**.
Two of the longest speeches in the book.

B. Maybe this mission is less about **exploration** and more about **evangelism?**

1. Because **the main point** of the chapter focuses on **Rahab's confession of faith** (8-14). **And the Spies conditional promise of salvation** (15-21).

C. In the face of **judgment coming** upon Jericho, God offers **mercy**.

1. In their dialogue, the focus should be on Rahab's knowledge of Yahweh, her plea for mercy, and the establishment of a covenant mediated by the spies.

D. God's mercy is on display in his actions towards Rahab, and this declares good news to all people. To those who take refuge in God (and in his Joshua), they will find salvation from God's righteous judgment.

1. If we accept this reading that the spies functioned as emissaries and carriers of news, then it makes sense of their purpose in the chapter.
2. It also stresses that in judgment God was bringing salvation to Rahab and her family.
3. Slide5b Pattern: As with Noah and the ark, Lot in Sodom, and the firstborn sons in the Passover, God was providing a way of salvation to those who would go through judgment.

E. Rahab confesses Israel's God is true and seeks refuge from the spies.

1. As a result, she will be saved, even as her city is destroyed. This is the main point of the chapter and we should focus here.

VI. Slide6a PROTECTION OF RAHAB AND CO. (15-21) Read

A. But she lied? - there are a lot of ideas on whether this was a bold face lie or a concealing of truth issue. Maybe as Rahab rightly saw the conflict between her people and Israel's God. When she acknowledged Israel's right to this land, she sided with Yahweh. Since warfare was about to break out, she did not release the position of Jericho's enemy, in this way, she did not divulge information demanded of her in a hostile situation. [Nazis knocking on your door asking if you're hiding Jews?]

1. But if it's just a bold face lie, then, she's just like me ... and you!
2. Again, the Bible never condemns nor condones it. Why? Because that isn't the story. Believers sin. God in his mercy is bringing salvation to this Gentile prostitute who has become a woman of faith.

B. While much can be made about rehabs **deception**, more should be made of her **confession** of the true God. This is where **the author** *trains us to look*, and this is what **the Bible** *remembers* ...

1. Slide6b **Her inclusion** in Mt.1:5 - Jesus's family tree. *Father of Boaz.*
2. Slide6c **Her Actions** in James 2:25 - *And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?*
3. Slide6d **Her Faith** in Heb.11:31 - *By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.*
 - a) Ps: Rahab is the only gentile in the group in Hebrews 11. Some see her as *a type of the church*. One redeemed from the nations, who trusted in the God of Israel, and been saved *by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone!*
4. Slide6e **Her Salvation** in Joshua 6:25 - *Read Joshua saved alive.* (next point)

C. **Scarlet Cord** - in the window makes us think back to the blood painted on the door frames, on the night of the Passover.

1. In both instances, **salvation** came through judgment, as God's people took refuge behind the sign on the door, or window.
2. Logically, it makes sense that the spies, when asked about **salvation** (13), would point back to **the Passover** (verbiage in 19).
 - a) Thus Rahab and her family find **salvation** in the same way that Israel did, and by a similar experience are brought into God's family.

VII.Slide7 **RETURN TO JOSHUA (22-24)** *Read*

A. Started in vs.1 with **Joshua**, ends with **Joshua**.

B. The Spies escape would have been more difficult, if not impossible, had it been necessary for them to *go out the city gate*.

1. Scarcely a half-mile west of Jericho are limestone cliffs about 1,500 feet high, honeycombed with caves. Here the spies hid in the hills for 3 days, until the soldiers of Jericho gave up the hunt.
 2. Then under cover of darkness the spies swam back across the Jordan, made their way quickly to the camp at Shittim, and reported to Joshua about their strange and stirring adventure and the heart-meltdown of the Canaanites.
 - a) Their conclusion was, The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands for all the people are melting in fear.
 - b) How different from the report of the majority of the spies at Kadesh Barnea who said, *We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are* (Num. 13:31).
- C. Slide 8 This story is not just about God's judgement on Jericho, we are Rahab the prostitute in the story. (saved by grace)
1. God in His mercy brought salvation to a Canaanite gentile prostitute who has become a woman of faith, & hand selected to be in Jesus' family tree.

D. Keywords: salvation,