



Rahab the Harlot's Testimony

There are situations in life where a mature believer may choose to lie to save lives or to protect others. Rahab the harlot is an excellent illustration. She was a woman in the line of Christ. As a mature believer, she was willing to commit the sin of lying and take the divine discipline to save the lives of two men. Rahab's reply falls into the principle of tactics and strategy in time of war. It calls for on the spot decisions. She was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. She was saved by hearing of the Lord's deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Heb. 11:31; Joshua 2:9-11.

"By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace." (Hebrews 11:31, NASB)

"and said to the men, 'I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. '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 utterly destroyed. 'When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.'" (Joshua 2:9-11, NASB)

She was one of the great producers of divine good as a believer. She lead many member of her family to Christ. James 2:25; Joshua 2:12-13.

"In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?" (James 2:25, NASB)

""Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death."" (Joshua 2:12-13, NASB)

She stands as one of the great trophies of God's grace. Rahab is in the genealogy of Matthew 1:5. The Jews said you couldn't have a woman in a genealogy. They said there was a place for a woman, but not in a genealogy. And so in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have four women. These women emphasize who and what God is, not who and what we are. Also it was forbidden to have Gentiles in any Jewish genealogy.

"Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse." (Matthew 1:5, NASB)

Of these four women, three were Gentiles and three of them were famous adulteresses. This is a very unusual Jewish genealogy and this genealogy will exist in heaven forever. Tamar in Genesis 38 knew how to get a ring from a man and she was good in bed. Matt. 1:3.

"Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram." (Matthew 1:3, NASB)

Rahab was a professional courtesan for a long time and then was gloriously saved. Ruth was a Moabite woman under a terrible curse as a member of this nation. Other than that she walked the straight and narrow. Matt. 1:5; Deut. 23:3-8.



"No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of their descendants, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the LORD, because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you." (Deuteronomy 23:3-4, NASB)

Bathsheba was a famous beauty of the ancient world. Matt. 1:6; 2 Sam. 11.

"Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah." (Matthew 1:6, NASB)

These four women were saved. Why is that so astonishing? It is not difficult for this type to be saved. The self-righteous, religious type, Yes. But a prostitute has no illusions about people. Rahab after salvation, did not have to unlearn religious nonsense, so she grew spiritually very rapidly. Rahab left the profession of prostitution, took the proceeds thereof and bought herself a hotel and a rope factory. In Joshua 2:1, she is waiting for her right man and whatever else the Lord is going to bring along.

"Then Joshua the son of Nun sent two men as spies secretly from Shittim, saying, 'Go, view the land, especially Jericho.' So they went and came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rahab, and lodged there." (Joshua 2:1, NASB)

Events Surrounding Rahab and The Spying of the Land

Joshua was the Commander in Chief and dictator of Israel. This takes place 40 years after the first generation of Israel sent the 12 spies into the Land to reconnoiter. Two spies were selected, one from the tribe of Ephraim and the other from the tribe of Judah. Forty years before only Caleb (Judah) and Joshua (Ephraim) said let's go into the Land. So forty years later only two spies are sent in, both representatives of those two tribes. Ephraim is the double portion tribe, and Judah is the ruling tribe.

A reconnaissance of the land was done. Jericho was the key that would unlock Canaan. So a two-man patrol went in. They arrived at the harlot's hotel and stayed there. They were in a dangerous situation, so they knew they may have to escape in a hurry and this location worked for them.

The purpose of this spying was two-fold: To bring in military information regarding terrain, fortifications, and troop dispositions around Jericho and to protect the lives of those in Jericho who were born again. The principle here is that God always takes care of His own no matter where they are located or how far they have strayed, like Lot in Sodom.

The Canaanites will be removed from the land, but in Joshua's day, the iniquity was complete. They were overdue. Jericho was just north of the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah. No race or nation of people are ever put under the fifth cycle of discipline by God until they more than deserve it. Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24-28.

"Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." (Genesis 15:16, NASB)

"Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants. But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not do any of these abominations, neither the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled); so that the land will not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nation which has been before you." (Leviticus 18:24-28, NASB)



God promised to give the Jews the land in Joshua 1:2-4, a promise made earlier to Moses' generation, and before that to Abraham. But they had to exercise human action. Using the faith-rest life is not to sit down on the ground. When action is taken, the substance of that action indicates whether you have faith-rest in the soul. James 2:25.

"In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?" (James 2:25, NASB)

Promises are not designed so you don't have to learn doctrine. They are designed to jog your memory on what you do have stored in your right lobe. One of the spies gets a bonus in that he finds his right woman. She, Rahab, knew she couldn't hang around a brothel and be identified by her right man.

The Discovery of the Patrol (Spies)

They didn't realize that the Lord had guided them to a Gentile woman that was born again and who would be listed in the genealogy of Christ the Messiah. One of the spies didn't realize that he was seeing his right woman, his future wife. The king of Jericho had a great counterintelligence organization. He learned that the two spies were in the land, so he sent his soldiers to look for them. Joshua 2:2.

"It was told the king of Jericho, saying, 'Behold, men from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.'" (Joshua 2:2, NASB)

Rahab's hotel became the number one suspected location. Why? Because she was a believer in Jericho and everybody knew it. The king's soldiers came to her house and knocked on the door. Rahab had previously hid the two men on the roof. Joshua 2:3-4.

"And the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, 'Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.' But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, 'Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.'" (Joshua 2:3-4, NASB)

She said, "Men were here, I didn't know who they were." This was a lie. The action of Joshua 2:4 took place (hiding of the men) before the action of Joshua 2:3. She hid them in the flax on the roof. Her rope factory was on the roof. She made and sold red colored ropes as another business.

Rahab lied to the king's officers to save the lives of the two men. Rahab is always called Rahab the harlot, never Rahab the liar. This is a very famous lie. A lie is always sin. The Word indicates that, but here were other factors at this particular point. When she told this lie, she told it to soldiers of the Jericho army and she knew that if these two men were discovered they would be killed.

That patrol was also in action, serving its country, so you have representatives of two armies. She made her decision. Her sympathy was with the Jews. She knew that if she told the truth, they would die, so she lied to save their lives.

What would you do? She might have noticed in one of these spies something unusual, something that turned her on. But the lie was not justified, but the lie fulfilled its purpose. The lie is continued in Joshua 2:5 and it is a cunning lie.

Rahab amplifies the lie in Joshua 2:5. Any prostitute has to fake out a large number of sordid characters in their career. No prostitute is madly in love with any of her customers, but she has to give the impression that she is madly in love with each one.

"It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where



the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." (Joshua 2:5, NASB)

So, she had been a flesh actor and had done quite well. Here, she was faking again and she was convincing. They fell for it. She was smart enough to get the patrol going one way and the spies in another so never the twain shall meet. The principle here is that she was willing as a believer to commit this sin to protect, to deliver, these two men!

Rahab's hiding place for the Jewish spies was the raw material in her rope factory on the roof. Joshua 2:6.

"But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof." (Joshua 2:6, NASB)

In Joshua 2:7, the king's patrol leaves quickly to pursue the spies.

"So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate." (Joshua 2:7, NASB)

In Joshua 2:8, "lay down" means to go to sleep. The Jewish spies had used faith-rest and trusted that the Lord would deliver them, so they had almost fallen asleep when Rahab came up after sending the king's soldiers on their way in the wrong direction.

"Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof," (Joshua 2:8, NASB)

Joshua 2:9-11 contains the personal testimony of Rahab.

"and said to the men, 'I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. '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 utterly destroyed. 'When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.'" (Joshua 2:9-11, NASB)

Her concern for members of her family is evident in Joshua 2:12-13.

"'Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.'" (Joshua 2:12-13, NASB)

The reply of the Jewish patrol is found in Joshua 2:14. "Our life for yours" is a pledge contingent on Rahab keeping their real presence a secret from the king's soldiers.

"So the men said to her, 'Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.'" (Joshua 2:14, NASB)

In Joshua 2:15, her trademark red rope is used to lower the two spies down the outer wall. Rahab was the one holding the rope for them to escape.

"Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall." (Joshua 2:15, NASB)

Rahab gives the two men instructions in Joshua 2:16. This is very good advice. She is smart. They went



up to the mountains for three days. She knew how long the patrols would be waiting for them.

"She said to them, "Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way."" (Joshua 2:16, NASB)

The Jewish patrol gave instructions to Rahab to hang the scarlet cord in the window of her home. Joshua 2:17-18. The principle here is that believers who have divine wisdom in their souls will know good advice when they hear it.

"The men said to her, "We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's household." (Joshua 2:17-18, NASB)

Three conditions were imposed on Rahab for keeping the oath. Rahab had to hang the scarlet cord in the window of her home. Rahab's family all had to be in her home when the city would be attacked. Rahab could not tell anyone of the secret she had.

Hanging the scarlet cord in the window of her home is the same principle as the sprinkling of the blood on the doors at the first Passover in Exodus 12:13. The scarlet rope is Rahab's identification with Israel at the Passover. When she took that promise from those men, they in effect put her under the same promise which they had in Joshua 1:2-4. Her faith brings her under their promise. It is also a beautiful picture of salvation and blood atonement through Christ.

"The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt." (Exodus 12:13, NASB)

Rahab's family all had to be in her home which was located on the walls of the city. All of walls will collapse, except for one spot where Rahab's house was located. Joshua 2:19.

"It shall come about that anyone who goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be free; but anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him." (Joshua 2:19, NASB)

Rahab had to keep her mouth shut. If she talked, no oath would remain. Joshua 2:20.

"But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be free from the oath which you have made us swear." (Joshua 2:20, NASB)

Rahab did as she was told. Her deliverance and her family are found in Joshua 6:17 and Joshua 6:23-25.

"The city shall be under the ban, it and all that is in it belongs to the LORD; only Rahab the harlot and all who are with her in the house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent." (Joshua 6:17, NASB)

"So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel. They burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. However, Rahab the harlot and her father's household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." (Joshua 6:23-25, NASB)



Her marriage to Salma (Salmon) is found in Matthew 1:4 and 1 Chronicles 2:10-11.

"Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon." (Matthew 1:4, NASB)

"Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, leader of the sons of Judah; Nahshon became the father of Salma, Salma became the father of Boaz," (1 Chronicles 2:10-11, NASB)

They had a son named Boaz. Boaz was the grandfather of Jesse and the great grandfather of David. It never made any difference to Rahab what she had been! Some of the finest people in the world have had some of the roughest backgrounds.