

Day 219 - MONDAY: August 7th

Joshua 2

Joshua 2:1-24 NKJV

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country." So the king of Jericho sent 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 country." Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) Then the men pursued them by the road to the Jordan, to the fords. And as soon as those who pursued them had gone out, they shut the gate. Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD

your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you." Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall. And she said to them, "Get to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you. Hide there three days, until the pursuers have returned. Afterward you may go your way." So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him. And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear." Then she said, "According to your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window. They departed and went to the mountain, and stayed there three days until the pursuers returned. The pursuers sought them all along the way, but did not find them. So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll start with the in-depth UCG reading plan on this chapter: "Verse 1 of this chapter should apparently say "had sent" rather than "sent," as the events from 2:1 through 3:1 evidently transpire before the "three days" mentioned in Joshua 1:11. Indeed, putting events together, we apparently have the following timeline:

Abib 1 Spies sent to Jericho (Joshua 2:1)

Abib 2 Spies in Jericho (Joshua 2:1-21)

Abib 3-5 Spies in hiding outside Jericho (Joshua 2:16, 22)

Abib 6 Spies return and report to Joshua (Joshua 2:23-24)

Abib 7 Israel moves from Acacia Grove to the Jordan (Joshua 3:1)

Abib 7-9 Israel camped at the Jordan (Joshua 3:3)

Abib 8 Joshua commands officers to tell the people to prepare provisions (Joshua 1:11)

Abib 9 Officers instruct the people about following the ark (Joshua 3:2-5)

Abib 10 Israel crosses the Jordan; Memorial set up; Males circumcised (Joshua 3:6-17, Joshua 4:1-24, Joshua 5:1-9)

Abib 10-14 Israel encamped at Gilgal (Joshua 4:20-24, Joshua 5:1-10)

Abib 14 Israel keeps the Passover (Joshua 5:10)

Abib 15 Israel eats produce of the land; Last day of manna; Joshua meets Christ (Joshua 5:11–15)

Abib 15–20 Israelite procession once around Jericho each day (Joshua 6:1–14)

Abib 21 Israelite procession seven times around Jericho and it falls (Joshua 6:15–27)

When the spies enter the land, the Israelites have been in Acacia Grove since their defeat of Sihon and Og (Numbers 22:1; Numbers 25:1). Rahab and the Canaanites had heard the stories of the Red Sea crossing, now 40 years ago.

Within the past few months the Israelites had completely destroyed the Amorites just east of the Jordan (verse 10). And now they were camped on Jericho's doorstep. But while most of the people of Jericho were faint with fear, Rahab recognized who was behind the Israelites' successes (verses 9, 11). She had developed faith in the true God and His power, and now she demonstrated her faith by protecting the spies and then asking them for protection in return (Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25).

The spies evidently did not know the manner in which Jericho would be destroyed. Otherwise, they probably would have expected Rahab's house, which was built into the city

wall, to be destroyed. Instead, the spies clearly assumed the house would still be there since they told Rahab to gather her family therein and remain inside—and to bind the scarlet cord in the window from which the spies were let down. Taking an oath that Rahab's family would be protected, the scarlet cord was undoubtedly intended to make it easy for Israelite warriors to identify those to spare. As it turned out, however, the cord was apparently unnecessary for that purpose. God Himself backed up the oath, and Rahab's faith, by miraculously keeping her portion of the wall from falling flat, making identification quite simple. (This is obvious from the fact that her house, which, again, was built into the city wall, still stood after the wall as a whole fell, according to Joshua 6:22.) Moreover, rather than just any Israelite soldiers being the ones to spare Rahab and her family, Joshua sent in the spies themselves—who would actually recognize Rahab—to retrieve them (verses 22–23). Nevertheless, the scarlet cord, the instructions to remain inside the house and the family's subsequent deliverance from death, do seem to carry with it some remarkable symbolic parallels with the events of the Passover the Israelites had kept in Egypt exactly 40 years earlier.

Rahab eventually married Salmon, a very prominent member of the tribe of Judah (Matthew 1:5). He was the son of the tribal leader at the time of the Exodus, Nahshon (compare Numbers 2:3), and first cousin of Eleazar the high priest (compare Exodus 6:23). Their son or perhaps later descendant Boaz would marry Ruth (of the *book* of Ruth), and from them would come David and eventually Jesus Christ (Ruth 4:20–21). In spite of her questionable history in the town of Jericho, Rahab evidently became converted (Hebrews 11:31, Hebrews 11:39–40), and her important role in the history of Judah and Israel is unquestioned. It should be pointed out, however, that some view the Bible's praise of Rahab as an endorsement of her lying to the men looking for the spies. Based on this, they argue that it is okay to lie when it is "for a good cause." However, that is simply not the case—ever (Leviticus 19:11; Proverbs 12:22). *The Nelson Study Bible*, in laying out the possible explanations with regard to Rahab's lying, ends with the one it clearly favors: "A lie is a lie, and...Rahab's action was wrong.... Rahab sinned no matter how noble her intentions. Of course, in her case, her sin is understandable because she lacked complete knowledge of the living God. That is, what she did was wrong, but she did not know any better.

We must be careful to make a distinction between Rahab's faith and the way Rahab expressed it. The Bible praises Rahab because of her faith in God, not because of her lying. That is, her actions would have been more noble had she protected the spies in some other fashion; as it is, she did the best she could. The Bible calls Rahab a prostitute, but we are not meant to take that as an endorsement for immorality. Rahab, like the rest of us, had a mixed character, but she believed in God and strove to honor Him and His people. That is what draws her praise. We should honor Rahab the way the Bible does. She was a great heroine of faith, who came from a most surprising place. In time, her name would be honored not only for what she did for Israel, but for what she became—a mother in the line of Jesus" ("In Depth: Lying").

Of course, over time, with the help of God's laws and His Spirit, Rahab surely came to repudiate her former lifestyle. Indeed, she *must* have to have married a prominent Israelite. Thus, it is likely that she herself came to view her lie as wrong—and repented of it, as we all must of our own sins." [END]

Regarding Rahab's house standing when the wall fell, even though her home was located in the city wall, I found the

following very interesting: “German excavations from 1907 – 1909 on the northern section of the site uncovered a portion of the lower city wall that did not fall as it did everywhere else. The still-standing section rose as high as 8 feet, with houses built against it still intact. A second wall at the crest of the embankment revealed that these particular houses were situated between the upper and lower city walls and were thus “in the city wall.” Since the lower wall also formed the back wall of the houses, an opening (window) in the wall would have provided a convenient escape route for the spies. From this northerly location, it was only a short distance to the hills of the Judean wilderness, where the spies hid for three days.” (Archeological Bible Study – Zondervan)