

## **We Are Rahab**

Text: Joshua 2

### **Introduction**

It is always a fearful thing to behold the wrathful judgment of God, falling down upon a people. And yet, such occasions are great reminders of the holiness, purity and righteous judgment of God, and the utter sinfulness and wickedness of fallen creatures in the presence of that God. It is, indeed, a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry (righteously angry) God.

At times, the Scriptures reveal to us instances, where God's terrible wrath has fallen upon an unrepentant people in great measure, not so that we can look upon those people as more sinful and wicked than us, but rather, so that, we might all the more recognize what we deserve, and so that we might anticipate the coming destruction upon the whole world, and so that we might find the fervent motivation to take refuge in Christ, the only hope for wretched sinners. Indeed, every display of God's destructive wrath, given in Scripture, is written down for our sakes, as a foreshadowing of that which is soon to come upon the whole world.

And yet, even during such times of great terror, in the displaying of God's wrath, we always find, at least, a small, but powerfully evident display of God's mercy.

1) The whole entire world was destroyed by a great flood during the time of Noah, but Noah found grace in the sight of God, and he and his immediate family were spared...in the ark.

2) The whole entire cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire and brimstone during the time of Abraham, but Lot and his two daughters, alone were spared, for the sake of Abraham.

3) And in this morning's example, we anticipate the destruction of an entire city, the wealthy and prosperous pagan city of Jericho, utterly destroyed by the edge of the sword (man, woman, child, and every animal)...with only one woman and her family spared; a woman named, Rahab.

## **I. The Context- Spies are sent in**

1: Israel is preparing to cross over the Jordan River, so as to take the Promised Land of Canaan, city by city. The first city they will take is the city of Jericho, about 7 1/2 miles west of the Jordan.

2: Joshua sends in two spies to spy out the city before they take it. The spies take up residence at the lodging house of a woman named Rahab.

3: The king of Jericho finds out about these spies and sends soldiers to take the spies.

4: Rahab hides the spies on the roof, amidst some stalks of flax, and she lies to the soldiers stating that the men had already left, and could probably still be caught somewhere on the road back to the Jordan.

5: Rahab goes back to the spies and explains why she has saved them from the king. The people of Jericho had heard about what the God of the Israelites had done to the mighty Egyptians and how He had dried up the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross over, and also what He had done to the two mighty kings, East of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites. And the people of Jericho were all terrified, understanding as well that their God had determined to give them the Land of Canaan as their inheritance. And so, the people of Jericho were discouraged, terrified and faint of heart.

6: After this, Rahab had also confessed that she believed that the God of Israel, YHWH, was the only true God, the God of heaven and earth, and she had hoped that upon sparing the lives of these spies, that she might be shown mercy, her and her family.

7: The spies then agree to spare her life (and the lives of her family members) when they take the city, if she continues to allow them to go freely, and if she leaves a scarlet cord in her window, indicating that she was the one who helped them. Those who stayed with her in that house, where the scarlet cord was seen tied at the window, would be spared.

8: Rahab provides them with instructions on how to get away, and she lets them down out of the window (by the scarlet cord), so they can sneak out by stealth. Her house was attached to one of the walls of the city, with her window at the wall, allowing them to get out, without having to go through the main gate. And so, they escape.

9: In chapter 6, we are told about what happened when the Israelites took Jericho. After the Israelites had marched around the city for seven days, the Lord took the large wall of Jericho down, and the Israelites destroyed everything and everyone, except Rahab and her family [Read Joshua 6:17-18, 21-25]

10: Rahab and her family alone were spared and they were incorporated into the people of Israel (the people of God) from that point on.

## **II. Who was Rahab?**

Out of all the people in the entire city of Jericho, only Rahab and her family were spared. Out of all the places in Jericho where the spies might have stayed, they stayed with Rahab. Now, recognizing the sovereignty of God over all things, we know that this was no accident or coincidence. Clearly, God chose to be gracious to Rahab, as He had been to Noah, as He had been to Lot...etc. But, who was Rahab?

Perhaps, Rahab was, at least, a morally upright woman in the city? Perhaps, she was a philanthropist of some sort, amongst the people of Jericho? Maybe, she was one of the nicer people in the city and just deserved a fair chance at life, going forward. No, of course, the Scriptures do not say that, do they? Who was Rahab?

Rahab was a defiled, dirty harlot. Indeed, Rahab's home was probably so welcoming, because more than likely, she conducted not only the business of providing lodging for people, but she probably made a significant sum of money sleeping with them as well. Rahab was "Jericho," and no exception. And more than likely, she was probably not the most respectable person in the city. There were probably others, who had a bit more common grace than her. There probably were others who were certainly more moral than she was.

And yet, out of an entire city of people, God spared her...no, God chose her and took her to be among His people. Everyone else and everything else (with the exception of her family) was utterly destroyed. The ultimate form of judgment was upon that city. But she was spared.

Now, if that weren't amazing enough, consider this. Rahab is listed amongst the people of faith in Hebrews 11! [Read Hebrews 11:30-31]. Rahab, the harlot (the label stuck with her in

Scripture, as a profound reminder of God's grace) was given faith by God, to confess YHWH as the true and living God, and to exercise that faith in the hiding of the two Israelite spies!

Indeed, what made Rahab's faith so profound, is that she willingly stood against her own people, and chose to honor God rather than stick with them.

And furthermore, it gets even more profound. In the genealogy of Christ, found in Matthew chapter one, we find that Rahab was also recorded in the lineage of Christ! [Read Matthew 1:1-16] Note: only four women are mentioned in this genealogy (Tamar- who prostituted herself to Judah when he failed to keep his promise; Rahab, the harlot; Ruth, who was a Moabite that had left her people to follow Naomi, ultimately marrying Boaz; Bathsheba, who was King David's adulteress, and of course Mary, the mother of Jesus). Ever wonder why only these women are named? Is God sending us a profound message about His amazing grace, even in the lineage of the Christ?!

### **III. We are Rahab!**

Brethren, the fact of the matter is that God is not saving everyone. Indeed, God is not saving most. The path to life is narrow and there are few who find it. Jericho is not too unlike the world, is it? Indeed, I believe it is a foreshadowing of the end, as I have stated. But that leads us to the real answer to the question, Who is Rahab, doesn't it?

Brethren, Rahab is us! Out of millions upon millions of people, throughout all of history, the Spirit of God, when the gospel was preached through some messenger, has entered your life, regenerated you, gave you a fear of God, and led you to Christ. And now, you are part of His spiritual lineage. And Brethren, the only difference between you and every single condemned person that has ever existed in this world, is the grace of God. We are Rahab. We are naturally, spiritual whores, who have whored ourselves out to the world, but God has saved us from the coming destruction, and He has incorporated us into His people, the true Israel of God, in Christ! [All naturally corrupt, all naturally unprofitable, all miss the mark completely, all morally defiled, all have sinned...etc]

1) Note the scarlet cord...the blood of the Passover lamb...Christ!

2) Note the hope of breaking family traditions (Roman Catholics, Jews, Muslims...etc)

3) Note the coming judgment and its permanence, for all left in Jericho. Come out and be saved! Set the scarlet cord upon the window of your soul!

4) Note the sin of Achan; a traitor in the camp.

Amen!!!