

From Harlot to Heroine: Rahab

Introduction:

We are introduced to Rahab first in Joshua 2. She hid the spies sent by Joshua to spy out the land (Josh 2:8-11). In the NT – Rahab is mentioned several times: in the genealogy of Jesus, in connection of “heroic” faith, and being justified by works. Yet – she was a harlot – a prostitute – who lied to hide the spies (Josh 2:3-6). How did a Canaanite woman, with a terrible past, wind up in the genealogy of Christ? How can she be an inspiration to us today?

I. Getting to Know Rahab.

- A. Rahab’s name means “insolence” or “fierceness”.
 - 1. Rahab lived in walled city of Jericho.
- B. Jericho was around 5 miles from the Jordan River.
 - 1. Josh 2:15 – Rahab lived in the wall of the city.
- C. She and her family lived in the same dwelling place. 2:13; 6:23

II. Rahab’s heart was affected by the truth.

- A. Josh. 2:9-11. This statement sheds light on Heb. 11:31.
- B. There’s a lesson here about how souls are affected by the truth.
 - 1. Impressions made can quickly wear off.
 - 2. Why didn’t they repent & cry out for mercy when Israel approached?
- C. So what made Rahab different?
 - 1. She was convinced by the evidence. She KNEW God is God!
 - 2. Her heart was willing to submit to the evidence.
 - a) Rom. 6:17; Heb. 5:8-9 – her obedience saved her!

III. Her conviction was what enabled her to be bold.

- A. 2:17-18 – had to hang a scarlet cord from her window till Israel returned.
- B. Her extended family had to be there when the city was conquered.
- C. Think too...when Israelites came to city – they did nothing but March around city for 6 days. Rahab would not have known the plan. What if she gave up?
- D. Faith has always been an expensive commitment.
 - 1. Abraham/Isaac – Gen. 22:1;
 - 2. Shadrack; Meshack; Abendego – Dan. 3:17-18; Daniel – Dan. 6:10
- E. Would you be faithful if it meant your life?
 - 1. Mt. 16:24-26 – take up your cross. Rev. 2:10 – could you do this?

IV. Rahab reminds us that God can save the worst of sinners.

- A. Harlotry was an awful sin. Despicable.
 - 1. But...Rahab was delivered from sin when she obeyed.
- B. Jesus died for sinners. 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:3; Lk. 5:32; 19:10
- C. Even the worst of sinners make the best of Christians.

V. What about her lie in 2:4-6?

- A. Keep in mind – Rahab grew up a pagan and prostitute.
 - 1. It doesn’t excuse her lies/harlotry – it should help explain her actions.
- B. Rahab had her flaws – but it was her powerful faith in a God she only heard about that saved her family from destruction. Josh. 6:17; 21-23.

Conclusion:

- A. Rahab’s faith was rewarded – Josh 6:22-23.
- B. How strong is your faith? Are you willing to submit to God?