

Joshua Chapter 02 Commentary

1 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.

We remember that Joshua's first job mentioned in scripture is to be commander in chief of the armies of Israel. Sending out the spies is not a sign of distrust in God, but purely good logical sense for an army commander. He is gathering information about what he will be confronted with when he enters the promised land. In other words; you don't go into battle blind folded, you open your eyes and learn what you can of the enemy with whom you are to battle.

We notice that Joshua sent the spies secretly. He doesn't want a repeat of the first time Israel sent spies into the land of promise. No doubt, these were men who could be wholly trusted; as Joshua himself. Joshua sent them to Jericho, which is the first city that Israel is will fight against.

No doubt; the providence of God sent them to Rahab's home. Some commentators try to make Rahab be a godly woman, but the definition of harlot does not give any goodness at all. She is what the bible calls her. Harlot comes from the Hebrew word zanah (pronounced; zaw-naw') and means: *to commit adultery, to act as or be a whore. Figuratively, to commit idolatry.*

Some commentators place her in the lineage that leads to Christ, seen in: **Mt 1:5 "And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;"** I cannot affirm this to be true or untrue. Rachab is a Greek word which means: *something sweet.* If this is the same person, we recognize that she has been changed, by the grace of God, into a godly woman.

We believe Rahab was a saved woman, as seen in: **Jas 2:24-26; 24 "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."** We understand that by her actions, Rahab and her family were all saved, out of the death and destruction of Jericho. This also points us to believe that she has been save eternally from death and destruction.

2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country. 3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

Though they were sent out secretly, the enemy recognized they were Israelites, and knew that they were spies.

4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: 5 And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. 6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. 7 And the men pursued after them the way

to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

Rahab, whose heart has already been changed, hides the spies, and she lies about their doings.

8 ¶ And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. 10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11 And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Here we have evidence from Rahab's confession "*I know that the LORD*" that she has been changed. She didn't say your Lord, but she acknowledges that the God of Israel is Lord. What does she know about "*the Lord*?" She understands that he is God over all things. "***he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.***" She also gives the spies the information that they really need to know:

- God has delivered not only the city, but the land also, into your hands.
- There is no courage in any man's heart here in Jericho.

The spies now have a report to give to Joshua.

12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: 13 And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

Rahab's petition is for her life, and her family's lives, to be spared. She is asking that they all be adopted into the Israelite kingdom.

14 And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

The spies set the condition for this to happen. She cannot tell anyone, why they were in Jericho.

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. 16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. 17 And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. 18 Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

"Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall." Remember this when you see the taking of Jericho. Remember the walls

fall down, yet her house being on the wall, must not have fallen, because they would have been killed in the destruction of the house on the wall.

The spies reiterate the conditions of the covenant they are making with Rahab.

Line is a Hebrew word which means: *a cord (as an attachment)*. Figuratively it means: *expectancy, hope, live, thing that I long for*. Scarlet thread also means cord.

Rahab requested a true token, and she was given that token in the "**line of scarlet thread**." From the definition of this token, we get the picture that she expects salvation to come to her through the scarlet thread, which is representative of the blood of Christ, which shall come from her lineage as seen earlier.

19 And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. 20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. 21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

It seems that Rahab immediately tied the scarlet cord and left it hanging out the window. However, logically, it seems more likely that she only let it out the window when she knew they were there to take the city. Otherwise, it would have raised suspicion of her. The main point is she believed, and she did as she was directed, which led to the salvation of her and her family.

22 ¶ And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. 23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: 24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

First, I remind the readers; scripture is not necessarily given in chronological order, which is true in this case, and which we hope to provide ample evidence to support the validity of the scriptures.

I want to make a point here about the three days that the spies hid, which seems to be a conflict with:

- In: **Jos 1:11; ¶ "for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it."**
- In: **Jos 3:1-2; 1 ¶ "And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. 2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host;"** God told Joshua to be ready to go over Jordan in three days, so Joshua moved Israel, that day, to the camp by the Jordan river, as demonstrated here.

- In: **Jos 2:1** ¶ "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."
- In: **Jos 2:21-24**; 21 "And she sent them away, and they departed: 22 ¶ And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: 23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them: 24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us." We don't know how long it took them to make the journey back to Joshua, but it was not a long time.

Now you can understand that these scriptures are not chronological. In **Jos 1:10-11** Joshua tells the people in three days you will cross the river. Then we come to **Jos 2:1** where; we are told Joshua sent out the spies. Next, we come to **Jos 2:21-24** and see that the spies spent three days hiding in the mountain. This is where there seems to be a conflict.

Let's look at some evidence to prove this is not a conflict, beginning with: **De 34:8** "And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended." Joshua was already in command when Moses left on his death journey, having already been appointed, and anointed, to take Moses's place, seen in Deuteronomy chapter 31. From the time Joshua was appointed to lead Israel until the time they cross the river Jordan, is at a minimum thirty-three days, which is the time of mourning for Moses after his death, plus the three days after God told them to prepare to go over the river.

Joshua, consequently, as leader of Israel, sent the spies out secretly, (probably as soon as he took command of Israel) giving them plenty of time to spy out Jericho and return. Remember, Joshua has been the military leader of Israel for a long time. Joshua is doing what any good military leader would do, sending spies to get the lay of the land, and the other information needed, to make a successful fight against the enemy.

Some will say that Joshua is not trusting the Lord, to which I answer: scripture supports Joshua's actions as seen in: **Lu 14:28-31**; 28 "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" As we see in this scripture; Joshua is just exercising good sound judgment to spy out the place he is going to fight against. No doubt in my mind, Joshua understands that the victory will be by God's blessing, and by God fighting for them, as he has promised.

Praise God, our Commander in Chief, our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, did what needed to be done, without us knowing, to bring to us the good news that the victory is ours. Though we know; we must fight the warfare living Christian life; we know that Jesus has already given us the victory.

What a great encouragement this was to Israel; to know the victory was theirs already. Likewise, it is good news to us; to know that our Saviour has already given us the victory. Even the last battle, which is death of the natural body, has already been secured for us by Christ. We shall see it, in full

fruition, when we arise from the dead, or are changed in a moment, from mortal to immortal bodies, undefiled and incorruptible, forever. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Amen!