



**Mustard Seed Children's Summary for January 11, 2009
Released on Wednesday, January 7, 2009**

"Help from Rahab"

DEVOTIONAL READING: Hebrews 11:23-31

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Joshua 2; 6:22-25

LESSON TEXT: Joshua 2:1-4, 8-14; 6:22-23, 25

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Now therefore,...shew kindness unto my father's house" (Joshua 2:11-12).

Joshua 2:1-4

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.

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.

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:

Joshua 2:8-14

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.

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.

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.

Joshua 6:22-23, 25

22 But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

25 And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach again that we demonstrate our commitment to the Lord when we do what pleases Him.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

Rahab believed the report she heard about the Lord and His deliverance of Israel. When Rahab protected the spies, she was demonstrating her faith in God. Our faith in Jesus is demonstrated to others when we do what pleases Him.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS

For Beginning the Lesson, find a picture to represent Rahab.

For Telling the Lesson, you will need pictures of a walled city, the two spies, a king (or crown), Rahab, and a group to represent Rahab's extended family.

For Telling How to Live, make two flash cards: "Believe" and "Show."

For Helping to Remember, provide crayons and a sheet of yellow or light green construction paper for each student.

For the Lesson Activity, provide a copy of the word search for each student.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

Time: 1405 B.C.

Places: Shittim; Jericho

After wandering in the wilderness for forty years, a new generation of the Israelites prepared to go into the land of Canaan that God had promised to give them (Joshua 1:2). As Israel's new leader after the death of Moses, Joshua prepared to lead the people into Canaan. The first city to conquer would be Jericho and its strong walls, so Joshua sent spies out to examine the city. In Jericho, the spies were aided by a woman named Rahab, whose commitment is the focus of this week's lesson.

Most children know and enjoy the story about Joshua and the battle of Jericho. The story of Rahab, however, is the story behind the story. Rahab was a Canaanite who had heard the stories of God's deliverance of the children of Israel. She and her neighbors had heard of Israel's deliverance out of bondage in Egypt forty years earlier. The Jericho citizens had also heard of Israel's recent victories over the two kings of the Amorites across the Jordan and feared that Jericho would soon be defeated also.

Unlike the rest of Jericho, Rahab chose to put her faith in the God of Israel. Because of the stories she had heard, she chose to believe in the God of Israel and made a commitment to help the spies sent by Joshua. In return, she became a part of an amazing story and her family would be spared when the walls of Jericho tumbled down.

TEACHER'S NOTES

The citizens of Jericho were terrified. Forty years before, the God of the Israelites had opened up the sea and overthrown the armies of Egypt in order to deliver His people. Now these same people were camped directly across the river from Jericho, threatening to invade. How could Jericho defend itself against such a mighty God? That was the attitude on the Jericho side of the Jordan.

On the other side, Joshua had confidence his people were where the Lord wanted them. But as commander of the Israelite troops, he wanted some practical information. To get this he sent two spies across the river into Jericho.

The two found a lodging place that would accept them without questions—the home of a prostitute. Her name was Rahab.

Archaeologists say Jericho's wall was wide, but the city itself was not large. Seemingly, conditions were crowded, helping to explain why some houses were even built on top of the wall itself, as was Rahab's.

We are not told how Rahab learned the identity of her "roomers," but when the king's men came to seize these foreigners, she already knew and had hidden them under some flax stalks drying on the flat roof of the house. "Yes, some men were here," she acknowledged, "but I did not

know where they came from. They are gone now. Hurry, and you will catch them."

When the local authorities had hurried off, Rahab went up to talk to the spies. "I know the Lord has given you this land," she told them. She was convinced that the idols of Canaan were nothing, confessing, "The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Josh. 2:11).

Hebrews 11:31 applauds Rahab's faith, saying she did not perish along with those *who did not believe*.

She asked that, since she had shown the spies kindness, the Israelites would show *her* kindness when they took the city. The men promised, and she enabled their escape through her window on the wall.

Rahab and her entire family were spared because of her faith in the true God, which was expressed by what she did. Years later Rahab was still living peacefully among God's people.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

Before we can even start today's Bible story, I must tell you something that happened to God's people.

They had been working for the bad king (in Egypt), remember? He was the one who wanted to kill all their baby boys. But God rescued them. He even dried up part of the sea so that the people could walk out of the king's country and be safe.

When today's lesson starts, it is forty years later and God's people were right across the river from the good, new country that the Lord was giving them. The first town they would have to fight against in that new place was the city of Jericho.

And in the city of Jericho there lived a woman named Rahab. (Show Rahab.)

TELLING THE LESSON

In those days cities had walls around them. (Show walled city.) These helped keep out any enemies. Each city wall would have at least one gate somewhere to let people in and out.

Now, Jericho had a *big* wall around it. Its wall was so wide that people could even build their houses right on top of it. It happened that Rahab's house was built on the wall.

Across the river, the leader of God's people, Joshua, was thinking, *I need to know how many soldiers will be fighting against us*. So he told two of his men to sneak into Jericho and find out. (Show spies.)

That was dangerous, but the men got into Jericho all right. Somehow they learned there was a house on the wall where they could stay. It was Rahab's house.

Of course the spies did not tell people who they were, but the king found out anyway. (Show king or crown.) He sent his men to arrest them.

When they came to Rahab's house, though, she said, "Yes, some men were here." (Show Rahab.) "They are gone now. Go after them quickly! You will be sure to catch them."

Actually, Joshua's spies were not gone. The two spies were up on the flat roof of Rahab's house, just where she had hidden them. (Show spies.)

After the king's men had gone to look somewhere else, Rahab went upstairs to talk to the spies. (Show Rahab.)

"I know the Lord has given you people this land," she said. "Everyone is afraid of you. We have all heard how the Lord dried up the water for you when you came out of Egypt." She also said, "The Lord your God, He is the true God in heaven above and on earth below."

You see, the other people who lived in Rahab's country thought there were many gods. But when Rahab heard about the Lord and what He had done for His people, she knew that only *He* was God. (Show Rahab.) The spies were the Lord's men. She wanted to help them because she believed what she heard about *Him*.

"I have been kind to you," Rahab said. "Promise you will be kind to me. Promise that you will spare the lives of my father and mother and brothers and sisters and all that they have." (Show Rahab's family.)

The spies said yes. (Show spies.) "When the Lord gives us the land," they promised, "we will be good to you."

Now, by this time the city gate was shut. The spies could not get out of Jericho that way. So Rahab took them to a window. Remember where her house was built? (Let a volunteer answer.) On top of the wall! She brought some rope so that they could climb through her window and

down the rope and be safe outside the city.

Just before the spies left, they pointed to a red rope. It could have been their climbing rope, or it might have been another one. But they said, "Hang this red rope in your window, and then bring all your family into the house. (Show family.) Tell them to stay inside, and everyone inside will be safe."

That is exactly what Rahab did.

So when Joshua and his soldiers came into Jericho, they could see a red rope hanging in one of the windows on the wall, and they knew just where Rahab and her family were.

Joshua told the spies, "Go into the woman's house now. Bring her out with all her family." The men did, and everyone in the house was safe. (Show Rahab and family pictures.)

The Bible does not say what Rahab's family did then. It does say Rahab stayed with the Israelites. (Show Rahab.) Later on, when Joshua wrote down what happened that day, Rahab was still there, living with God's people.

Maybe you are wondering about something. Rahab told the king's men the spies were gone when they really were not gone. Does telling a lie please God? No, what pleased God about Rahab was that she believed He was the true God. Others in Jericho prayed to gods that were not real. Rahab believed the Lord was God, and she chose to go His way. (Show Rahab.) Rahab *showed* she believed when she helped His people.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE

Rahab did two important things. (Hold up two fingers.) First, she believed what she heard about the Lord. She knew He was the true God. Then Rahab *showed* she believed by doing something that pleased Him. She helped the spies. But she helped them because first she believed.

Those are the two important things God is waiting for you too, boys and girls. First He wants you to *believe* who Jesus is, the one God sent to die for you and live again. (Display "Believe.") Have you believed that? If so, the Bible says you are God's child.

Are you doing the second important thing? Are you pleasing Jesus? Are you doing the kind of things every day that *show* you are God's child? (Display "Show.") It was what Rahab did that showed she believed.

HELPING TO REMEMBER

Tell the students to imagine they have to write a book about Rahab and the spies. Have them fold their papers in half and then make a front cover for their book, including a title. Inside, they should print the story, in their own words, and also draw an illustration.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE

"The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. Now, therefore, . . . shew kindness unto my father's house" (Joshua 2:11-12).

Rahab was talking to the spies she had kept safe. She was saying, "I know it is your God, the Lord, who is in charge of everything in heaven and on earth. Now, because I have been kind to you, please promise that your people will be kind to me and all my family." ("Shew" is just the way people used to spell "show.")

CONCLUSION:

The story of Rahab is another Old Testament example of commitment to God. Rahab is to be commended, not for her lifestyle or her lying to protect the spies, but for putting her faith in the God of Israel. Scripture makes no secret of her bad lifestyle or her lying, but despite her shortcomings, God had mercy on her.

When Jericho's walls fell down, Rahab and all in her house were kept safe (Joshua 6:23). She and her family were rewarded for her commitment. They would live outside the camp of Israel for a while; Rahab married into the tribe of Judah and became the great-great-grandmother of King David and a relative of Jesus Christ (*Matthew 1:5-6*). In the book of Hebrews, Rahab is listed with other people of great faith (*Hebrews 11:31*). She is also commended in the book of James as one whose works showed evidence of their faith (*James 2:25*).

PRAYER:

Father God, thank you for the examples of faithful people that you give us in your Word. Help us to also be faithful. Help us to let our actions show our commitment to you. In Jesus' name, amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Following a Godly Leader" and focuses on Joshua as he prepares to lead the Israelites across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Study Joshua 3:1-17.

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books.

LESSON ACTIVITY:

Word Search - Help from Rahab (Joshua 2:1-4, 8-14; 6:22-25)

Find these key words from the lesson:

SPIES

JERICO

JOSHUA

PROMISE

GOD

COUNTRY

ROPE

ROOF

COURAGE

RESCUE

KINDNESS

ISRAEL

RAHAB

HID

FAMILY

DELIVERED

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