

RAHAB

Her Name Means "Storm," "Arrogance," "Broad," or "Spacious"



Rahab's Legacy in Scripture

Read Joshua 2:1—18.

1. What do you think prompted Rahab to hide the Hebrew spies? Why would the house of a prostitute be a good place for the spies to go when they entered the city?
2. Although Rahab was a prostitute, the lowest profession for a woman, what good characteristics did she have?
3. Why do you think God would choose to use someone like Rahab?
4. What does this say about the people God might choose to use today to further his kingdom?
5. Rephrase in your own words Rahab's eloquent plea for her life and the lives of her family (2:9—13).
6. Why do you think the spies were willing to deal with Rahab, their lives in exchange for hers?
7. Rahab's brave actions spared not only her life but also the lives of her family members. What brave actions can you take to spare your loved ones from future difficulties and harm?

Read James 2:25.

8. James mentions Rahab in his plea for believers not to forget that works are an important outgrowth of faith. How did Rahab's actions demonstrate this truth?
9. What lessons in obedience and faith can you learn from Rahab the prostitute?

WOMEN OF FAITH

HER CHARACTER:

Rahab was both clever and wise. She saw judgment coming and was able to devise an escape plan for herself and her family. As soon as she heard what God had done for the Israelites, she cast her lot with his people, risking her life in an act of faith.

KEY SCRIPTURES:

Joshua 2:1—21; 6:17—25; Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25

Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Shittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof and said to them, "I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. . . . Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you."

Then [the Israelites] burned the whole city and everything in it. . . . But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho—and she lives among the Israelites to this day.

Rahab's Life and Times

Jericho is probably best known today for its enormous walls, walls that fell because of the faith of the people of Israel (Hebrews 11:30). A wall around a city was its chief distinguishing mark. Anything without a wall was merely a village whose inhabitants would run to the nearest walled city for protection during a battle or war.

Rahab lived in a house on the wall of Jericho. She probably had a view not only of the city itself but also of the area outside of the protective walls. This view, which gave her the perfect vantage point for spotting potential customers as they entered and left Jericho, may have given her an advantage in running her prostitution business.

Homes, businesses, watchtowers, archer positions—all could be built on top of or within walls that were as much as twenty to thirty feet thick. The stronger the system of walls around a city (some cities had both an inner and an outer wall), the more defensible the city was against invaders who came across the plains.

Most walls of major cities were built of huge stones and mortar. Some stones of the wall of the temple in Jerusalem still exist. Their dimensions: thirty feet long, eight feet wide, and three and a half feet high. Each stone weighs an unbelievable eighty tons!

But no stone was large enough to protect the city of Jericho from the power of God through his people; no battering rams were needed to breach its walls. All that was necessary was the faith of God's people in what he said he would do. And the walls came tumbling down!

Our Life and Times

God is still in the tumbling wall business. Whatever walls in your life need breaking down—between you and a friend or family member, between you and God—God is willing to help take down.