

An Invitation Extended
The Rahab Story
Invitation to Promise Series – Part 2
Joshua 2:1-24
October 25-26, 2025

Introduction

- **Protection from Scamming**
- Did you hear who got invited? Radical conversion experiences – do you know some of those stories? What about Saul to Paul? Aren't all conversions a bit radical? I've found that those who are most adamant are the easiest to reach for God. It's the listless, apathetic, agnostic with no care that seem to be the most difficult (from a human point of view).

The Reach of God's Redemption is limitless

- Last Week – Pastor Becky! Find Your Place Weekend.
- Part 1 – Pastor Brian taught us:
 - *Invitation to Promise Series* – Joshua – going back roughly 3200 years!
 - The definition of success for a believer = OBEDIENCE
 - The story of Israel – **Moses hands off** to his assistant Joshua to take the Promised Land (Canaanite people groups). Different leadership, Same Vision.
 - I'm giving you the land but you have to take it. A lesson for our flesh.
 - Be strong and courageous. **I AM with you.**
- This week – The Jews find out what they are up against, and receive an unexpected encouragement...

Lesson

- Secret Hideout
 - Joshua sends out spies to Jericho
 - *Joshua 2:1 – “And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim¹ as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there.”*
 - And Joshua the son of Nun – Moses' assistant, now the leader of the Hebrew people. He is a faithful man, a tough man, a godly man. Very few men of the Bible are as good as this guy. He has a job in front of Him – take the land. He was born roughly 1355BC and lived 110 years until 1245BC. This puts our story 3200 years ago (assuming he was leading the invasion into Canaan at 70 years old which would be 1175BC).
 - The Assignment - Israel has been wandering in the desert for a long time (40 years) and although they have fought some tough battles,

¹ “For English speakers the noun “Shittim” sounds like a vulgar word and should be avoided. This is also a principle that should be followed in any language; in the translation or transliteration of terms, any vulgar-sounding words or word combinations should be avoided.” © A Handbook on the Book of Joshua – Barclay and Newman

they aren't actually trained warriors per se. **They are scrappy, they are streetwise, and they are led well.** How are they going to conquer a whole region? They don't even have enough people to fill it, if they did. **This whole concept and assignment is far bigger than they could imagine or strategize how to do it. So it begins with taking the first city on the map...Here we go.**

- sent two men² secretly from Shittim³ as spies, - Shittim is where they are currently camped and they send out two young men to find out what they are up against with this behemoth of a fortress city. This is a reconnaissance mission.
- saying, "Go, view the land, especially⁴ Jericho." – Their job was to examine the area and local cities, but there was one in particular that Joshua knew would be particularly difficult and that would be Jericho.
- What do we know about Jericho? – next week we'll talk more about Jericho's construction and why it was such a big deal to take militarily. But for now here's a few fascinating facts about this historic city. First of all it's the **first major city to the West of the Jordan** river at the time (especially from where Israel was camped with their army). It's considered the **oldest continuously occupied city in the world!** Remnants of occupation have been found from 9000BC. Thirdly, it's located in the hotly debated **West Bank** of Israel and, like Bethlehem, is under **Palestinian control** today. Fourthly, it's the city **where Herod the Great (disputed 'king of the Jews' 40 BC)** had his winter home and ended up **dying** at.⁵

² "The LXX calls them "young men," as does the MT in 6:23. Does the LXX mean to lessen the moral problem of the spies' going to the house of a harlot?" NICOT

³ "Shittim, probably the same as Abel-shittim (Num. 33:49), was the place where Israel had sinned with Baal-peor (Num. 25:1). It has been identified with Tell el-Kefrein, a cone-shaped hill guarding the Wādī Kefrein. Others think of Tell el-Hammām as the possible site (see E. G. Kraeling, The Rand McNally Bible Atlas, 124; and Y. Aharoni, The Land of the Bible, p. 32). The word Shittim means "acacia trees." NICOT, Marten Woudstra

⁴ "Jericho, the most important city in the region, was west of the Jordan." A Handbook on the Book of Joshua

⁵ Died from chronic kidney disease and gangrene of the genitals -

<https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/story?id=98107&page=1>;

<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/in-herods-footsteps>;

- And they went and came into the house of a prostitute⁶ whose name was Rahab⁷ and lodged⁸ there –
 - **Was Rahab a prostitute? – Yep.** It says so here and in Heb 11:31 and in James 2:25. Some scripture translations use the word ‘innkeeper,’ which is in some of the manuscripts, but that word for innkeeper has a negative tone to it. Whatever she did (likely ran a brothel or was a prostitute), it wasn’t good. There’s been conjecture about her for 3200 years. Some think that she was a widowed woman that had no other option. Some thought that she was a runner of a brothel. Some think that she was a regular prostitute. It doesn’t matter. **The most important biblical elements are that she was 1.) non-Jewish; 2.) not of high standing in her society.** The reason those matter is because they speak to the **wideness of Gods’ plans and grace.** God uses all kinds of people and can redeem anything.
 - Why the men chose a brothel to hide in? – if you are an enemy or on the run where would you go to **remain undetected?** Usually it’s to **hide with other people that want to avoid authorities. Also, brothel’s tend to have more flexible hours and places to lodge at inopportune times.** Many scholars have pointed out that some of the wording in the original language seems to have some nefarious tones to it about why the guys were there, but I think that’s speculation. They had a dangerous job to do and they were not on vacation.
- The Ethics of War
 - Rahab lies to protect the Jewish spies
 - *Joshua 2:2-7 – “And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.”³ Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.”⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.”⁵ And when the*

⁶ “A. Gelin is quite positive that sexual intentions (“illicite commerce”) played a part in the men’s choice; Josué, p. 27.” NICOT

⁷ “Rahab’s name is not to be confused with the name of the sea monster mentioned in Job 9:13. It may have a connection with the root *rāḥab*, “to be broad,” and be an abbreviation of a theophoric name, Rehabiah in 1 Chr. 23:17; 24:21. Josephus maintained Rahab was an innkeeper. It is possible to hold that she was both that and a harlot. The Targums call her a *pundeqita*, which means innkeeper. But, as Kroeze indicates (Jozua, p. 36), this word in the Targums always receives an unfavorable sense.” NICOT

“What we make of this story will probably tell a lot about our prejudices. A few translators and commentators have sought to rescue Rahab’s reputation by a discreet change of terms. For them she is a hotel-keeper or, if that is too grand and formal, the landlady of a bed and breakfast establishment. Given the suggestiveness of the story, that will suffer the fate of many well-meaning but ill-thought-out schemes. Men and women of the world will quickly point out what they have heard about the goings on in seedy hotels and lodging houses. Many of us who enjoy the twilight world of the intelligence services in novel or in film will shrug our shoulders and admit it is a dirty business, but necessarily so. All the best secrets are learned in bed. One favour deserves another. And where, after all, would a stranger expect to meet the riff-raff prepared to sell their country? Other readers with some knowledge of how society works may suggest to us that Rahab was a widow. In some societies part of the curse of widowhood and the attendant loss of status, income and protection is that a woman has to offer the only thing that many men want from a woman. They will also wonder if she was a foreigner owing little loyalty to the citizens who allowed her residence and employment only at their own convenience.” Graeme Auld – Bible Commentary

⁸ “The word *šakab*, “sleep,” does indeed have an ambiguous meaning and may be used of sexual intercourse, but in v. 8 it seems to be used without such connotation. There is no reason to understand it otherwise in v. 1. Some read v. 3, “who have come to you,” as having sexual overtones (cf. Gen. 38:16; Judg. 16:1). This is indeed a possible meaning of the phrase, but the addition “who have entered your house” would seem to be against that understanding here.” NICOT

gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.”⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof.⁷ So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.”

- And it was told to the king⁹ of Jericho, - The big cities of that area (and many areas of Canaan) were independent so that localized leader would be the ‘king’. This was the big man in charge who was mostly interested in this massive caravan army of Jews coming to his border and wanting to be protected from their advance.
- “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.” – how he found out about this or who outed the guys is a mystery, but **they were found out**. Clearly they weren’t very good spies. ☺ So there was a search party going for them. The city police knew that this was a reconnaissance mission and they were getting intel for a possible invasion.
- Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, - How in the world they knew that the guys had been to Rahab’s house/establishment is another mystery. **Clearly someone found out who they were and followed them to Rahab’s**. They turned in the information and the police force showed up at her front door.
- saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” – The police demanded that she hand over the spies citing what their crimes were. I get the feeling that there was a lot of **pressure and loudness about the betrayal of someone hiding spies for an enemy force**. All of her neighbors would have to know what they were there and what they were looking for. If she lied to them eyes would still be prying to find out if she was a traitor to her city.
- But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. – It’s important to note that this story is not tightly chronological from this point forward. It seems that the actual order of events was the guys came to her, she had a conversation about everything and then made them make a covenant with her for her safety and then she hid them. The way the story is laid out it jumps back and forth in time like flashbacks. Bottom line, she hid the guys.
- And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. – Now **Rahab shifts into protection and lying mode**. She knows they are upstairs but tells the city police that they in fact, DID come there (clearly someone saw them arrive and tattled on her), but she

⁹ “From the so-called Amarna tablets, 14th century correspondence between Canaanite kinglets and Egyptian pharaohs, it is known that Canaan at this time consisted of city states each with its own king (cf. also 12:9; Judg. 1:7).” NICOT

makes it clear that she has a lot of guests and had no clue as to the men's identity or interests.

- And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. – She then goes on with her tale that those guys were there but they took off right before the gates were closed for the night and escaped.
- I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” – To make matters more believable, she acts like she's helping the authorities. She says, 'although I don't know where they went, I'm sure you can catch up to them if you hurry. They can't be far!' Of course this is a lie.
- But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax¹⁰ that she had laid in order on the roof. – This explains very clearly that she was lying. Interestingly, one commentary said that flax means it was likely springtime, which is helpful for imagining the story.
- So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out. – The local police take her word for it and rush out of the city (getting the nighttime gates to open for them to get out), and they run into the night to track these guys down. The *fords* would be 'places to cross the Jordan river.'
- **Why did the men trust Rahab's word and not search the place?**¹¹ – sometimes the police know the local sex workers really well. They know the difference in the women. There are some trustworthy ladies and non-trustworthy ones. Perhaps Rahab was one that they knew would tell them if she knew. As far as they know she would have no reason to side with the enemy, it would affect her livelihood too.
- **Is Rahab a liar?**¹² – **Absolutely.** So, how do we credit her with a good deed if she lied? This is where things get tricky, in my opinion. The reasoning used is that she was siding with God against bad guys and so it's okay. But here's the thing, that is what every religion says and uses to justify bad behavior. The radical Muslims say that they are allowed to lie to 'infidels' because they are against Allah. Every cult leader says the same thing. So, when is lying justified? When is it okay? When is it a good thing? The Bible refers to Rahab multiple times as a good woman who did what she did out of faith and it pleased God. How is that possible?

¹⁰ "Flax is a plant from whose stem a fiber was made, to be used for weaving into linen cloth (see Fauna and Flora of the Bible, Flax). The stalks had been laid out on the flat roof to dry out, and this may indicate that it was springtime (see 3:14–15)." A Handbook on the Book of Joshua

¹¹ "The narrative does not state explicitly that the spies were the recipients of special divine care. Yet it is strange that the king's messengers were so quickly persuaded of the accuracy of this woman's words and that no search of her house was instituted. The Bible is often sparing with indications of divine guidance over against human intrigue (cf. Gen. 50:20; 2 Sam. 17:14). Yet this guidance may well be implied by the narrator of this account." NICOT

"The king's ribald but not unfriendly conversation with Rahab may have given her her first inkling of the identity of her two clients; and it may say something for her reputation in Jericho that her word was accepted and her house not searched. No official harassment here with police heavies shouldering in the door!" Graeme Auld, Bible Commentary

¹² "Several commentators call Rahab's words a lie. Others point out that the account does not contain a value judgment, which it is left to the reader to supply from the wider biblical context. B. Holwerda (Jozua, p. 8) argues that "truth" in Israel is something different from "agreement with fact." It means "loyalty toward the neighbor and the Lord." Thus viewed, Rahab's words need not be called a lie." NICOT

- Heb 11:29–31 – “By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.”
- Jas 2:22–25 – “You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works;²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God.²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.²⁵ And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?”
- **Assessing lying** – lying is listed in the list of sins that provoke the wrath of God (1 Tim 1:10), and Satan is called the father of lies (John 8:44), so clearly God doesn’t look kindly at lying. Lying destroys trust and trust ruins relationships (and community). So, when is lying considered okay or good? We think about the times when missionaries lie about having bibles to smuggle them into closed areas. We think about those that lied about hiding Jews from the Holocaust. We think about Harriett Tubman who lied to smuggle out slaves in the underground railroad. All of those are considered heroes for what they did and why they did it. But isn’t that a slippery slope? If we can justify lying we can do it? If we think we are lying for the right reasons (lying about adultery because our spouse would be crushed if they knew), then it’s okay? That doesn’t sound right. But this is where we have to realize that not everything is equal. God is the center of all things. Yahweh determines what is justified and not. When there is an alignment with the will of God it is justified. That doesn’t justify any other attempt to lie for a false god (there is no other true God than Yahweh). It actually means that at some point we say that, yes, it’s justified if it’s Yahweh-based. How many of us could purely discern that? Not many so God will have to be the ultimate judge of what He authorized and didn’t. But I do need to say that the lie is bad relationally regardless of the ultimate ends. Lying is deception. The point I’m making is that we don’t get to call it good or nice just because we can justify it. It’s a bad thing that was forced in a bad situation. It was a bunch of sin that demanded that God operate in a lying atmosphere. We shouldn’t minimize sin, but clearly show the ramifications of it.
- Scared Straight
 - Rahab recounts God’s impact on Jericho
 - Joshua 2:8-11 – “Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof⁹ and said to the men, “I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.¹⁰ For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to

the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.”

- Before the men lay down, - Although this is going back in time (flashback), when they talked about the plan, the spies hadn't gone to sleep yet.
- she came up to them on the roof and said to the men, “I know that the Lord¹³ has given you the land, - Immediately there is something to note here. **She used the name, Yahweh for God.** This means she isn't just saying, ‘I think your local god is bigger than our local god.’ It means that **she has done some research and knows that the Jewish God is Yahweh and He is something different.** It's not a local dispute, but a universal difference. She knows that this Yahweh is watching over the Jews and giving them victory. **This isn't about an army against an army, but Jericho against an Almighty God. She's tapping out early.**
- Rahab contrasted with the 10/12 spies that didn't believe – Notice that 40 years prior to this incursion into the Promised Land, Moses sent out 12 spies. Only two (Caleb and Joshua) could see God's greatness in what He was doing and would do. Only 2 of the 12 had the faith that God could and would do the impossible. 10 couldn't see it. But **here we have a Gentile woman prostitute who could clearly see what they could not.** This is not an accident. This is **God embarrassing His people.**
- and that the fear of you has fallen upon us,¹⁴ and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. – Rahab had the pulse of the people in her city and knew that people were freaking out. They had not just heard the rumors but all the reconnaissance her people had done had revealed that this Jewish army was unstoppable. Beyond logistical damage there was a supernatural unsettledness and doom in their hearts and she read that as God shaking their hearts. She knew it was **evidence that God was unstoppable.**
- For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea¹⁵ before you when you came out of Egypt, - When people tried to explain their terror of the Hebrews they cited a couple different stories of how God did the impossible and defeated great armies. The first story that came to mind happened just over **40 years prior** (a lot of them may not have been alive but the story lived on). It was when God did the miracle

¹³ ““The Lord”—and in Hebrew that is a proper name, “Yahweh”—has given them the land, and fear of them and of him has knocked all the stuffing out of the land's inhabitants.” Graeme Auld – Bible Commentary

¹⁴ “Her words bear out the truth of Exod. 15:14–16; 23:27.” NICOT

¹⁵ “In spite of the modern trend toward “Reed Sea” as the translation of Heb. yām sūp, we believe a good case can be made for “Red Sea.” According to L. Koehler-W. Baumgartner (Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros [Leiden: 1958], p. 652), sūp means “rushes,” “waterplants,” such as were also wrapped around the face of Jonah who was thrown into the Mediterranean Sea (Jon. 2:5). Kraeling, The Rand McNally Bible Atlas, p. 103, states that yām sūp “is most definitely identifiable” when it refers to the Gulf of Aqabah (1 K. 9:26). This gulf was an arm of the Red Sea, not of some body of water called Reed Sea. The point is not essential to the thought expressed here and will not be pursued further.” NICOT

of bringing the Hebrews out of Egypt in the Exodus and opened up a way through the Red Sea so that they crossed over on dry ground. It demonstrated that any battle with these people would not be based on army size or training. Supernatural changes the logistics.

- and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites¹⁶ who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon – The story of these two wars/battles is found in **Numbers 21**. When the Hebrews were in their 40 year wandering of the desert times were tough. Periodically they would get attacked by people groups in the area. Two of those battles were with the people of Heshbon and Bashan. Both were people in Canaan which would make them Canaanite people. But another term for Canaanites were Amorites. It's a catch-all title for people that lived in that whole area. Sometimes it was specific people who identified as Amorite, and sometimes it was people that fell under the broad banner of Amorite. In the first case with the people of Heshbon (Sihon), **Moses tried to pass through their territory in peace**, but Sihon refused and attacked them. God empowered the Hebrews to defeat them miraculously, which ended up allowing them to settle in Heshbon and the surrounding villages.
 - Nu 21:21–26 – *"Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, ²² 'Let me pass through your land. We will not turn aside into field or vineyard. We will not drink the water of a well. We will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory.' "* ²³ *But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. He gathered all his people together and went out against Israel to the wilderness and came to Jahaz and fought against Israel. ²⁴ And Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as to the Ammonites, for the border of the Ammonites was strong. ²⁵ And Israel took all these cities, and Israel settled in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all its villages. ²⁶ For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and taken all his land out of his hand, as far as the Arnon."*
- and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. – In the second story (Og of Bashan), it was **Israel who were on the offense**, but when they were counterattacked by Bashan, it looked like they might lose, but God miraculously let them win that as well. It demonstrated that the size of the army didn't seem to matter to this Yahweh.
 - Nu 21:31–35 – *"Thus Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. ³² And Moses sent to spy out Jazer, and they captured its villages and dispossessed the Amorites who were there. ³³ Then they turned and went up by the way to Bashan. And Og the king of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. ³⁴ But the LORD said to Moses, 'Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hand, and all his people, and his land. And you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.' "* ³⁵ *So they defeated him and his sons and all his people, until he had no survivor left. And they possessed his land."*
- And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, - These dynamic, more recent battles,

¹⁶ "This term is used in a variety of ways in the OT. Amorites occur in the Table of Nations (Gen. 10:16). The term also stands for all the inhabitants of Canaan (Gen. 15:16). Sometimes it "is the most generic name for the populations here envisioned" (R. North, *Bibl* 54 (1973), p. 48. However, in this case and elsewhere, it is reserved for dwellers on the east side of the Jordan (9:10; 24:8)." NICOT

that Israel won, struck irrational fear into the hearts of the Jericho inhabitants and people of the land. It was so bad that people felt like they were going to faint.

- for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath – And here is the beautiful testimony that Rahab says about God. She says that Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, is the true God of all the heavens (their term for all stuff) and on the earth below (He is not a localized God but worldwide). She knows that she is dealing with something, someone greater than she could imagine. She knew that there was no winning against this God and she wanted in.
- **Flipping the script: God as victor, not Satan** – I grow frustrated with both my own mistakes and the mistakes of believers around me who hype up the enemy too much to the detriment of God's worship. There are so many stories about spiritual warfare and the focus is on the enemy. There's too many comments about how life is so hard, but not enough about God's redemption and overcoming. A specific area that this affects is how Christians talk about the end times (e.g. the Book of Revelation). There is so much fear mongering and talking about the mark of the beast and the persecution and the devastations of the Antichrist. But the book of Revelation was a book talking about the greatness of God and the rule of King Jesus the Supreme. The more we talk about scary things and how the enemy is so big and dangerous we encourage his ability to be a bully (bully's work off rumors). Shouldn't we focus more on the Almighty power of the Almighty?

- Quid Pro Quo

- Rahab makes a deal with the spies

- *Joshua 2:12-21 – "Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." ¹⁴ And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the Lord gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you." ¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall. ¹⁶ And she said to them, "Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way." ¹⁷ The men said to her, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. ¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. ¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his*

blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head.

²⁰ But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear.” ²¹ And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.”

- Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that, as I have dealt kindly¹⁷ with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, - Rahab is clear that the Hebrews are coming and they are going to win. There is no other option. Therefore **she not only wants to join their team but you will notice that her concern is not just about selfishly saving her own life alone but saving as many as she can.** She had demonstrated that she was willing to defend them and now it was time for them to defend her (marketplace politics).
- and give me a sure sign¹⁸ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our¹⁹ lives from death.” – She wants an agreement, a covenant that they will hold up their side of the bargain. She wants them to promise that her whole family would be protected from the attack coming.
 - **Rahab’s protective nature and unselfishness²⁰** - The more I read this story again and again I am impressed by her unselfishness and strategy to protect those of her family. She has a heart like the great saints who were willing to die to protect their loved ones. Think of 1 Tim 5:8 in relation to having to correct Christians on care for family but here we have a gentile prostitute leading the way.
 - 1 Ti 5:8 – “*But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*”

¹⁷ “Heb. *ḥesed*, a word hard to translate by one English equivalent. Koehler-Baumgartner, Lexicon, translates it with: “Gemeinschaftspflicht, Verbundenheit, Solidarität.” The word means principally that one is loyal to a covenant relationship, but it also contains the notions of mercy and of kindness. Many translations use the notion of “kindness” at this point: ASV, RSV, American Translation, Moffatt, Jerusalem Bible; Abel “bonté”; Zürcher Bibel “Barmherzigkeit”; Noth “Treue”; Holwerda similar, DNV “Weldaad.” NICOT

¹⁸ “Some commentators wish to omit these words, which do not occur in the LXX, e.g., Noth. Gelin puts them in brackets. Perhaps the LXX, thinking that these words must be understood in terms of the scarlet cord, considered them out of place here. We prefer to take them as referring to the oath which Rahab requested (with Keil and Delitzsch, B. Alfrink, and Kroeze). A solemn oath in oriental context might well be referred to as a “sign.” For the LXX text at this point, cf. also Holzinger, op. cit., p. 5, who thinks he can detect more than one point where the LXX has smoothed out (“Glättungen”) the text.” NICOT

¹⁹ “Rahab thinks in terms of family and clan. This is in keeping with the thought patterns of the ancient Near East. It is also an indication of her unselfishness.” NICOT

²⁰ “Firstly, Rahab is not just saving her own skin. It is almost idle to speculate about Rahab’s connections with her family. Were they ordinarily dependent on her? Was she the sole breadwinner for a whole family at the margin of Jericho’s society? Or does her concern with her father’s house echo part of the Joseph story? She has—however briefly—the opportunity in her hands to influence events. Will she, like Joseph, grasp this chance and use it for the benefit of a family who do not deserve it of her? Whether her day-to-day relationships with her family were cordial or non-existent, it was their responsibility to look after her, not the other way round. An unmarried woman, whether before marriage or after divorce, was the responsibility of her father.” NICOT

- And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death!"²¹ If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the Lord gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you." – The spies showed a strong faith as well. They seemed to be confident that God would give them victory even though they were standing in an impenetrable fortress (it was right in front of their eyes). **Perhaps their faith was spurred by her faith and testimony.** They speak of victory as if it's fact. They agree with the covenant/contract of protection.
- **What we lose when we exclude people from our lives that are different from us (genealogy of Messiah – great, great grandson David)** – Imagine if the guys would have been selfish and ignored her pleas. Imagine if they would have said, who cares about this prostitute, it's a good thing we got out of there. What if they would have allowed the pressure of embarrassment of talking to Joshua the commander about taking the word of a prostitute and protecting her? Here's what they may have missed. Do you realize that Rahab, this **Rahab, is in the line of the Messiah? God used her to get married to a Jewish guy named Salmon** and they had a baby named Boaz who married Ruth (e.g. the book of Ruth). They had a baby named Obed, who had a baby named Jesse, who had King David. If you go down 14 more generations you have Joseph, Jesus' step-dad.
- Mt 1:1–6, 12-17 – "*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. ²Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶and Jesse the father of David the king...*"¹² *And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, ¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. ¹⁷So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations."*

²¹ "Heb. lit. "our life instead of you to die." NICOT

"The answer the Israelites give to Rahab's request is difficult to understand. In Hebrew it is literally "Our lives for yours (plural) to death." As Soggin says, this is "a self-cursing formula which guarantees the promise that they make." So TEV has May God take our lives if we don't do as we say! But the alternative translation in the footnote is also possible, though less likely. The clause if we don't do as we say may also be phrased, "if anything happens to one of you." To avoid two consecutive "if" clauses, the second may be rendered, "But you must not tell anyone that we were here." The next clause may then be rendered, "Then when the LORD gives us this land, we will keep our promise to treat you and your family well." A Handbook on the Book of Joshua

- Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall.²² – Rahab needed to get these guys out of there without notifying any more looky-loos. She decided to let them down out the back of the home. Since **her home was built between** the inner wall and the outer wall (next week we'll talk about the design and construction of Jericho), it allowed her to have an **external view from a window** (albeit high up). She let them down by a rope.
- And she said to them, "Go into the hills,²³ or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way." – Notice that she has a strategy and knows the area. The guys are new here and have no clue where to run in a jam. **She again demonstrates her leadership and sharp mind. No wonder she 'runs a home business'.**
- The men said to her, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet²⁴ cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. – The men agreed to the covenant and clarified the stipulations. They would only be able to protect her if they had a **clear indicator to tell the army that would be attacking** (it was likely not going to be them personally). They suggested tying a scarlet cord as a sign of what house not to attack for the Hebrews (many people have made sermon material about the scarlet red color being a sacrifice and blood color and tying it to Jesus, which is a stretch to me, but perhaps). Also they can't tell the army to find her family and protect them because they didn't know how the city was going to be attacked. Therefore, they said we can only do this if it's practical, so gather everyone you want alive in your house and we can protect them. We are not responsible for anyone outside that home. If any of your family is harmed that blood is on us!

²² "A house built into the city wall: archaeological excavations reveal that at one time Jericho had two city walls, an inner one and an outer one, separated by a space of some 3:5 to 4:5 meters. Houses were built on heavy timbers laid from one wall to the other: the window through which Rahab let the men down looked out from the outer wall (see Bright). The phrase a house built into the city wall could possibly be unclear; it may be more satisfactory to translate "a section of the city wall formed the outside wall of Rahab's house." Moreover, it may even be necessary to include a footnote, indicating more precisely the relation between the house and the city wall." A Handbook on the Book of Joshua

²³ "In her advice to the men (To the mountain country you must go), the woman may have thought of Jebel Qarantal, a prominent moun-taintop northwest of Jericho, identified by the Crusaders as the scene of Jesus' temptation. This area is full of crevices and caves, and would thus provide a likely hiding place." NICOT

²⁴ "Some of the Church Fathers considered the red cord that Rahab used as a sign whereby she and her family would be spared from death to be a symbol of the blood of Christ. Rahab herself was considered a symbol of the Church, since she by her faith and kindness secured the safety of her family. Typological connections of this sort must be handled with great care. Indeed, a real typological connection between the Testaments should be recognized in the light of the Bible's own consciousness. But due care should be taken to detect whether there is in fact a real line of continuity running from the "type" to that which it is supposed to typify. No mere coincidence such as the sameness of the color or other externalities will suffice. The men state precisely what will be the case. He who is not in Rahab's house at the time of the capture of Jericho, his blood will be on his own head,³⁴ i.e., he will be responsible for his death, whereas the men themselves will assume responsibility for the death of any who will be with Rahab in the house. Rahab, as they have stated before, is sworn to complete secrecy." NICOT

- But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear.” – They also made it clear that if she messes up and tells on them or exposes any of the plans, all bets are off.
- And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” – She agrees wholeheartedly.
- Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window. – She let them down through the window and as they ran into the night, she tied the scarlet cord to her window in faith.
- Imagine That
 - The spies return with good news
 - *Joshua 2:22-24 – “They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing. ²³ Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them. ²⁴ And they said to Joshua, “Truly the Lord has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us.”*
 - They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing. – Sure enough **they followed her plan to a T**. They took off and went into a part of the region that is filled with caves and crevices. There was an active search party looking for them, but they were only two young guys who could pretty much hide anywhere. **It worked.**
 - Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them. – Eventually they got back to camp and reported all that had occurred and what they learned.
 - And they said to Joshua, “Truly the Lord has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us – And they shared the testimony that Rahab told them, and **everyone’s faith was built up.**
 - **The power of testimony** – I believe that many of us struggle with faith and confidence in the Lord because we are lax in telling testimony. If we told the miracles of God more, actual things that happened to us and our friends, then we would all be so much more confident to step out with the Lord, to pray powerfully, and to live into His purposes.

Conclusion

- The power of God’s redemption - Rahab and her family were invited into the promise of God. **It doesn’t matter who you are or what you’ve done; God’s plan of redemption includes you!** God’s sees worth in the world’s worthlessness.
- Salvation message – **God’s wrath is coming, whose side do you want to be on?**
- **Prayer for those we assume are too far from God for Him to reach**