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## The Faith of Rahab at Jericho

### 11: 30-31

The faith of Rahab at Jericho DIG: Explain why Rahab was willing to help the two spies escape (Joshua 2:9-11)? Compare Rahab's comments about God (Joshua 2:8-14) with the Israelites comments (Deuteronomy 1:27-28). How would you describe the difference between the two? What is amazing about Rahab ending up in the messianic family tree and in the Hall of Faith?<sup>341</sup>

REFLECT: Which situation of those in the Hall of Faith would have been the most difficult for you face? Why? What does it mean to you that not all these people of faith met with success? What has your faith cost you? How has your faith attracted those around you in your neighborhood? At school? Your family? Your friends? With respect to the people mentioned in the Hall of Faith, with whom do you feel you have the most in common? Why? With whom do you have the least in common? Why? How has your life changed as a result of your faith in God?

After the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy, to see link click Bi - The Stipulations of the Covenant**), Moshe had appointed **Joshua** to take his place before he died. Then **ADONAI** brought **the nation** right back to Kadesh Barnea where they had been disobedient some forty years before (see the commentary on **Numbers By - The Rebellion of the People**). The situation was not easy. In fact it closely paralleled the dilemma Moshe and **the Israelites** faced encountered at the Sea of Reeds. In both cases the obstacle occurred at the beginning of the leaders' ministries. Both were impossible to overcome by natural means. Both demanded unspoken **trust** in and absolute dependence on **God's** miracle-working power.

**Joshua** had been one of **the twelve spies** who had explored the Promised Land forty years earlier (see **Numbers Bv - The Selection of the Spies**). Now as **he** faced westward and viewed the land that **God** had promised across the Jordan River, it was natural for **him** to want to gather as much information as possible for a successful battle. Looming in the middle of his path was the walled city of **Jericho**, the key citadel of the Jordan Valley, which controlled the passes to the central highlands. But before attacking **it**, **Joshua** needed complete information about the fortress - its gates, fortified towers, military force, and the

morale of its people. As a result, **two** secret **spies** were chosen and sent on a carefully concealed mission. Not even **the Israelites** were to know of it least an unfavorable report dishearten **them** as it had **their** fathers at Kadesh Barnea. By the providence of **God**, **the two men** were led the house of **Rahab**.<sup>342</sup>

By **faith** the prostitute **Rahab** welcomed the **two spies in peace (11:31a)**. **Rahab** was an unlikely candidate for the **faithful's** Hall of Fame. For starters, **she** was a prostitute. Moreover, **she** was a Gentile, and a Canaanite at that. **She** was, in fact, an Amorite, a race that **YHVH** had long before marked for destruction (**Genesis 15:16**). Yet that is how the grace of **ADONAI** works. **His** mercy is available to all who will receive it, and **His** grace has always been available to the Gentiles even during the Dispensation of the Torah: **I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse and all Gentile peoples on earth will be blessed through you (Genesis 12:3)**.<sup>343</sup>



**Rahab** hid the **spies** and helped **them** escape (see the commentary on **Joshua An - The Faith of Rahab**). In return **she** asked that **she** and **her** family would be spared when **the city** was taken. **Her** words to **the spies** give us a unique insight into the difference between **fear** and **faith**. **Hers** was not a blind **faith**. **She** was well informed about **Isra'el's** exploits. **And she said to the men: "I know that Adonai has given you the land - dread of you has fallen on us and all the inhabitants of the land are melting in fear before you. For we have heard how Adonai dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. When we heard about it, our hearts melted, and no spirit remained any more in anyone because of you. For Adonai your God, He is God, in heaven above and on earth**

**beneath (Joshua 2:9-11).** To show **her faith**, she tied a **line of scarlet thread**, foreshadowing **the blood** of **Messiah**, in her window so when **the Israelites** returned and conquered Jericho, **Rahab** and her family would be safe (**Joshua 2:18 and 21**).

**Rahab** had no more light than any other inhabitants of **Jericho**. All were awed by the miracles **Ha'Shem** had performed, and were convinced that **He** had given Canaan to **the Israelites**. And they were terrified. Yet despite what they knew and feared they fought against **God's people** and resisted **His** known will. They heard the voice of **YHVH** but they refused to surrender. All but **Rahab**. **She** acknowledged **ADONAI** as **the God of heaven and earth**. **She** too heard **God's** voice in the reports of what **He** had done for **His people**. And rather than resist, **Rahab** came to **God** to seek refuge. And **because she welcomed the spies in peace, she was not killed with those** Canaanites **who were disobedient (11:31b)**. For **her faithful** courage **Rahab** was not only spared but was honored. **She** became the mother of Boaz, who married **Ruth**, the great-great-grandmother of **David** (see the commentary on **Ruth Bd - Coda: The Genealogy of David**), and **she** thereby came to be an ancestor of **Yeshua** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ai - The Genealogies of Joseph and Mary**).

Knowing the truth about **God** still provokes one of two responses. Human beings either reject **Him** and resist **His** will, like the citizens of **Jericho**, or they surrender and seek refuge in **Him** by **faith**, as **Rahab** did because **those who are righteous will live their lives by faith (Hebrews 10:38 CJB quoting Habakkuk 2:4 CJB)**.<sup>344</sup>

**Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand.** This was the **same man** who Abraham met overlooking the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 18:2**). It was **the second Person of the Trinity, the preincarnate Messiah**. Not knowing who it was, **Joshua went up to Him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" "Neither," He replied, "but as commander of ADONAI's army I have come."** Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence and asked Him, **"What message does my Lord have for His servant."** The commander of the **LORD's** army replied, **"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy,"** And Joshua did so. (**Joshua 5:13-14**),

**Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the Ark. On the seventh day, march around the**

**city seven times, with the priests blowing their trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up and defeat the city” (Joshua 6:1-5).** The instructions made no military sense, but **Israelites** acted on the orders of **their** unseen **Commander**. When **the seventh** circuit was completed **the people shouted** and **by faith the walls of Jericho fell (11:30).**<sup>345</sup>

**The walls of Jericho** were massive structures and were wide enough at the top for two chariots to ride side-by-side. **Jericho** was a frontier fortress city, located strategically near the mouth of the Jordan River, and its **walls** were designed to protect it from the strongest enemy attack. **Jericho** was the first obstacle in Canaan, and from a human perspective seemed an impossible task to the ragtag multitude of **Hebrews** who had been wandering in circles in the wilderness for so many years. **Its** location was strategic; **its** walls were high and thick, and **its** soldiers were well-trained and well-armed. **God** would later use the army of **Isra’el** to conquer the Promised Land, but **His** plan for **Jericho** was for **the people** to do nothing more than a few symbolic acts to show **them** and the Canaanites, **His** power.

One of the most amazing things about **God’s** plan was that **the people** didn’t voice a single word of doubt or complaint. They believed **Joshua’s** report from **ADONAI**, and **they** immediately began to prepare for the march. For a full week **they** carefully and **faithfully** marched. It was a milestone of **faith** in the life of **Isra’el**.

**The LORD** delights in slaying the pride of mankind. **He** slew the pride of the city of **Jericho** by making its city **walls** collapse in the most foolish possible way, just as some years later He would send a little boy to kill the giant Goliath and send the Philistines running. In the defeat of **Jericho**, **He** also demolished any pride **the Israelites** might have had. It was obvious that their part was pretty symbolic. They could take absolutely no credit for themselves. All **God** wanted was **their faith**, and this **they** gave, for **by faith the walls of Jericho fell.**<sup>346</sup>