

2008 HEROS – RAHAB- WOMAN OF OPPORTUNITY

Joshua 2:1-4 &12-14

Today we are looking at the great work
That God can do in the lives of his people.
We will see how His blessings have come
To a woman who didn't expect them and didn't deserve them.

Rahab was a pagan living in spiritual darkness.
a harlot living in sinful depravity.
Nature may form us, but sin deforms us,
Rahab was a Canaanite bound for sure destruction
And yet she went from a shady lady to a shining star;
from the house of shame to the hall of fame ---
transformed by the grace of God.
She went from a child of hell to a citizen of heaven;
She was so transformed that she married a prince of Israel.
Became the great-great grandmother of King David.
And a part of the bloodline of Jesus Christ.
so if you think your life has been so bad that God
Can't redeem you, then let look in on this story
and the amazing woman. Rahab.

Joshua, the commander and chief of the Army of Israel,
Was about to lead the army into the promised land,
He had just led them across the Jordan and
Now he had a little problem.
The land was already occupied,
And the great city of Jericho stood in his way.
To enter the promised land,
one had to pass over Jericho.

Joshua as a good commander wanted and needed information.
He sent out his CIA, his SEALS
Or whatever he called his special forces.

"Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." Jericho 2:1

The spies were young and walked with authority,
Tried to mix in with the crowds coming and going,
All the while memorizing the fortification of the walls,
its weakness and strength.
No army could defeat Jericho without coming thru the walls

The spies were probably a little too eager,
Because they attracted some attention.
The King of Jericho was told two spies have entered the city.
So to avoid discovery they entered a place of prostitution
So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

Joshua 2:1

Here it is that we meet

I. RAHAB WAS A WOMAN OF FAITH

We do not know a lot about her,
Except the scripture says she was a prostitute.

In today's world prostitutes get high billing.
in playboy and centerfolds,
We see them as guests on talk shows,
On TV sitcom of like "Girls next door."
Making untold wealth.
But in Joshua's day,
no woman could be an Israelite and be a prostitute.
It was and still is an abomination to God.

Now we are not told why she entered into the profession.
But we can surmise that it had to do with caring for her family.
Since that was primarily on her mind when she
Made the contract with the spies.
Had her father gotten sick, been injured,
Her husband and brothers been killed or died,
We don't know,
But we do know that she was responsible for the family.
And without a husband or provider,
She opted to survive in the only way she knew how.
Her place was unique in that it was on the walls of Jericho.
Walls that were so big you
Could drive two chariots side by side
around on top of them.

Archaeological findings revealed
Jericho actually was a city of double walls.
With a gap of 12 to 15 feet between.
And in certain places,
Timbers were laid over the space of the wall as beams,
And houses were built on top with sun-dried brick.
Rahab's house was of these strategic houses
With a window looking out on the outer wall.

So the two spies eager to avoid notice,
Mixed with the crowds outside the wall,
And perhaps knowing they were under observation,
Choose to lose themselves in the flow of traffic
In and out of this prostitute's house.
But the king is alerted.

³ So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land."
Joshua 2:3

Not only did Rahab see an opportunity.

But as a woman of faith,

II. RAHAB SEIZED THE MOMENT OF OPPORTUNITY.

It is one thing to see an opportunity,

Its another thing to take it.
 Rahab seized the moment and risked her life.
 What started out saving two men,
 Ended up saving her whole family.

"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. ¹⁰
 All things are possible with God.

Could Rahab put her finger on the moment when
 For some unfathomable reason
 She began to believe in this God,
 Though she knew little about him.
 That he was the true God of God's
 And He would be able to help her escape the slavery of her profession.
 This heaviness of heart,
 And pain in her head that somehow this God
 Could and would forgive her sins.

**Jesus said; if you have faith in God, even the
 Size of a mustard seed." Matthew 17:20**

She hid the spies
 And when the kings men came
⁴ She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come
 from. ⁵ At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know
 which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them .
Joshua 2:4-5

Why would she trust these men from Joshua's Army?
 And hide spies who were a threat to her city's security?

Was it that she had heard from the men who shared her bed
 How the Hebrews had destroyed Og and Sihon,
 And the two Amorite Kings east of Jordan.
 And were planning on destroying Jericho as well.

**We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you
 came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites
 east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed Joshua 2:10**

Jericho's King had also heard it,
 And all the people were frightened, and
 Stepped up their surveillance.
 She said to the two spies,

**When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of
 you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.
 Joshua 2:11a**

So in a great act of faith,
 She deceived the king's men,
 And hid the soldiers on top of her roof

**But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she
 had laid out on the roof.) Joshua 2:6**

And in that moment of opportunity,
 She moved from her belief in Baal,
 To the living God.
 And she entrusted her whole life and her family to him.
 She said:

for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Joshua 2:11

So the king's men left
 To search for the spies,
 And the gates of Jericho were closed with the
 Contraband spies in her house, on her rooftop.

**III. RAHAB AS A WOMAN OF FAITH
 TEACHES US THAT IF WERE WILLING TO LEAVE OUR PAST,
 WE CAN MOVE FORWARD.**

**No matter what our circumstance,
 AND SHE TEACHES US THAT OUR PAST
 DOES NOT HAVE TO DETERMINE OUR FUTURE.**

With God's help we can change direction.
 We can move to a new location.
 We can become a brand new person.

Let me challenge you:
 Are you attached to this world?
 Do we live only for that which we can
 see and feel, smell and tastes, around us?
 Are we clinging to some habit that we can't break?,
 Some attitude that is hurting us,
 Perhaps some past that has victimized us?.
 But we can't seem to break out from,
 Let me tell you

God says all who are in Christ are new Creations.

Change is determined by a choice of the will.
 Will you choose to let God touch you today
 And begai to put off the old and put on the new?

Now that takes courage.
 Everyone in Jericho saw that a new Kingdom was coming,
 But only Rahab had the faith to do something about it.
 To move forward we must.

1. Let go of the past

remember God said to Lots wife
 don't look back. Genesis 19:17 yet Lots' wife couldn't resist.
 She turned into a pillar of salt.
 Once Rahab made her decision,
 she never looked back.

2. Repent of our sins and receive God's forgiveness.

I John 1:9 it says: If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will

Forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It's as simple as that.

Even for a prostitute, a drug dealer,
A backslider, or a sinner. Or you and me.

3. Forgive ourselves.

We may be consumed by guilt,
Overwhelmed by the enormity of the wrong
And the hurt we have committed.
But if God has forgiven us,
Then we must receive the gift of forgiveness.

4. Change locations

We no longer live in sin city,
We live in the kingdom of God.
We no longer go to the same old place,
Speak the same old language
Run with the same old friends.

I have heard people say:

If I become a Christian I will have to give up my whole life.

I like my social life, my dating life, my pleasures.

Rahab didn't look back

She didn't bemoan the fact that she would lose her material possessions.

Her house on the wall, her heirlooms and possessions,

All of Jericho including her house would be burned.

Her family displaced.

Her country destroyed.

She had made up her mind.

She deceived the king's men,

Hid the spies, which could have sent her to the gallows.

⁸ Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof ⁹ and said to them,

She said:

¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death." Joshua 2:12-13

Rahab exhibited an unselfish behavior.

She didn't just save herself,

But she pleads for her father and mother, sisters and brothers

When you and I experience what it means to be set free,

We want our brothers and sisters, our whole family, to experience it as well.

What is it you are asking of God for your family?

Or have you written them off?

God says: Ask and you shall receive.

God is a faithful God

He cares about you in the details of your life.

14 "Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land."
Rahab agreed.

Now the only thing left was to get the spies out of the city and
Out of her house alive.

So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. Joshua 2:15

What do you think is the last thing she did?

Sit and worry?

Stew and fret?

No, she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

21 So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window. Joshua 2:21

When the Israelites marched around Jericho seven days,
And on the seventh day seven times,
When they blew the trumpet.
The wall crumbled.
Jericho fell.
But Rahab's house.
Her little part of the wall,
With the scarlet cord hanging from the window
Remained standing.
It survived the earthquake.
She and her family were rescued.

Hebrews remembers her and commends her faith.

Hebrews 11:30-31

31 - By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.

There are only two women named in the famous roll call of the faithful.

The harlot Rahab is one of them.

Rahab was a woman of faith,

Who saw opportunity

Took it,

She didn't look back and saved herself and her family.

Perhaps God has his finger on a part of your life.

Will you take the moment that God is giving you right now?

And make the change he is asking you to make?

A change in your habits? Your attitude?

A change in the way you treat your spouse, or your family?

To make a change in your faith?

Trust God today and see his protection and power come to you and your household.