

#11 Rahab | April 15, 2018

A Questionable Woman of Unquestionable Faith | Joshua 2

- Joshua sent out two spies (perhaps with memory of the last expedition) – v. 1.
- Rahab received the spies but kept them hidden from the King of Jericho – vv. 2-7.
- Rahab testified of the knowledge of the Lord’s might, and asked for reciprocal protection for she and her family – vv. 8-13.
- Rahab was instructed to place a **line of scarlet thread** in the window, and that all her family which was in the home when the destruction of Jericho would come, would be saved – vv. 14-21.
- Joshua committed to fulfill the promise of the spies, and Rahab lived in Israel even to the time of the writing of the book of Joshua – Joshua 6:17-25.

An Undeniable Hope

- Rahab was instructed to put a *Tikvah* in the window as a sign to Joshua’s troops to spare the household– Joshua 2:18, 21.
- This story became so important in Jewish culture that *tikvah* became the word for *hope*.

*As long as the heart within  
a Jewish soul still yearns,  
An onward, toward the east,  
An eye still gazes toward Zion;  
Our hope is not yet lost,  
The hope of 2,000 years,  
To be a free people in our land,  
the land of Zion and Jerusalem*

- “In Israel, in order to be a realist, you must believe in miracles” – David ben Gurion.
- Jeremiah 29:11 contains the word *tikvah*.
- Hebrews 11:31 shows us the exemplary faith displayed in the hope of Rahab.

Is Rahab in the line of the Messiah?

- Matthew 1:5 states that “Rachab” (different spelling) married Salmon, and the two became the parents of Boaz, who later married Ruth and the two became the grandparents of King David.
- Would anyone have married Rahab?
  - After Ai, who would dare disobey the law?
  - Deuteronomy 7:3-4 forbids an Israelite from marrying a Canaanite, and after that happened with the Midianites (24,000 died due to relations with Midianite women), it seems unlikely that an Israelite would dare marry a Canaanite.
- The name *Rachab* and *Rahab* are not the same.
- Rahab is always given the designation of *the harlot* in the New Testament, but *Rachab* is not.
- The chronology makes it difficult to Rahab of Jericho to have been the wife of Salmon.

Things You May not Know

- Some believe that the term “Red Light district” comes from the story of Rahab.
- An ancient Jewish commentary (midrash) claims that Rahab was one of the four most beautiful women to ever live, the others being Sarah, Abigail, and Esther.
- Rahab is considered in Jewish writings as one of the most exemplary of Jewish converts.
  - Jethro – Exodus 18:11
  - Namaan – 2 Kings 5:15
  - Rahab – Joshua 2:11
- Rahab is often mentioned in Jewish rabbinical literature as having married Joshua after she converted. Neither Scripture nor Josephus makes any mention of her marriage.
- Jews teach that the two spies were Phineas and Caleb, and that God had given the priest Phineas the ability to be invisible, but Caleb needed to be hid. Thus Joshua 2:4 has a singular pronoun, “hid him” rather than “hid them.” Note that most translations use *them*, unexplainably. The NET Bible claims that the singular pronoun is a “scribal error.”
- Rabbis teach that Proverbs 31:21 is in reference to Rahab.