

# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Two – Joshua 2:1-24

As we get started in Joshua chapter 2 let's sing:

“Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.”  
(source unknown)

This is the story of two men and a prostitute. These men demonstrate by their lives SACRIFICIAL SERVICE and this woman the magnitude of the GRACE OF GOD.

The two men are not known. We just have to call them SPY 1 and SPY 2. But that's the way it is with servants a lot of times. Their names are never recorded.

There's a very interesting verse in Philippians 4 when Paul calls on a true yokefellow—doesn't even mention his name—to help two fighting women—Euodia and Syntyche—to get their act together in Philippi. He says this:

### Philippians 4:3

...along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers,

whose names are in the book of life.

They're just a whole bunch of people that have been support personnel who've served the Lord, whose names were not recorded in the Bible itself but whose names are definitely recorded in the book of life.

These are two fellas that we're going to appreciate, doing a sacrificial act of service that was necessary in order to make preparation for going into the land.

Now remember we left the two and a half million people of the children of Israel eight miles from the Jordan River on the east side. They are making preparations to go into the land. Moses has died and General Joshua has taken over.

We've titled chapter 1:

“The Commissioning.”

And we've divided it into three parts:

1. the LORD speaks,
2. JOSHUA speaks, and
3. the PEOPLE speak.

In the Lord speaking to Joshua, His primary thrust was **STICK TO THE BOOK**—don't turn to the right or to the left.

If we want God to bless and prosper our endeavor, then stay with the Word of God.

Now we've titled the first five chapters:

“The Invasion of the Land.”

And with “The Commissioning,” we title the second chapter:

“The Spying”

because of what's going to take place here in this chapter.

Our KEY VERSE was:

Joshua 1:3

I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

Now as Joshua takes over he immediately does a couple of things before the chapter ends.

Number one, he commands the officers to go throughout the tribes and tell them to get ready because in three days they're going to cross the river.

So they're making those preparations. He also has a very important problem and that is two and a half tribes have been content to settle on the east side of the river.

Moses had entered into an agreement with them that if they did that, their fighting men had to go over and help possess the land on the west side. So Joshua wants to remind them of that. He wants them to know that he's not a new leader who's forgotten what they promised they were going to do. In fact there are going to be over 40,000 of them that are going to be a flying wedge in our next study to be the first ones to get in the land—depending on what they're going to run into when they get over there.

And so that's all taken care of. That's kind of like Act #3 has to be done before we go in. And that is, the greater the knowledge of your enemy, the greater the potential for victory. So we're going to send some spies in to look over the land.

It's very interesting that he only sends two. He probably learned a really good lesson 40 years ago when Moses sent 12 and only 2 ended up with the right response—he and Caleb. So he has handpicked these two fellas that are going to go in to make this effort and it's going to be fun to watch.

Let's pick up now in verse 1 and get into this.

**v. 1 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.**

“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.”

Now the word “Then” ties us into chapter 1. After what’s been done there, now it’s time to find two men who are suitable and send them on a secret mission.

Notice he doesn’t make this one public. This is really a private matter and he sends them from the campsite which is 8 miles from the river. And then when they get across the river, they have 6 more miles to go—about 14 miles from where they are—to get to the city of Jericho and to look it over.

Now some 40 years ago when the spies came back, 10 of them said we can’t go in because they were looking through the magnifying glass of fear and unbelief at their enemies—and they were great big. And there was just no hope as far as they were concerned of even getting in the land.

One poet put it this way:

(Promised Land Living: Joshua by J. Oswald Sanders)

Doubt sees the obstacles,  
Faith sees the way;  
Doubt sees the darksome night,  
Faith sees the day.

Doubt dreads to take the step,  
Faith soars on high;  
Doubt whispers, “Who believes?”  
Faith answers, “I”!  
(Author Unknown)  
p. 27

So the two spies are sent in and these two men are ready to lay down their lives. The thing about the Bible is, it uses so much conservation to say so much. They do it in such a little way, and we have to realize that there had to be a tremendous price involved.

What happens to spies? Well if they get caught they get shot.

Are we willing to go into the land and get caught and get shot?

Ever heard of Nathan Hale? He was a 21-year-old school teacher that George Washington used to send behind British lines during the revolutionary war to get information. He got over there and got caught. He’s the one who made that famous statement while the rope was hanging around his neck in the gallows:

“My only regret is that I have but one life to give for my country.”  
(source unknown)

These two fellas are ready to do it. Stop and think about it. This is a mission impossible. They have to cross a flooded river

in the springtime, make a 14 mile trip, get into a walled city without being recognized, spy them out, get back out, get across the river and get home. This is no small or easy task at all.

And now here they are getting ready to move into the land. General Joshua says to them, with his instructions, “I want you to go and I want you to spy out ‘especially Jericho.’”

Ever wondered why in the world he didn’t say something about the Jordan River? He doesn’t have any problem at all with the Jordan River because he’s been through the Red Sea escapade. He and Caleb are the only two that saw that.

”What’s the deal about drying up a little river, if you can dry up a sea and you’ve been through that 40 years ago. God is still God and He’s going to be with him, right? So forget the Jordan.”

Now if we were doing this, we’d think two and a half million people going across a flooded river to get into the land—impossible. We’d be thinking that even if we’d seen the Red Sea.

But not Joshua! Joshua says, “Forget the river! The first thing we’re going to hit when we get across there is that walled city of Jericho. So y’all go take a good look at that.”

It shakes us clear to our socks in that first verse. Here are two godly men going across the river and they head to the house of a prostitute. That blows us away doesn’t it? We just can’t

figure out what in the world the scripture's saying here. Realize there's a purpose for that.

In fact there are three real good ones:

1. Where would two men go to arouse the least amount of suspicion when they come into the city? Well the house of a prostitute, and everybody knows that Rahab's one, so we go there.
2. Secondly, her house happens to reside on the wall. And if they have rappelling ropes in their bag of tricks, there's no better place to get out than from a house on the wall. So that's really cool.

But the third thing's the biggest one of all.

3. God designed this whole thing. Of all the residents in the city of Jericho, there's one resident—in the same Jesus must go through Samaria because there was one person who's going to respond to Him—there's one lady living on a wall that's getting ready to respond to him. And he knows that.

### Psalm 37:23, 24

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,  
and he delighted in his way;  
though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down,  
for the Lord upholds him with his hand.



It's a beautiful thing to see God lead our life and take us to the exact place we need to be at the right time to meet the right people to do the right thing that God wants done because they're sensitive. And these men are sensitive to the Lord's leadership.

We need to introduce our cast of characters for this episode. We have:

1. GENERAL JOSHUA, whom we've already met,
2. the TWO SPIES whose names are not known, and
3. RAHAB the prostitute.
4. The supporting roles will be played by the KING OF JERICHO and the MEN IN PURSUIT.

That's the story.

**v. 2 The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land."**

"The king of Jericho was told, 'Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land.'"

Now isn't that a great, good mission impossible story? As soon as they get in the city the Secret Service reports to the king they have some folks in town that don't belong there:

“the Israelites have come...to spy out” the city.

Woo, they got caught quickly! How in the world did they get caught?

Maybe their Canaanite clothes revealed something? We don't know. Maybe their accent caught them when somebody asked them a question about where they were going.

Maybe their foreign plates on their rental chariot are what gave them a clue. They got caught!

And the word immediately goes to the King of Jericho—we have these folks in town.

The Bible is filled with accounts like this that are just right on the edge. Remember in the life of David and Absalom came into Jerusalem and David's being driven out of town. David needs a link to find out what's going on in Jerusalem and so Jonathan and Ahimaaz, the two young men, are the spies. And sure enough, Jonathan and Ahimaaz are recognized by one of Absalom's men and they run and tell Absalom.

The Secret Service comes out checking all around and they're out at Bahurim. They found a lady there and a man who put them in a well, covered the well up and put grain on the top of it. The men come running in and say, “Where are the two men that came to you?” And the lady says, “I don't know. They crossed over the brook.”

Well when the men leave they climb out of the well and run down to David and give him the information. There's a principle in that.

Someone made this statement:

“Saints are immortal until their work on earth is done.”  
(source unknown)

The fact that we're still here, shows we still have assignments. When we're through with our assignments, we go there. It's over, it's finished, it's done. We're on our way to new assignments and a new beginning.

And here, in this situation, God's going to protect them. They're on a mission of mercy and two and a half million people are involved in this. So they're going to be taken care of.

But we're getting ahead of the story. Look at verse 3.

**v. 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.”**

“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.’”

Now that is a serious message to be brought to your front door. She has a tremendous amount of thinking to do on her feet as she makes a decision as to whose side she's going to be on and what kind of a decision she's going to make. This is tough!

If she gets caught and implicated in the deal, she's going to bite the bullet too—along with the two spies. So she has that on that side. But she also has something else inside her heart that even the two spies don't know about yet that we're going to see in just a few minutes.

But here comes the message from the king. "We need to get these two men that have come to you." Now look at verse 4.

**v. 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from."**

"But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, 'Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from.'"

**v. 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."**

"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.”

Rahab throws her life on the line. She says, “I don’t know where they went!” And so she sends the messengers of the King of Jericho on a wild goose chase down to the main gate trying to catch up with them on the road—which is about 6 or 7 miles to the fording place in the river.

Some are probably fans of Joseph Fletcher and *Situation Ethics*. That it is right to do wrong in a given situation that good might happen. Well that’s Joseph Fletcher.

Did Rahab do right in this situation by telling the lie that two spies—who otherwise would have been killed—were saved? Now a lot of people might say that. There is nowhere in the Bible ever that a lie is commended.

Now it’s quite obvious that she has told a lie. And the Word of God makes it quite clear that we don’t do that. It’s part of our moral ethic to tell the truth. God blesses and honors the truthful heart.

But what if she hadn’t lied? God would have had another way to take care of the spies. God is not limited in this situation to her telling a lie to accomplish His purposes.

We can’t get around it:

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things the Lord hates,  
seven that are detestable to him:  
haughty eyes,  
a lying tongue,  
hands that shed innocent blood,  
a heart that devises wicked schemes,  
feet that are quick to rush into evil,  
a false witness who pours out lies  
and a man who stirs up dissension among  
the brothers.

### Titus 1:12

Even one of their own prophets have said, “Cretans are always liars, they are evil brutes, and lazy gluttons.”

Rahab’s profession involves an awful lot of lying. There have been a lot of husbands over the years that women have shown up at her door wondering if their husbands are inside the house. And she has had to lie and say no.

Lying is a bedfellow with immoral activity. There are husbands that’ll look you straight in the face and say there’s no other woman in their lives and we know full well there is. We might have all the evidence, but they’ll lie straight at you.

As soon as we get involved in immoral activity, lying becomes a vital necessary link. And God does not bless a liar! In fact He will ring the chains on a liar to accomplish His purpose.

A great illustration of this is Moses. Remember when the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock and Moses hit it because he was mad? What did God do when Moses hit the rock? He gave him water but he certainly didn't commend him for his temper. He lost his chance to go into the land because of his temper.

The anger was judged by God, but in hitting the rock the water came forth. God was faithful to make the provision for the people. Here God is making provision for these two spies through her lie, but He does not commend the lie anywhere at all in the scripture. We're told to speak the truth.

Now notice verse 6. We have a little parenthesis here in this story to kind of fill things in.

**v. 6 (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the 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.)”

Parenthesis.

She took them up on the roof and she hid them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.

Has she hidden other guys in that spot? That's probably her favorite hiding place.

“Quick guys! Hit the flax on the roof!”

That’s the way her life was—lying and laying under the flax.

Now lest we get the wrong idea about this woman, she is not one of these flitty little butterflies that sleeps in until noon and gets up and goes and does her sleazy deal and comes back and sleeps in till noon. The fact that there’s flax on her roof also indicates that she is a very industrious, disciplined woman.

We read that in Proverbs 31 about spinning it long into the night. She is an industrious woman. And we’ll also find usually about an immoral woman, she becomes intensely selfish and she forgets her family and becomes hardened toward her mother and her dad and her children. But that is not the case here.

She is very much concerned about her family and her children as the story goes on. So lest we throw the baby out with the bath water, just put some of these things down to remember. She has flax on her roof drying out so she can spin, weave and prepare clothing for her family. She is a woman who really works hard.

Now meanwhile, the men that left the doorstep are heading on a wild goose chase, so back to verse 7 in the story.

**v. 7 So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the**



**road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.**

“So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan,”—that’s where you go across the river—“and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.”

Now evidently it must have taken most of the day to get over there. They must have left early in the morning from Shittim, the campsite, and had come down, crossed the river, gotten across. They’d made the total 14 mile trip and it’s getting late afternoon when they get there. And so they agree when they go into the gate that they’re looking for the red light district. So they go and find Rahab’s house on the roof. And that’s where they’re going to be sheltered for the present time.

Now when they did that and the men go in for pursuit it’s about dark-thirty—it’s getting late. And so as soon as they get out, they close the gate. Now this must be at sunset unless the mall stays open till nine, and all the stores are open and so the gate stays open late. That’s the only way it could be any bit later here. But basically it’s about dark and these two fellas are on the roof.

Now can we tell by verse 8 that they have an idea that they’re going to spend the night there and just kind of lay low and hope it cools off by morning? That is basically their plan.

## **v. 8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof**

“Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof”

Now because it's panic city down below and the men have knocked on the door, she has to talk to them to communicate some very important things to them that they don't know on the roof—plus tell them it's getting hot and they better get out of town if they're going to save their lives. So she's going up to the roof.

We have come to the greatest passage in the Old Testament on the **UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF GOD** and a marvelous manifestation of His grace. We are getting ready to walk through the Holy of holies into one of the most sacred statements that's made in the scripture.

It's hard to read these verses without bursting into tears. This is a great, good and gracious God who finds that no one is impossible with Him—as far as His ability to forgive and to cleanse and to bring healing into lives.

Now in verse 9 we're going to have the statement of the **PROMISE OF GOD**.

In verse 10 we're going to have the statement of the **POWER OF GOD**.

In verse 11 we're going to have the statement of the **PREEMINENCE OF GOD**.

This woman gives one of the greatest statements of faith in her testimony to these men. They are bug-eyed and bushy-tailed when she comes up and makes these kinds of statements to them.

Now there are a lot of ramifications in these so we are at the heart of the message.

Here we go—verse 9. As soon as she got up there:

**v. 9 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.”**

“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.’”

Look at those first two words. She said to them:

“I know...”

How does she know that the Lord has given the land of Canaan to them? She's put faith in the promises of God. She evidently knows something about the Abrahamic covenant. She knows something about the tenure of service in Egypt,

and she knows that they came to the land 40 years ago and they should have come in at that time but then in unbelief they didn't—so she knows the story of Israel.

Do you know if you died you're going to heaven?

If we don't she knows more than we do. She is already convinced of the promises of God—she's put her faith in that. And she says, "I know."

John says:

### 1 John 5:13

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Paul says:

### 2 Timothy 1:12

...I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he's able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day...

"I know it. I have total and complete confidence that I know where I'm going."

She says here—so beautiful—"I believe in the promise. I know why you have come and I want to join you. I look at you and I

know what's going to happen and my plea to you men, in protecting you, is that I can have a part in this as a Gentile woman living in a godless city that's about ready to be destroyed."

And she not only stops there, she says:

"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."

People are so scared they don't have any courage, they're "melting away in fear" because they know what's going to happen.

Look at that statement and that is the greatest condemnation of those guys 40 years ago that should have gone in.

This was the true picture 40 years ago! People were "melting in fear" and all they had to do was go in and take what they had! But in unbelief they turn around and wander for 40 years in the wilderness and never get what God has for them.

Maybe we are "melting in fear." We have all kinds of reasons and conditions why we don't really get serious about God and get on with the program. And we are missing so much of the fruit of the land of promise that God would like to give us simply because there are conditions attached and we don't really know that God could take care of us, and bless us abundantly.

He waits to do that! For people who will believe in Him. They're just amazed at what she says.

Now we move from the PROMISE to the POWER of God. Look at the things that impress her—verse 10.

**v. 10 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.**

“We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and”—on top of that—“what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed.”—just here a while back.

When they got up there, remember? They destroyed these two kings because they would not let them reside there in their territory. And their campsite and Shittim is right there in the land. And this is why the Reubenites and the Gaddites and the half tribe of Manasseh decided to settle there because they wiped the Amorites out like God told them to do. And now that land is over there. And on the other side of the river everybody's melting in fear because of what happened in those two things.

When did they cross the Red Sea? That was 40 years ago. And they're still—this generation—scared to death over what

happened 40 years ago.

What does 40 years tell us? Forty years tells us that God is long-suffering and gracious. Now some of us are going to get hassled a tad when we get over here and God's wiping out all these cities with the women and the children and the whole nine yards. But before we get too hassled, how long is long enough for God to give us an opportunity to get our act together?

Genesis 15 he says:

### Genesis 15:16

the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.

So He gave them 400 years while the children of Israel have been in bondage down in the land of Egypt and then they come up to the river and they don't go in so God attaches on 40 more years to give them a chance. We come back to the river and they're still in the same condition. They haven't made a decision. How long is long enough?

“The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (ref. 2 Peter 3:9)

But the facts are, a lot of people are going to perish. And God is allowing them to perish because He threw the lifeline to them and they wouldn't take it. They decided to drown instead of doing it. And it's their responsibility. And what's getting

ready to happen in the land of promise, is these people have had opportunity after opportunity and they've failed to avail themselves of it. And there comes a time when grace runs out and judgment takes over, so the ax is going to drop! And God's going to fulfill His promise and give them the land.

Now notice she mentions TWO THINGS. She mentions:

1. the RED SEA and
2. the DESTRUCTION of these two kings of the Amorites.

**v. 11 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.**

“When we heard of it, our hearts sank and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.”

When we heard about that 40 years ago, “our hearts sank and everyone's courage failed because of you.” Our God is the God of all gods! He's the “God in heaven above and on the earth below.” It's the preeminence of God that's magnified here in this beautiful statement that she makes.

We've seen the PROMISE, we've seen the POWER and we've seen the PREEMINENCE of God in her statement of faith.



Isn't that a tremendous condemnation to those people 40 years ago? When this is what they saw on that side of the river, while they're over here in unbelief believing they can't go in because the land is full of giants and it's just not going to work out. This is the God of heaven and the God of the earth below.

Doesn't this story kind of remind us of John chapter 4 a whole lot?

He needs to go through Samaria because there's an outcast woman who is there at the well getting water in the middle of the day who says, "I don't have a husband." And Jesus said, "You're right, you don't. You've had five and you're living out of wedlock with one right now."

Out of that experience, that woman is confronted with her past. She goes away forgiven and runs into the city and becomes the greatest evangelist that Samaria's ever known. And there's a steady stream of people coming out of the city. And when we see the final phase of it in John chapter 4, it says, "Many believed on Him because of her word, but many more because of His word." God moved in a mighty way.

And here in a similar fashion, as these men come into town, this is what they find.

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!"

God can do it!

“I know many of you are sitting there and you’ve kind of got your self-righteous robes around you a little,” he says. “But oh man, this crumby woman! You know I just can’t believe being so raunchy like that that she gets to be it!”

Kind of like the eldest son in the parable of the Prodigal Son. He got his nose out of joint because daddy was going to have a feast for a boy that’s been wasting his father’s inheritance in the far country. He doesn’t want to come into any party for that. He’s always been with his daddy and lived a good life. And here we are having a big party for a sinner. That kind of grates at us, especially when we’ve been good.

Want to realize something else about this woman? She’s in the Great Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11:31. Alright, think about that for a minute.

God in the great cavalcade of stars who fill the galaxy of Hebrews 11, there’s a name called Rahab. Ready for another one? She’s the great illustration of faith and works in James 2:25—Rahab, a prostitute.

It got her in the Hall of Faith and got her in James chapter 2. And we haven’t heard the best yet. Know what happened to this woman after this story’s over? When they invade the land there’s a man by the name of Salmon—just like the fish. He finds Rahab and falls in love with her and marries her.

They had a baby together. And guess what? That baby’s name was Boaz. And Boaz married a little Moabitish lady by the

name of Ruth. And guess what? They had a son by the name of Obed. And their son Obed grew up and got married and had a baby by the name of Jesse. And Jesse grew up and got married and had a baby by the name of David. And 26 generations later we have Jesus Christ.

She's in the sacred line. Don't say grace ever runs out. God gives opportunity to bring healing and to take the years that have been destroyed by the canker worm and bring healing into life, but He waits for us to swallow our pride and receive what He has to provide for us.

Why sit there and cry over spilled milk and say, "God can't forgive this!" Oh yes He can! He demonstrates it once for all in the marvelous work of grace that He provides to this dear woman in Joshua chapter 2.

It just brings goosebumps.

**v. 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**

"Now then,"—she's still talking. Isn't that the way it is with a woman? She never gets through talking. She's still going here.

"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"

What she's saying here is, "I was good to you and I hid you, now y'all do something nice for me here since this is going to happen."

What she's doing is incredible. It's a foregone conclusion that this is going to happen. Why?

Well if God could dry up the Red Sea and wipe out Sihon and Og—the kings of the Amorites—it's just a bird nest on the ground to dry up a river and come over here and destroy the city of Jericho. She's already believing those two things are going to happen.

And so she says to them, since it's a foregone conclusion that it's going to happen and she's put her faith in the promises of God and it's going to happen, they're probably going to be just like Sihon and Og. And when that happens, she says in verse 13:

**v. 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."**

"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."

"When you come in here and you do that, you see, I have a request—Please save our lives!"

And what do the spies say?

**v. 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.”**

“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.”

Sometimes we read the Bible fast and we miss the greatest blessing of all. When’s the last time we read a verse of the Bible and we found that the little word “when” was the greatest verse in the book? Circle the word “when” and then chew on that for just a minute.

What do those men say?

She says, “I know!” And because of her testimony, these guys are getting on the bandwagon. If they didn’t believe it coming in and they had some second thoughts about it, they certainly are believers now. What do they say?

“when the Lord gives us the land.”

Do we have faith? Do we believe?

If we’re still saying, “I’ll look forward to seeing you IF I get to heaven,” we don’t have faith.

Faith is when all of our IFs are changed to WHENs. It's just a matter of "when." It's a foregone conclusion because God promised it—and that settled it. Didn't it? Because we believed it.

God has never broken a promise! So these fellas are exercising fantastic faith!

She says, "I know it's going to happen." They come back with an answer. "When it does, this is what we're going to do for you"—"Our lives for yours."

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

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

Now notice back in verse 8 they were bedding down for the night. She obviously said some other things. She says, "There's a lot of heat on in the city and I think we better get you out of town."

And one of the fellas says, "Well I have a rappelling rope with me." And she says, "I think we better just go right over the wall now. And under the cloak of darkness you take the little half-mile trip up here to the cliffs. There's lots of caves up there. Find yourself someplace to hide out because the secret

police are really after you.”

So the heat’s on. This is kind of what they decide.

Now isn’t it neat in the Bible how many times people are let down out of a window with a rope? If we’re ever let down out of a window with a rope, we’re in good company.

Back in the book of 1 Samuel 19, just after David marries Michal his sweetheart and daughter of Saul—Saul gets mad and wants to kill him. Michal comes up to David in the apartment and says you’re going to have to get out of there. And sure enough, Michal’s letting him down on the rope out of the window and he runs off to Ramath.

And then the next time we see somebody let down on a rope—here it is, the two spies—back here in the book of Joshua.

And then turn over to the New Testament and Saul of Tarsus, after he becomes a Christian, goes into the city of Damascus. Everybody’s so mad at him they want to kill him so the Christians let him down in a basket through the window so he can get away from them.

Here in the first part she’s getting ready to let him down through the window. Now there are a few more things that have to be said in the story—verse 16.

**v. 16 Now she had said to them, “Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there**

**three days until they return, and then go on your way.”**

“Now she had said to them, ‘Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way.’”

**v. 17 The men said to her, “This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us**

“The men said to her, ‘This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us’”

**v. 18 unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house.**

“unless, when we enter the land,”—there it is again—“you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, and your brothers and all your family into your house.”

**v. 19 If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him.**



“If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him.”

**v. 20 But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear.”**

“But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear.””

Okay, there are TWO CONDITIONS:

1. this red rope has to be hanging out of your window to mark your spot and
2. everybody has to stay in the house.

Now does that remind us of anything at all?

The RED CORD reminds us of the first PASSOVER in the land of Egypt, when the Death Angel passed over the houses that had blood on the doorposts.

What about staying inside when the rains of judgment are falling? NOAH and the ARK. We're in the ark of safety.

The only place to be in Jericho, if we're going to survive the onslaught that's taking place in a little while, is to be in the

house on the wall—the house of Rahab.

Going outside means instant judgment and death.

**v. 21 “Agreed,” she replied. “Let it be as you say.” So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.**

“‘Agreed,’ she replied. ‘Let it be as you say.’ So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.”

She is a lady who wants to be ready. Get them out and get the “cord in the window.” That’s the deal. “They can talk about my cord in the window all they want, but my cord in the window has got some real meaning and I want to be ready.”

Ready? If we aren’t, we don’t have our cord in the window and it just might rain on our parade. If we don’t know Jesus Christ as Savior, we have not come beneath the blood of Calvary and we have not entered the only ark of safety. And when the fires of judgment fall, we have not prepared to meet our God—  
Amos 4:12.

### Proverbs 27:1

Boast not yourself of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth.

She knows that she could forget about that so she

immediately puts the cord in the window as soon as the fellas let go of it down below.

God's timing is always so perfect. Robert Foster is doing a series in his *Challenge* letter to businessmen on the great people of faith in Hebrews 11. Rahab's name appears in the little bi-monthly letter. This is what he says about her:

*(Challenge by Robert Foster, August 15, 1986)*

By faith, Rahab the harlot, because she believed in God and His power, did not die in her city...

Rahab was an unlikely candidate for any respectable hall of fame. Her "hospitality center" was creating quite a stir in the city. The city fathers had organized a committee to promote the ethics of decency. Others (traveling salesmen) suggested that she was a respectable innkeeper...the manager of the Jericho Hilton.

The Bible makes no attempt to smooth over nor to magnify her murky mess in the "red light district" of Canaan's leading city. "Rahab indulged in venal wantonness as men came her way and were housed in her ill-famed abode on top of the city wall."

Rahab had three strikes against her...she was a prostitute...she was a Gentile and a Canaanite at that. Thirdly...she was living in the wrong city at the wrong time and was involved in the wrong business. News traveled fast in

the 14th Century B.C. Rahab heard the stories of Jehovah God parting the Red Sea and overthrowing the two desert monarchs... Sihon and Og. Notice with me the contrast between this harlot and the children of Israel. She was a debauched wicked woman worshiping false gods of Canaan...Joshua's troops were the chosen people worshiping the Only True God. She only heard that God had acted...they had seen God act! Rahab knew men of sin...Israel knew men of God. She received the Word of God indirectly...they received the Word of God by direct revelation. She knew God by faith...they knew God by sight.

This pitiful, sin-sick woman came to faith in the reality of a loving and living God as she heard...saw...and believed. Rahab the whore...transformed into a worshiper of Jehovah by Divine grace and forgiveness. The swingin' sex symbol of Jericho decided for the God of Israel. What the lustful deities of Chemosh, Astaroth, and Baal could not do in a woman's heart....God could do and did for Rahab.

Herein lies the hope of all of us...the meaning of grace and the nature of saving faith. Rahab took God at His Word. "Her theology was simple but her faith was great." She believed with all her heart...she confessed with her mouth...and she acted on her faith at the risk of life.

We all stand in Rahab's place...sinners in the hands of a righteous and Holy God. We all live up on the wall of our own Jericho. We all deserve payment for our "riffraff" style of living. God is not shell-shocked by my sinful thoughts, words

and deeds, nor is He waiting for me to clean up my act! God recommends His love toward Rahab, you and me in [the] covenant grace.

(source unknown)

John Newton had the very same thing. He left home at a time of great need on March 10th, 1748:

Mercy was found. Newton sought it and he found it. And later wrote:

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,  
that saved a wretch like me.

(source unknown)

Why is it that we put parameters on God's love and grace? And it's like His love and grace is provided for good people, but not for the folks who really have a need.

In Ron Lee Davis' book *The Healing Choice* he cites an illustration of all this that is beautiful:

(The Healing Choice by Ron Lee Davis)

In Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in the Sun*, there is a poignant depiction of failure. The father of a poor inner-city black family has just died, leaving only a small life-insurance policy. His widow has a dream of using the money to buy a small bungalow in a better part of town. Her son, however, wants to invest the money in a business deal, which he

believes can multiply the small legacy. This young man, who has never held a job, sincerely wants to do something to help his family. He pleads with his mother for the money; she refuses at first, but finally relents and gives her son most of the money. He then invests it with a “friend”—and this “friend” skips town with the cash.

When the young man confesses his failure to his mother and sister, the sister flies into a rage, cursing him and condemning him for being so stupid, for gambling away their future. But suddenly the mother steps in, cutting off the sister’s tirade. “I thought I taught you to love your brother,” she says.

“Love him?” shouts the sister. “There’s nothing left to love!”

“There’s *always* something left to love—and if you ain’t learned that, you ain’t learned nothing!” the mother replied. “Have you cried for that boy today? Not for yourself because that money’s gone, but for *him*, for what he’s been through! Child, when do you think is the time to love somebody the most? When he’s done good? That ain’t the time at all. [It’s when he’s done bad.] It’s when he’s at his lowest and can’t believe in himself ‘cause the world done whipped him so!”  
p. 90

That’s the time to love.

In the book *Nam* by Mark Baker there are a couple of illustrations. This is what we read:

(Nam by Mark Baker)

In the middle of a blood-and-guts tale about an artillery barrage at Khe Sanh, the man telling the story disappeared into his bedroom and began rummaging through the dresser. I could hear the drawers sliding open and banging shut. He returned with a watch face, the crystal so scarred I could barely see the hands. He had picked it up near the body of his friend who died in the barrage. The exact time of his friend's death to the second was frozen in that small machine. He had kept it all these years as a sort of personal monument to their friendship.

“They always get more worked up about the people you killed than over your friends who died,” he said. We devour the death and destruction with morbid curiosity and then turn our backs in embarrassment when the storyteller reveals the love men shared and the tears they shed.

The veterans themselves seem confused by the communion beyond fellowship they experienced in Vietnam. Ten years later, many of them attribute the hollow ache inside to an over hearty slap on the back in Nam—or they don't mention it at all. But the friendship, the honest human love is all they wanted to bring back from there, and it was the one thing they couldn't seem to hang on to. The guilt, the pain, the scars are intact. The lessons of friendship and compassion are lost [forever].

pp. 198-99 (source unknown)

Here we have a tremendous illustration of unconditional love and healing brought into a woman's life who is exercising faith in the promises of God.

**v. 22 When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them.**

“When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them.”

**v. 23 Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.**

“Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.”

What an exciting report they give!

**v. 24 They said to Joshua, “The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us.”**

“They said to Joshua, “The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us.””

Put the words:



“The Lord has surely given.”

They said to her, “when the Lord gives.”

She says, “I know the Lord’s going to give.” And now they’re convinced, as they tell Joshua—and what great words of encouragement—He “has surely given the land into our hands.” Their hearts are what?

“melting with fear”—the very words that Rahab had given to them when she gave her report.

Here are the lessons we get out of the lesson.

Lesson #1: Joshua is taking preliminary steps for possession of the land.

That’s faith. It’s all we’ve seen in these two chapters.

Guess what? We’re going across the river in the next study.

Lesson #2: The greater the knowledge of the enemy, the better the chance for victory.

A couple of verses on that:

2 Corinthians 2:10, 11

I forgive in order that Satan might not outwit us, for we are not unaware of his schemes. I forgive because I don't want Satan to outwit us. We are not ignorant of his schemes.

The greater the knowledge of the enemy, the better the chance for victory.

Lesson #3: God protects and provides for the two spies.

Lesson #4: It is never right for us to lie in any situation.

Lesson #5,: Three Ps—Rahab's statement of faith:

1. the PROMISE in verse 9,
2. the POWER in verse 10, and
3. the PREEMINENCE in verse 11.

Lesson #6: Our faith is demonstrated when our IFs become WHENs.

Lesson #7: The scarlet cord reminds us of the blood on the doorpost when the death angel passed over.

Lesson #8: The staying inside the shelter to escape judgment reminds us of Noah and the ark.

Lesson #9: [Question in view of that] Have you come under the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, and into the shelter of salvation?

Have you come under the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, and into the shelter of salvation—the only ark of safety?

Lesson #10: Rahab put the scarlet cord in the window immediately because she wanted to be ready.

### Hebrews 2:1-3

How should we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

In the *Daily Bread* we read this:

(Our Daily Bread, October 6, year unknown)

We can't relive the days that are past, but we can devote ourselves to the Lord in the time we have remaining....

You can't relive your past, so don't waste time dwelling on cherished fantasies or vain regrets. You can't go back and do it over, but you can thank God for past mercies, confess past failures, and apply the lessons learned. Let's give God the past and let Him give us the future...

**It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and [to] despair.**

(source unknown)

That's the message that comes to us as believers. Find ourselves wandering in the wilderness in the far country, not happy and fulfilled, experiencing the abundant life? Don't keep looking back. Come on, let's get on with it.

Last week was an arduous week with a funeral on the front end of it and a wedding on the back end of it—I haven't been able to stop yet. And the Lord knew I had some real need for just some encouragement when I got home about 10:00 Saturday night. And when I went through the mail I found the Forward to my book on *The Mid-Life Crisis*. Two of our books will be published in January and the only thing left was to get the forward from British Columbia down here so we could publish it.

I have invited Lamar Muse to write the forward to my mid-life crisis book, and the forward had come and in it were these words:

I was pretty well through my various midlife crises—or at least I thought I was—when Don became the pastor at Emerald Bay Community Church in deep East Texas. I had been going to church off and on all my life, but for the first time I was now looking forward to Sunday mornings. Not only for what Charles Kuralt would be reporting on, but more importantly what new insights to life Don Anderson was going to instill in me and my family each Sunday morning.

Hungry for more I joined Don and his good wife Pearl at every

opportunity and through them came to know and accept Jesus Christ.

(source unknown)

There's no greater passage to teach the grace of God and His forgiveness and the power of Salvation than a passage like we've had the privilege of looking at. Why don't we get in a hurry and get ready and put the scarlet cord in our window. God will be faithful to honor His promise to us.

Father, thank You that Your promise turns to power to make us new creations in Christ. And when Jesus Christ is lifted up He draws all men to Himself. Please may He be magnified and may His name be glorified and there be those this very night who now have a certainty—who knows and no longer have to say “if,” it's only a question of when. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

# A Practical Study of JOSHUA

## “The Path of Obedience Leads to Victory”

### Study Number Two – Joshua 2:1-24

### NOTES

v. 1 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.

v. 2 The king of Jericho was told, “Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land.”

v. 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.”

v. 4 But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from.

v. 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.”

v. 6 (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.)

v. 7 So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

v. 8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof

v. 9 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.

v. 10 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.

v. 11 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.

## NOTES

v. 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

v. 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.”

v. 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.”

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

v. 16 Now she had said to them, “Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way.”

v. 17 The men said to her, “This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us

v. 18 unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house.

v. 19 If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him.

v. 20 But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear.”

v. 21 “Agreed,” she replied. “Let it be as you say.” So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

v. 22 When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them.

v. 23 Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.

v. 24 They said to Joshua, “The Lord has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us.”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Read Joshua 2:1-24 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. What does Joshua do in verse 1?

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3. Who is Rahab and what does she do for the spies?

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4. Summarize Rahab's statement of faith in verses 9-11.

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5. What request does Rahab make of the spies in verses 12 & 13?

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6. What do the spies promise Rahab before they depart in verses 14-20?

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7. What is Rahab instructed to do at the time of the invasion, according to verse 18?

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8. What do the spies report to Joshua, according to verse 24?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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## LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Joshua is taking preliminary steps in preparation for the occupation of the land.

LESSON #2: The greater the knowledge of the enemy the better the chance for victory.

LESSON #3: God protects and provides for the two spies who enter the land.

LESSON #4: It is never right for us to lie in any situation.

LESSON #5: Rahab's faith is demonstrated in: the promise of verse 9, the power of verse 10, and the preeminence of verse 11.

LESSON #6: Our faith is demonstrated when our IFs become WHENs.

LESSON #7: The scarlet cord reminds us of the blood on the doorpost when the death angel passed over during the slaying of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt.

LESSON #8: The staying inside the shelter to escape judgment reminds us of Noah and the ark.

**LESSON #9:** Have you come under the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, and into the shelter of salvation—the only ark of safety?

**LESSON #10:** Rahab put the scarlet cord in the window immediately because she wanted to be ready.