

Operation Rahab

By Alan Huesing

“And she tied the scarlet cord in the window” (Joshua 2:21 NIV).

(Read Joshua 2 and 6)

What was the mission of the two Israeli spies in Jericho?

Who was in danger?

What kind of danger?

How did Rahab help the spies? Why?

Whose idea was it to rescue Rahab and her family?

When we read these chapters, we usually think about God helping the Israelites, His Chosen People, to conquer the walled city of Jericho. This battle was the Israelites' first victory in their conquest of the Promised Land.

The people of Jericho thought they were safe within their huge city walls.

But the Israelites trusted and obeyed God, so He performed a miracle and destroyed the wicked enemies of His people.

Now take a closer look, keeping in mind God's mission to reconcile the world to Himself and that His people were called to be a blessing to the nations. What was the spies' mission? Regardless of any current assignment in life, the mission of God's people is always to be an agent and tool of God's salvation. They were on a mission to save the prostitute Rahab. Who was in danger? Rahab, of course. The spies were never in danger—from God's point of view. How did she help them? By cooperating.

And why? She answers in Joshua 2:8–11. Whose idea was this mission? God's.

In the time of Noah, God provided an ark to save Noah, his family and “whosoever would come.” What was the place of salvation in Jericho?

What was the symbol that designated it as the place of safety? (Joshua 2:18)

What did it mean?

Who was the missionary to Jericho in the time between Joshua 2:21 and 6:20?

How many people were saved in this mission?

Who is not mentioned in Joshua 6:23 that Rahab listed in Joshua 2:13?

It’s a mystery why God chose to rescue Rahab, an enemy Gentile prostitute. But, it’s also a mystery why He chooses any of us to save, adopt into His family, and send on His mission.

Regardless of any current assignment in life, the mission of God’s people is always to be an agent and tool of God’s salvation.

How many people could have been saved?

Jericho was Rahab’s city, her country, her whole world. To some people there, she was a traitor; to others, she was a deliverer. What she was to each depended on whether she had warned them of coming judgment and invited them to the place of safety. It depended on whether they believed her and trusted in the God of Israel.

Jericho knew about God and feared Him to the melting point. The leaders could have surrendered to Him, but they refused. So God penetrated their walls and their culture to provide a personal way of salvation. He provided an indigenous missionary with a message.

Perhaps the whole town could have been saved. There could have been red cords hanging out of every window, door and on the city gates; and the people of Jericho could have

been singing “I Surrender All” when the Israelites came marching in. Everybody could have followed the directions in Joshua 2:18–19. On the other hand, Rahab could have told the “wrong person” at the “wrong time” in the “wrong way” about the plan of salvation, and she would have had her head cut off. (“Missionarying” is rarely without its risks.)

What about you? In what way(s) are you like Rahab?

What is your Jericho?

What (who) is your “place” of salvation?

How much time do you have before the “walls come tumbling down”?

In what way(s) are you like the spies?

Who is your “Rahab”?

How are you doing in your mission?

What place did the Israelites give to Rahab? (*Joshua 6:23*)

What place did God give her? (*Matthew 1:5; Hebrews 11:31*)

In your “world” right now, who is God’s “Rahab”?