

# Rahab

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[ 0 : 00 ] Would you turn with me now to Hebrews chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11. You start at the end of the Old Testament and work backwards. You'll come to it quicker. Hebrews 11 and we'll read verse 51.

By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not.

Now in many lists of mothers in the Bible we find Rahab probably the most unlikely character of them all. And we find that the Bible does not whitewash anyone. The Bible speaks of people exactly as they are and it does no good for commentators or for us to try to get alternative meanings for things that are absolutely plainly stated to us. So that we find that Rahab is called a harlot. We find that the New Testament writers, the writers of the Hebrew and the epistle of James, that they have no hesitation whatsoever in calling Rahab a harlot. And I think that we tend to limit the pardoning and redeeming love of God when we try to change the description we get of people in the Bible. By calling Rahab exactly what she was we are able to understand absolutely perfectly the saying in 1 Timothy 1 15, this is a faithful saying

God is worthy of God and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

We must not be blind to the miracle of divine love. The history of the Bible is there for a purpose.

[ 2 : 26 ] God's dealing with God's people, God's dealing with people, ordinary people. And we find that people of the lowest degree, people that we wouldn't choose, find a place in the kingdom of God through faith. They have nothing else whatsoever to recommend them.

But they have faith and they claim a place in the kingdom of God. And it's also encouraging for us that in God's plan for the children of Israel coming into the promised land, the world of Israel coming into the world. And there was included a person like Rahab.

Jericho had to be taken. Jericho had to be utterly destroyed. We are told that both man and woman, young and old, ox, sheep and ass had to be destroyed with the edge of the sword.

Jericho had to be destroyed. But before all that, Rahab and her family had to be saved. And in the dealings of the Lord with the children of Israel, we see his dealings with us. And we can take great encouragement from this.

In the dealings of the Lord with us, within the high city walls of Jericho, a soul that had faith in God had to be saved. And because of that one soul, because of where? Somebody that man would absolutely sling to one side, because of that, the children of Israel were held back from going into the promised land. After being 40 years in the wilderness, they had to delay until Rahab and her family, an arrangement had been made for them to be saved.

[ 4 : 24 ] And the judgment that had to come upon Jericho, where it had to be flattened to the ground, where the people had to be put to the sword, and even the animals had to be put to the sword, had to stop and wait until Rahab and her family were saved.

And this is the way that God deals with his people to this day. In his master plan of salvation, God deals and remembers with individuals. He remembers individuals.

He remembers with his people to this day. He remembers with his people to this day. He remembers with his people to this day. We find that Lot in Sodom, that Sodom was not destroyed. The fire and the brimstone was held back, until Lot was taken out of Sodom. We find that Jesus Christ on his road to Calvary, had time to stop and speak to people, heal them, had time to give them back their sight, even when his face was set toward Jerusalem, and even his disciples couldn't dissuade him, couldn't sort of make him wait a while. When there was a poor, crying soul, a blind man calling to him, he took time to deal with them. And

as always, the way with the God of Scripture.

God remembers the individual. Now remember when we say the individual. That is you.

God remembers you. God knows you. You are taken account of in his plan for salvation.

[ 6 : 15 ] And you are important enough that his whole plan of salvation revolves around you. God knows you. The same way as it did here. And the same way as it did with Lot. And the same way as it did with the blind man.

And the woman that touched the hem of Jesus' God. Everything is geared to the salvation of souls. God knows you. And we know that God today looks upon each one of us individually. And he looks upon the believer's faith.

Kindly as it may be. Flimsy that even the believer sometimes doubts it himself. And God rejoices over it.

And God ensures the safety of that individual. We may be unimportant to society. We may not be able to leave a map on history.

We may go through this life and nobody notices us all the time we are here. But we are not unimportant in the plan laid down by the King of Kings.

[ 7 : 26 ] And that's what matters. Let us look for a little while at Rahab's faith to see what we can learn from it. Rahab's faith first of all was based on a little testimony. She didn't have much chance to hear about God.

She didn't have many sermons preached to her. She didn't have much of the gospel there. She was a Gentile woman. That was a non-Jew. A Gentile woman who kept a public house or an inn on the wall of Jericho.

But the fame of the God of the children of Israel had gone before the children of Israel into Jericho. And Jericho and Jericho, the whole city, had heard about this marvelous, wonderful God of the children of Israel that was leading his people.

And was leading them into Canaan. And was coming to judge Canaan. And amongst all the hundreds of thousands of people that lived in Jericho, that lived throughout Canaan, Rahab was the only one that believed this report that she had.

We are not told that she was born into any sort of religious family. Her parents don't seem to have taught her anything regarding the God of the children of Israel. Because she was born and brought up in a heathen city and in a heathen country.

[ 8 : 52 ] But isn't it interesting and wonderful that even in the midst of a heathen city and a heathen country, with no chance whatsoever of hearing the gospel, God raised up one witness for himself.

That's how it is to this day. It is marvel, as you travel through the world, how you find in the most unlikely spot, a Christian who grows, and nobody knows how.

But he appears because God has called him. Because he belongs to Christ. And God brings him. Just as surely as he brings those that are born into the family of the children of God, as it were, a Christian family surrounded by all that is good.

But at the same time, while we rejoice about this, don't you think that those who have grasped the kingdom of God with a very, very little opportunity, don't you think that they will rise up and witness against those who sit under the gospel constantly?

Those who have been born into a Christian family, into a Christian country, a Christian area, who have the Bible in their homes, who have family worship night and morning, who go to Sabbath school, who go to church, who have the gospel freely available to them, and yet they reject it.

[ 10 : 27 ] Don't you think that those plants that come out from nowhere will one day point an accusing finger at them and say, How on earth could you reject Jesus Christ when he was so plainly preached to you?

There is no excuse for persistent unbelief. I know that nobody means to sort of go on forever refusing Christ.

I know that most of the people that you speak to, they do think that one day they are coming to Christ. But my friends, there is no excuse for this sort of persistent unbelief. Because from week to week it goes on and it will not go on forever because the opportunity will be removed.

We find that Rahab's faith was based on little testimony. But we find that it was a great faith. It really was a great faith. Rahab believed that Jericho was going to be captured.

She believed that all the people in Jericho were going to be destroyed. And she believed it because she had heard it that the God of Israel was going to do it. Now Jericho was a very, very strongly

fortified city. It had a tremendously strong wall all the way around it. It was a high, strong wall. It was sort of built with fortresses built into it.

[12:11] And it was impossible to scale it. And it was impossible to breach it in any way because of its power and its sheer strength. And also between the children of Israel and Jericho, there was the river Jordan, which was at this time of year at the highest level.

Because the snow and the hills were melting and it was coming down into the river Jordan and it was at its highest level, at its most impossible.

There was no means of crossing it for the children of Israel because they had come through the desert. They didn't have boats. They had nothing like that. But Rahab knew that God had said that he would lead these people into the promised land and she believed it.

Because she remembered the Red Sea and she remembered how the enemies of the children of Israel were defeated constantly against all the others.

And she believed that God would and could take Jericho. She had a great faith, although she didn't know how it was going to happen.

[13:22] And it's interesting that the Holy Spirit in James cites two great witnesses, two examples of a great faith.

One of them was Abraham and the other one is Rahab. That is, we have a Jew and we have a Gentile being cited as two who had a great faith.

And imagine Rahab being placed on the same footing as Abraham, the power of the faithful. And yet the Holy Spirit in the epistle of James does this.

Or today we look at things with such a human viewpoint. We are so geared to looking at things with our own eyes. Even the best Christians. We forget God. We have this built-in caution which really is unbelief.

When we talk and have confidence about what's wrong with the church, what we should be doing about this, that and the next thing, why churches are empty, why we're not doing a whole lot of things. And people say it's lack of prayer, it's lack of young men, it's lack of this, it's lack of that.

[14:43] The basic cause is unbelief. We don't believe what we read. We think that because we don't understand how or why, and because we don't have the money for it and all that, we forget. We're in God's business.

And it is very simple for God to do anything He wants, even if it's impossible with everything. So particularly the young Christians, go out into the world with a belief and a faith in God.

Don't be cautious. It is better to be reckless with God's faith because there is plenty of it.

To be cautious in God's work is really to be tempering our faith with unbelief. Now I don't mean that we sort of go out into the deep end. We assess things according to Scripture. We assess what is best for God's cause.

And then we do it. Because we're dealing with God. Always take God into account. Recognise our own limitations. And it's when we recognise our own limitations that we lay claim to the omnipotent resources of God.

[16:14] We see that. She had a great faith. She didn't know how. But she believed that it was all going to happen just as God had said it would.

And it was also an act of faith. Because she believed this, she just didn't sit back and say, ah well that's it. Because she believed it absolutely, she did something about it. And she acted accordingly. Her faith was motivated by her love. And she had a concern for her family, for her parents, and for her sisters, and for her brothers.

Because she says, deliver our lives from death. She places herself with her family, and with her brothers, and with her sisters. And it's interesting to note, that she was probably the black sheep of the family. Probably her family had sort of cut adrift from her, and wouldn't mention her in the best of circles.

And would sort of try and keep the young ones away from her. Because she was not really the sort of character that you would like in your drawing room when you'd visit her.

And yet, as is so often the case, the black sheep had the softest, most loving heart. And you often find it to this day, that the black sheep of the family, the one who goes astray, and the one that the rest of the family, or sort of don't speak about, usually they're the nicest ones of the lot.

[17:36] And Rahab, when she knew about God, and that God was going to do this, and that there was a chance of safety. She remembered her own family. Delivered our lives from death. What an

example she shows to us, about the weight of our family upon her own shoulders.

Don't let her be like David, who would hear us, is the young man Absalom safe? When he was too late, Absalom was dead.

Before David said, is the young man Absalom safe? He should have asked about, is the young man Absalom safe? When Absalom was 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, all the teenage years.

But he is too late. And so many of us, lose opportunity, to pray for our own immediate circle. And yet we are so busy doing the Lord's work outside, we forget our own nearest and dearest.

And my friends, our prayers must start here. Because that is where God has given you the initial responsibility. By touching your heart, and by making you a Christian, in a family, in a large family or a small family.

[ 18 : 54 ] He says, right, take your family to heaven with you. And you do it by sheer prayer. She also had an obedient faith. Because the two spies told her to hang a scarlet thread, a scarlet line, out the window.

And to take all her family to her house. And that's exactly what Rahab did. She said, the exact color of the line, the exact line that had been used to lower them down, in the exact window.

And she asked her family to come to her own home. Because she knew that the scarlet thread, the scarlet line, was going to be the means of saving by identification.

And she also knew that any other color or type of line would not provide the proper identification.

And she also knew that even if her family had a note from her to say, I am Rahab's father and I am Rahab's mother, I am Rahab's sister and brother, that that would be of no good.

[ 20 : 14 ] Because she had been told, take the family to your house. I wonder if she remembered about the angel of death in Egypt. Had she heard about it?

That there had to be blood in the lintels of the door and that the angel of death would come. And if there was blood in the lintels that he wouldn't go near it. And that even if Israelites were inside the house that had no blood on the door, that there the son would be taken, that the angel of death would touch there.

Whatever it was, she knew that obedience demanded attention to detail. And it's something that we must always be sure of. That we do pay attention to detail when the Lord tells us to do something. We are dealing with the same God. And it is of tremendous sheer agony to Christians to read how the edges of the Christian faith are being eroded by people who do not pay attention to the detailed obedience that is required by God.

God says there is no other name under heaven given amongst men by which you must be saved.

The name of Jesus Christ. You know yourself, the number of other avenues that people are given.

[ 21 : 44 ] The number of different Jesus Christ that are given. The number of things that are added on. The number of things that are taken away.

Where is the attention to detail? To the detailed obedience that is required when God says to us there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The Lord Jesus Christ. When people say the virgin birth is only a figment of the imagination. They say the resurrection isn't really the resurrection.

They say that Christ was an ordinary man and that he ceased to be God when he was on the cross. They say so many things. My friends.

Christ was man. Christ was God. Christ was God. He never ceased to be God. He is still man.

[ 22 : 47 ] He is still God. He came into this world to seek and to save sinners. And he died for every single sinner that believes in him.

And he rose on the third day and he is now at the right hand of God the Father. Coming to judge the world at the last day. When you die you go either to heaven or to hell.

Don't tamper with any of those fundamental truths. Argue about moot points of theology if you like.

But these are the non-negotiables. You cannot tamper with any of those and remain a Christian.

We are dealing with the same God.

And if you tamper with any of those then Rahab once again will witness against you. Rahab knew there was no safety in any other colour.

[ 23 : 54 ] There was no safety in any other house. No matter how expensive. No matter how beautiful. Every Christian should know that.

That he should not be drawn aside to any other house. No matter how attractive that house is. And the young ones. You must not be thrown aside to any other gospel.

No matter how pleasant it may be to sit there. In different churches. Where you find the surroundings pleasant. And the music pleasant. And all that so nice. And where the company is nice and friendly. And the meaning. If Jesus Christ is not preached. If the blood of Jesus Christ was not spilt at Calvary. Then my friends. Have nothing to do with it. Because there is no refuge. Anywhere else. [ 24 : 58 ] Except. At the foot of the cross. At Calvary. Simply to the cross. High clinging. And as you leave home the young ones.

And you find that it is good. To go with a crowd to different churches. Please find out. What they do with Jesus. We can stand a whole lot of other things. But if they tamper with you. Do not have anything to do with that place. Rahab knew that destruction was all around us. And her only hope was in the scarlet thread. While in the same way. Our only hope is in Christ. And there is nothing but destruction out of him. In the same way.

In the same way. Our only hope is in Christ. And there is nothing but destruction out of him. knew that destruction was all around her and her only hope was in the scarlet thread while in the same way our only hope is in Christ and there is nothing but destruction out of him and Rahab also knew that it wasn't good enough to know of the thread to know that if she did hang the thread out the window that everything would be alright she knew that she had to be inside the house that the scarlet thread was hanging out of in the same way it is no use for you to know a historical Jesus the same way as you know Napoleon or the Duke of Wellington or Hitler or Churchill or any of those so my friends you've got to pray to the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes so that your heart will know and recognise the Lord Jesus Christ you cannot do it on your own but by coming and praying in the name of Christ asking for the Holy Spirit to come in to get harsh to see recognise him he has promised that he will send the Holy Spirit so that you will see and recognise and find and find

Jesus Christ those that seek him will find him and Rahab's faith was also a witnessing faith she did hang the thread out the window she did hang it out the window so that it was plain to see she didn't just hang it out the back window or out the door where people couldn't see she hung it out the window where she was told to hang it out it was publicly declaring her belief that the Jordan would be crossed that the walls of Jericho would be breached and that the children of Israel would enter into Jericho that all the other houses would be destroyed that every single person in Jericho would be killed plus the animal but to cause she had a scarlet thread in the window she believed that her house would be left standing that she herself would be saved and that all her family would be saved she and her house and her family would be saved and why was this?

[ 28 : 01 ] because the spies had said that God had said so now not many people would have known or would have cared about the scarlet thread that was hanging at the window but those that mattered would know the children of Israel who were coming to destroy the place would know and recognize and that's all that Rahab was worried about there are some here maybe who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ but they make no public profession well my friends all I can say to you is whatever your reason for staying back come forward and tie the scarlet thread in your window and let the world know that you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and that no matter if everybody else's house is destroyed you will be alright because you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because we know that although others may not see our professional faith

God will see it God will see that we are placing our hope our complete hope on his dear son and our house will stand when others fall and every Christian should hang out this scarlet thread no matter where he is at work or play when he's talking to somebody particularly in the home the family the family must know that there's a scarlet thread in the window but if you claim that the Lord Jesus Christ is yours and if you hang the scarlet thread in the window to say that your house belongs to Christ then my friends make sure that that house is fit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ if he comes calling on you have nothing in the whole house not even away in the cellar that would be of any embarrassment to you if the Lord Jesus Christ walked in because hanging out the scarlet thread claiming that you belong to Christ carries its own responsibility well in conclusion there's one or two things that come out very clearly to us the first one is that we must never never never think that anyone is beyond help no matter the mess one makes of one's life the great craftsman can see an angel in the rubbish heap down in the human heart crushed by the tempter feelings lie buried that grace can restore touched by a loving hand wakened by kindness cords that were broken will vibrate once more don't let underestimate the divine love that can make new people out of people

who looked like rubbish by the end of the story the city was taken the city was destroyed the whole wall fell down except

Rahab's house notice that Rahab's house was on the wall so that all the wall around about must have fallen down except Rahab's house and her family and herself were saved and then in Matthew chapter 1 we find that in the list of people leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ we find that Rahab was the wife of Salmon the mother of Boaz Boaz who married Ruth and then in that lying down we find Jesse we find David we find Jesus so Rahab the heathen Harad a mother in Israel behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God Amen let us pray

O Lord God of heaven and earth we pray that we would take great encouragement from the way that thou dost look down upon individuals individuals that have made a mess of their own lives and yet thou dost raise them up to be an example to us all through faith so we pray that each and every one of us would take encouragement from this and would reach out to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith and would also pray and expect people who are very far removed from thee to come in faith to know the Lord help us then to do those things that thou dost require us to do help us to grow in faith remove our unbelief make us humble in the knowledge that we have access to the omnipotent power of the Lord Jesus take us all home safely we pray and we ask that thou would give us further opportunities to dwell round thy word but we ask it in the name of Jesus Amen