

Joshua 2:1 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there.

Joshua 2:2 And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country.

Joshua 2:3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country.

Joshua 2:4 And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they *were*:

Joshua 2:5 And it came to pass *about the time* of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

Joshua sent two men to spy out the city of Jericho in preparation for their attack; this is just prudent military preparation. They ended up at Rahab's house; she was a harlot but evidently also rented out rooms. It seems that some in the city had recognized them as Israelites and immediately assumed they were spies. When the king was informed of their presence, he sent messengers to Rahab and told her to send the men out of her house because they were spies. She had evidently suspected this would happen and had hidden the two spies. She acknowledged to the king's representatives that the men had come to her house, but she didn't know where they were because they had left since it was about time for the gates to shut. It was dark, so she didn't see which way they went. She then suggested that if they took off after them quickly, they would probably overtake them.

Obviously, Rahab lied; but she lied to protect life (similar to the Israeli midwives in Egypt who refused to kill the boy babies) and would be blessed by God because of it (as were the midwives).

The New Bible Commentary offers this insight: "...we do not accuse the participants of acting according to the unethical principle that a right end justifies a wrong means. Rather, we recognize that in such situations deception is legitimate, not wrong. So also the OT recognizes that in war intelligence, counter-intelligence and decoys are all part of 'the game'."

Joshua 2:6 But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

Joshua 2:7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

We are told that Rahab had hidden the men on the roof of the house among the stalks of flax that were drying on her roof. The men of Jericho took off after them toward the likely spots for crossing over the Jordan, and the gates of the city were shut.

Joshua 2:8 ¶ And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the

roof;

Joshua 2:9 And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

Joshua 2:10 For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

Joshua 2:11 And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Before the two Israelis lay down to go to sleep, Rahab came up to the roof to talk to them. She informed them that she knew that the LORD had given them the land. Evidently, so did the other inhabitants of the land, because she noted that they were all afraid of the people of Israel. They had heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Red Sea when they left Egypt (40 years earlier) and how they had utterly destroyed the kingdoms of Sihon and Og that were east of the Jordan River. Rahab declared that everyone became afraid as soon as the news reached them.

The last part of verse 11 seems to be a personal declaration by Rahab. She recognized that the LORD, the God of Israel, was the one true God in heaven above and on earth below.

The people of that time may not have had television news or computers, but the news sure got around somehow.

Joshua 2:12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token:

Joshua 2:13 And *that* ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

Joshua 2:14 And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

Rahab proceeded to plead for her life and the lives of her family in light of the protection she had provided the spies. She wanted the men to make this promise to her with an oath "by the LORD." She was smart enough to understand that this was the strongest promise she could expect from them. The men didn't hesitate; they promised to honor her request as long as she kept their business secret. They promised to do as she asked when the Lord gave them the land.

I think it is important to note that they were very careful to declare that they would take the land because the LORD was giving it to them—not because they were taking it in their own strength.

Principle: We can only and will always be victorious with the LORD on our side and acting on our behalf.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

Romans 8:31 "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Joshua 2:15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house *was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.*

Joshua 2:16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

Rahab let the men down by a strong cord through her window, since her house was on the wall of the city. She warned them to get to the mountain to avoid the men that were hunting them. They should remain hidden in the mountain for three days to make sure that their pursuers had given up the search. They could then return to their camp safely.

Coffman offers the following insight on the mountains: "These were the rugged hills that rise 1,500 feet to 2,000 feet above the Jericho plain within a mile or so of the city. These limestone hills with many caves and grottoes were the very ones where the Dead Sea Scrolls have been discovered in recent times, only about eight or ten miles southward from Jericho!"

Joshua 2:17 And the men said unto her, We *will be* blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.

Joshua 2:18 Behold, *when* we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

Joshua 2:19 And it shall be, *that* whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood *shall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him.

Joshua 2:20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

Joshua 2:21 And she said, According unto your words, so *be* it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

Before leaving, the men made sure that Rahab understood their agreement. When they came to take possession of the land, she was to tie the same cord of scarlet that she was using to help them escape in the same window. She was responsible for seeing that her father, mother, and siblings were in her home. If any of them went outside her home, their death would be their own fault. If anyone in her house died, the men of Israel would be guilty of their death. If she didn't keep quiet about their business, their agreement was null and void. Rahab readily agreed and sent them away. It sounds like she tied the scarlet cord in the

window right after they left.

Principle: The LORD never turns anyone away that seeks His salvation through faith in His provision. This reminds me of the words of Jesus recorded by John.

John 6:37 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Joshua 2:22 ¶ And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought *them* throughout all the way, but found *them* not.

Joshua 2:23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all *things* that befell them:

Joshua 2:24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

The two spies went to the mountain as Rahab had advised and stayed there for three days until the men hunting them had returned home. They then went down the mountain and reported back to Joshua, telling him everything that had happened. They delivered a report that was confident of victory. They reported that the LORD had caused all the inhabitants of the land to fear them.