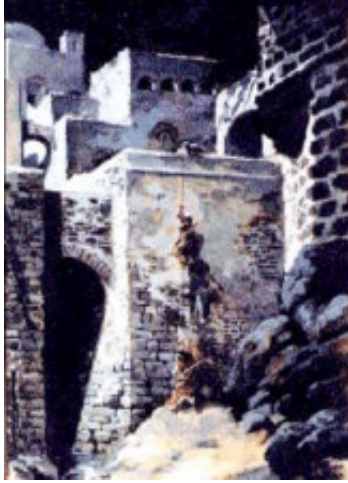


LESSON 2



SPIES SENT TO JERICHO

Scripture Text: Joshua 2:1-24

Israel's conquest of Canaan is a type of the saints' conquest of complete salvation. This victorious experience can only be gained by one's obedience in a step-by-step, day-by-day travel by faith and obedience to God's direction. God calls men to lead His people, men whom He can trust, Spirit-filled men, who will listen to and follow His instructions exactly.

The people of Jericho knew about Israel's God, but they did not know Him. They had heard about the miraculous way their God had led them this far. They were fearful of the Israelites because of their God. The Christian life is a daily conflict.

MEMORY VERSE: *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 2:9*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—Numbers 21:21-35 Past defeat of the enemy.

Tue.—James 2:17-26 Rahab's faith and works.

Wed.—Luke 14:25-35 Counting the cost.

Thu.—John 15:16-27 The Christian life has conflict.

Fri.—John 16:1-15 The Holy Spirit promised.

Devotional Reading: John 6:26-40 Work of God is to believe.

Rahab Helped the Spies

Joshua 2:1-7 Joshua, Israel's new leader, **sent . . . two men to spy secretly**. Since Jericho lay close to where Israel was to enter Canaan, it was essential to know its character. **Came into an harlot's house**. "Harlots and innkeepers seem to have been called by the same name . . . Among the ancients, women generally kept houses of entertainment . . . I am fully satisfied that the term *zonah* in the text, which we translate harlot, should be rendered tavern or innkeeper or hostess." (Adam Clark)

Who guided the spies to the only believer who would protect them? Who kept them from being discovered and made their way safe and successful? It was not their own skill and wisdom, understanding and power. It was God with them. The experiences of Israel are types of experiences in the Christian life. Each day the Christian meets the enemy. Our every move toward possessing what God has ahead for us is contested by the enemy of our souls. Opposition either takes us on to greater victory or backs us off farther from our inheritance, or our Canaan.

The king of Jericho, fearfully watching the Israelites, heard of the spies and sent men to capture them. Rahab hid them on the flat roof and lied, saying they had left. Could not God have protected them without a lie? Yes, but Rahab was a heathen. Yet she was learning God's ways.

Rahab's Fear of God

Joshua 2:8-11 Rahab told the spies of the fear of the people. **She said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land . . . the inhabitants . . . faint because of you.** They had news of the drying of the Red Sea and the destruction of cities they had passed through before, Sihon and Og (Numbers 21:21-35). These were outstanding wonders known to the nations. The same news that produced terror in her countrymen produced faith in Rahab. She believed God could and would bless His people. She planned to share in the blessing.

Rahab was ready to help the spies because she believed in their God. Her faith rose above the many questions confronting her and grasped the truth. She believed in His power and love to bless His people. This is what childlike faith will produce in willing hearts (Hebrews 11:31).

Rahab's Request

Joshua 2:12-14 Swear unto me by the Lord—call upon God to bind the promise (Deuteronomy 6:13). Here she shows her faith, not in the men, but in the Lord. She asked that the lives of her family be spared, not if, but when, Jericho would be taken. She believed (1) that God would destroy the city, (2) that God could grant her request, and (3) that the spies had power with God. They were sent to find what effort and sacrifice might be for Israel to do to enter and conquer the land. God did not instruct them to do this. Whether this was wise or unwise, we cannot tell from our lesson text, but we learn that they found one there with a greater faith than they. She was counting on Israel's God to save her family. She had counted the cost. She was willing to pay whatever it would cost. She would do all she could. That is all God asks of us.

Plan to Escape

Joshua 2:15-16 It was night. The city gates were shut. Rahab's house was on the wall. A window such as hers was the only way to the ground outside the wall. Her life and the lives of her family were at stake. Instructing them to hide in the mountain three days, she let them down by a scarlet cord, or rope. Her faith was great. She was counting on Israel's God to do the rest.

The Agreement

Joshua 2:17-24 Before going, the spies promised to spare the lives of all Rahab's relatives kept within her house. Not near it, but in it. Compare with Noah's Ark. The scarlet cord tied in the window would mark her house. Compare this with the blood applied to the door in Egypt. She promised to keep their business secret. Both sides staked their lives on faithful keeping of the covenant.

Returning, the spies gave the glory to God for what their faith accepted as a coming victory.

JUST A THOUGHT

Genuine faith is assuring, insuring, and enduring.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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