

Group Study Questions – Joshua 2 (NKJV)

Joshua 2 shows that God is already working inside Jericho before Israel ever marches around its walls. The city is afraid, the spies are protected, Rahab believes, and a household is marked for rescue.

The chapter teaches that faith acts, courage chooses allegiance, and God's mercy can reach unexpected people. It also points forward to Christ, who brings outsiders near and provides salvation in the midst of judgment.

Forward Connections to Christ and the Gospels

Joshua 2 does not have a direct parallel story in the Gospels, but it has several important forward connections. **Rahab** becomes part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ in **Matthew 1:5**, showing God's grace toward a Gentile woman with a sinful past. She is also remembered for faith in **Hebrews 11:31** and for faith expressed through action in **James 2:25**.

The scarlet cord in Joshua 2:18 is not explicitly called a symbol of Christ in the text, but many Christians see a meaningful connection to deliverance through a visible sign, similar to the blood on the doorposts at Passover in **Exodus 12:13**. In the Gospel story, true rescue ultimately comes through Christ's blood, which Jesus says is "shed for many for the remission of sins" in **Matthew 26:28**.

1. Why does Joshua send spies into Jericho, and how does this show both faith and wisdom? *(Joshua 2:1)*

Joshua sends two spies to "view the land, especially Jericho." This is interesting because God has already promised the land to Israel in **Joshua 1:3**. Joshua believes God's promise, but he still gathers information and prepares carefully.

This shows that faith is not carelessness. Joshua is acting in line with God's promise while also using practical wisdom. Earlier, Moses had sent spies into the land in **Numbers 13:1–2**, though that mission exposed Israel's unbelief. Here, the spying leads to confidence because the spies return saying, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands" (Joshua 2:24).

Everyday Application: Trusting God does not mean refusing to plan. Faith can pray, prepare, ask questions, gather information, and still depend fully on the Lord. God's promises should make us obedient and thoughtful, not passive.

2. What does Rahab's response to the spies reveal about faith beginning in unexpected places? *(Joshua 2:1–7)*

Rahab is introduced as a harlot living in Jericho. Humanly speaking, she is an unlikely person to become an example of faith. Yet she protects the spies and later confesses belief in the God of Israel.

Scripture later honors Rahab as a woman of faith: “By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe” (**Hebrews 11:31**). James also says Rahab’s faith was shown by her actions when she received the messengers and sent them out another way (**James 2:25**).

Her story reminds us that God’s grace often appears in places people would not expect. Matthew’s Gospel includes Rahab in the genealogy of Jesus (**Matthew 1:5**), showing that her story becomes part of the larger story of redemption.

Everyday Application: We should be careful not to decide who is “unlikely” to respond to God. A person’s past does not prevent God from working in their future. Rahab reminds us that faith can begin in surprising hearts.

3. What do Rahab’s words reveal about what Jericho knew and feared? (*Joshua 2:8–11*)

Rahab tells the spies that the people of Jericho had heard how the Lord dried up the Red Sea and gave Israel victory over Sihon and Og (*Joshua 2:10*; *Exodus 14:21–22*; *Numbers 21:21–35*). The result was fear: “our hearts melted” (*Joshua 2:11*).

This shows that God’s works had become known among the nations. The issue was not lack of information. Jericho heard, feared, and remained opposed. Rahab heard the same reports and responded in faith.

Her confession is powerful: “The LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath” (*Joshua 2:11*). That sounds similar to language used elsewhere to describe God’s unique rule over heaven and earth (*Deuteronomy 4:39*).

Everyday Application: Two people can hear the same truth and respond differently. Some harden themselves; others humble themselves. The question is not only what we have heard about God, but how we respond to what we know.

4. Why is Rahab’s confession so significant? (*Joshua 2:9–11*)

Rahab does more than acknowledge Israel’s military strength. She confesses that the Lord has given Israel the land and that He is God over heaven and earth. This is remarkable because she is a Canaanite living inside Jericho, yet she recognizes the authority of Israel’s God.

Her faith is not perfect knowledge, but it is real. She trusts what she has heard about God and acts on it. This is why *Hebrews 11:31* connects her deliverance to faith.

In the Gospel story, we see similar unexpected faith from outsiders. A Roman centurion amazes Jesus with his faith in **Matthew 8:10**, and a Canaanite woman shows persistent faith in **Matthew 15:21–28**. Rahab fits that pattern: an outsider responds in faith while others remain resistant.

Everyday Application: Faith often begins by taking seriously what God has revealed. We may not understand everything, but we are responsible for responding to what we do understand. Rahab teaches us that genuine faith moves toward God even with limited light.

5. What should we make of Rahab hiding the spies and misleading the king's men? (Joshua 2:4–7)

Rahab hides the spies and tells the king's men they have already left. This raises a real ethical question because Scripture values truthfulness (**Exodus 20:16; Proverbs 12:22**). The text praises Rahab's faith and protection of the spies, but it does not explicitly praise the lie itself.

Hebrews 11:31 and James 2:25 commend Rahab for receiving and protecting the messengers, not for falsehood as a moral example. The situation takes place in wartime, with Rahab choosing allegiance to the Lord over allegiance to Jericho's doomed system.

A careful way to say it is this: Rahab's faith was real, her courage was real, and God honored her response, even though her understanding and actions may not have been morally complete in every detail.

Everyday Application: God often begins working in people before they have everything sorted out. This should make us humble and patient with spiritual growth. At the same time, Rahab's courage challenges us to ask where our true allegiance lies when obedience becomes costly.

6. What is the meaning of the scarlet cord in Rahab's window? (Joshua 2:15–21)

The scarlet cord was the agreed sign that Rahab's house would be spared when Israel attacked Jericho. It required trust and obedience: Rahab had to place the cord in the window and gather her family inside the house (Joshua 2:18–19).

This has a strong echo of Passover. In **Exodus 12:13**, the blood on the doorposts marked the homes that would be spared from judgment. In Joshua 2, the scarlet cord marks Rahab's house for rescue.

The New Testament does not directly call the scarlet cord a symbol of Christ, so we should be careful. But it does point forward thematically to salvation through a sign of mercy amid judgment. In the Gospels, Jesus speaks of His blood being shed for forgiveness (**Matthew 26:28**), and John the Baptist calls Jesus "the Lamb of God" (**John 1:29**).

Everyday Application: Rahab did not merely believe privately; she acted on the promise given to her. Faith often involves visible obedience. Trusting God means taking refuge in the way He provides, not inventing our own.

7. Why does Rahab ask for her whole family to be spared? (Joshua 2:12–13, 18–19)

Rahab asks that her father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all they have be delivered from death. Her faith immediately becomes intercessory; she is not concerned only for herself.

This does not mean her family is saved apart from response. They must come into the marked house and remain there (Joshua 2:18–19). But Rahab uses her opportunity to seek mercy for those close to her.

This concern for household rescue appears elsewhere in Scripture. Noah's family enters the ark (**Genesis 7:1**), and the Philippian jailer's household hears the word of the Lord after he asks about salvation (**Acts 16:31–34**).

Everyday Application: Faith should enlarge our concern for others. Rahab challenges us to pray for, speak to, and seek the good of our families and communities. We cannot believe for others, but we can point them toward refuge.

8. What does the spies' report in verse 24 show about the purpose of Joshua 2? (Joshua 2:22–24)

The spies return and say, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us" (Joshua 2:24). This report strengthens Israel's confidence before crossing the Jordan.

The chapter is not mainly about espionage strategy; it is about confirmation of God's promise. God had already said, "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you" (Joshua 1:3). Now the spies hear from Rahab's own mouth that Jericho is afraid because of what God has done.

Unlike the fearful report in Numbers 13:31–33, this report encourages obedience. The spies come back convinced that God is going before them.

Everyday Application: God often gives reminders that His promises are trustworthy. We should pay attention to testimonies, answered prayers, and confirmations that strengthen obedience. Encouragement should move us forward, not make us passive.