

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

The Promised Land

RAHAB AND THE SPIES

Joshua 2

Elementary Lesson

Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Seven

[0320]

AIM: to use the story of Rahab and the 2 spies to teach my class that God can use them to help somebody else do right.

OBJECTS TO HAVE: A measuring tape
 A picture of Jericho
 A picture of a pile of hay
 A red string or rope
 A picture of a window
 Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: (Hold up the tape measure) Who knows what this is? It's a *measuring tape*. Who can tell me what you use a measuring tape for? That's right! We could say it this way: "You use a measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it. Let me tell you some ways that you might use a measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it.

If you are going to sew a piece of clothing to fit a person, you need to measure before you do the job. For instance, when a man buys a new pair of pants, many times the bottom of each leg needs to be sewn to fit the length of the man's legs. So in order to know how long to make it you have to use the measuring tape to measure before you start the job. You use the measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it.

Another time you use a measuring tape is if you are going to build with wood. Suppose we needed to build a door to go in this open space right here. Before we start the job we need to measure the space to know exactly what size to make the door. You use the measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it.

You also need a measuring tape if you are going to hang a picture on the wall. You don't just hang a picture in any old spot; you need to make sure it is in just the right place on the wall. In order to make sure it is just right, you need to use your measuring tape. You use the measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it.

These are a few examples of how you use a measuring tape to **size up the job** before you start it. What do you use a measuring tape for? To **size up the job** before you start it. Very good.

Today we are going to learn about a job that God needed done, but before He could use Joshua and the people to do that job, He needed somebody to **size up the job**.

POINT OF CONTACT: Last Sunday we learned how the children of Israel were ready to enter into the Promised Land, and that God had called Joshua to be the man to lead them into the Promised Land. They knew that they were about to face some very difficult battles, but they knew that if they followed God that He would take care of them.

The first battle that Joshua and the children of Israel were going to have to win was a battle against the wicked city of *Jericho*. Jericho was a wicked city with a big, high wall around it. Because of the wall around the city, and because the children of Israel were still far away, Joshua did not know what to expect when they arrived at Jericho. So before they could begin the battle they had to **size up** the land and the city that lay before them. How would they do this?

Joshua chose two men from the children of Israel, and he gave them the very important, yet very risky job of **sizing up** the land and its people. These two men were called *spies*. Do you know what a spy is? A spy is someone who goes secretly into enemy territory to **size up** the land. That is what Joshua needed these men to do—to go into the city of Jericho as spies and **size up** the land and its people so they would know how to face them in battle.

The two spies went bravely into the city of Jericho. They looked around as much as they could, and learned as much as they could about the city, trying not to let anybody know they were there. But sure enough someone spotted them, and knew that they were of the children of Israel. The spies knew that someone had seen them, and they knew that they must find someone to help them. But who should they ask? Everyone in the city would think of them as enemies!

Then they heard someone whisper, "Hey, you two men!" They turned around and saw a woman peeking out of a door. "Come hide in here!" Quickly, the two spies snuck inside of her door. "My name is Rahab. I know that you men are Israelites. I know why you are here. You are safe here. I will not let anyone know that you are here."

The Israelite spies were relieved that they had found a safe place to hide. But as they were talking to Rahab there came a loud knock on Rahab's door. It was the king's men! Someone had seen the spies go into Rahab's house, and now the

king's men were coming to take them! Quickly, Rahab took the two spies up to the roof of her house, where she hid them underneath a large pile of flax, or straw. The flax was in piles on the roof, drying in the sun. Rahab said, "Huddle down here, and I will cover you with the flax. Hurry!" They crouched down as small as they could, and Rahab covered them up. "You be still and quiet, and I will go answer the door. Don't worry...I won't tell them that you are here."

Rahab ran back downstairs and answered the door. "Two men of the children of Israel were seen coming into your house. These men are spies, and they pose a great danger to our city. Bring these men out at once."

Rahab said, "I'm sorry, but they have already left. You just missed them. If you hurry maybe you can catch them." Before Rahab could finish speaking, the king's soldiers turned and hurried to the gate of the city, hoping to catch the two spies before they got away.

Rahab went back up to the roof of her house and told the two spies that the soldiers were gone. They crawled out from under the flax, and brushed themselves off. Then they asked Rahab a question: "Why did you save our lives like that? Why did you protect us? Why did you risk your own life to save our lives?"

Rahab said, "Because I was afraid of your God. We have heard how God parted the waters of the Red Sea for you. We have heard all about how God destroyed the great Egyptian army to save your nation. We have heard about the many battles you have won against great kings because your God fought for you. We have heard how anybody who fights against you and your God loses. And we knew that if you ever came to our city that we would be destroyed, for our city is a wicked city, a city of sin where nobody does right and nobody fears God. I have hoped for the chance to show that I fear God, and that I believe God. When you told me who you are I knew that God had given me that chance. That is why I wanted to help you."

You see, kids, these two men were **good** men. They were there for a **good** reason. They were doing a **good** thing. But even though everything about their mission was **good**, they needed some help. Rahab knew that it was her job to give them that help. And just like God used Rahab to help somebody else do good, God can use you to help somebody else do **good**.

Did you know that your parents need your help? Your mom and dad work very hard to do **good** things. Giving you a house to live in, food to eat, clothes to wear, a car to get around in, and many other things, these are all **good** things that they do for you. But you know what? They cannot do it alone. I know you think, "Oh yes, they can, they're grown ups!" But you're wrong if you think they don't need your help. They need you to help by **obeying them the first time** you are told to do something. Of course, you ought to obey your parents just because God commands you to obey your parents. But another good reason to obey your parents is that it helps them to do the **good** things that they are trying to do.

Your teacher in school needs your help. Your teacher is trying to do a **good** thing by teaching you and the rest of your class how to read and write, add and subtract, and all kinds of other things. But I'll bet you've seen your teacher get upset because some kids in your class don't behave. I know you think, "My teacher's a grown-up. Grown-ups are just supposed to deal with kids misbehaving." No, they need your help. They need you to help by **sitting still, looking at them, and listening** to them.

Our pastor is trying to do many **good** things here in our church. But he cannot do them all by himself. Just like these two spies needed Rahab's help, our pastor needs your help. How can you help? You can help by **coming to church every Sunday**. You can help by keeping your church building clean. You can help by behaving properly before, during, and after Sunday School and church. You can help by bringing your friends with you to church.

Rahab wanted to help these two good men do a good thing. Rahab took from her closet a long red rope. She threw that rope out of her window. (You see, Rahab's house was built into the great wall of Jericho. If the spies could escape through her window, they would be outside of the gate of the city, and they could escape from the king's men). Rahab let the men escape through her window in the middle of the night.

Before they snuck out the window, the two spies said to Rahab, "What can we do to thank you?"

Rahab said, "When you come into our wicked city to destroy it, please spare me and my family from dying."

The men made her a promise: "If you will take this scarlet rope and hang it from your window when we come into Jericho, then we promise that everyone who lives in your house will be saved." Rahab did that, and, as we will learn next Sunday, she and all the people in her house were spared. She sure was glad that she had helped two men, because those men came back and saved her life.

If you will help people do the **good** things that they are trying to do, some day you will be glad when those **good** things are a help to you!

Let's learn our memory verse. **Titus 2:11 - For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.**

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Joshua 2

Teen and Adult Lesson

Year One, Quarter Three, Lesson Seven

[0320]

Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.

- I. **GOD CAN USE YOUR BAD EXPERIENCES TO CREATE A GOOD EXPERIENCE.** 2:1. The Bible doesn't say so, but it is not hard to imagine that, before Joshua sent out this two-man spy crew, he coached them on exactly what their mission was. Joshua had had 40 years to relive that day at Kadesh-Barnea when ten men turned the hearts of the Israelites away from God's will. However Joshua prepared them, they were fully prepared to do the job. Often it is difficult to overcome the hurt of a bad experience, when the foolish actions of others hurt you; but if you can face it and learn from it, you can use it to prepare others.
- II. **GOD EXPECTS US TO BE THOROUGH IN OUR PREPARATION.** God had a plan for Jericho; why did they need to spy? But notice that God did not reveal his plan until the spy-work was done. Notice also that their plan was in line with what they uncovered in their spying. God's direction and Sovereignty are never a substitute for thorough preparation. When we have fully prepared to obey Him, that is when God steps in and shows us His plan. God always blesses the prepared person.
- III. **GOD HAS US COVERED, EVEN IN PREPARATION.** Preparation for the mission is part of the mission; therefore, we can expect the same protection and provision in preparation that we expect for execution of the mission. These spies were fully covered by God as they went into Jericho to spy.
- IV. **GOD HAS PEOPLE IN PLACE TO HELP YOU FULFILL HIS WILL.** God had been working on Rahab for years to bring her to the place where she would be ready to help these spies when she met them. Don't forget: she mentions the Red Sea, and at this point, the Red Sea had happened 40 years earlier! She may not have even been born when God parted the Red Sea. But she had done a lot of listening and thinking, and she was right where God needed her, and right where the spies needed her, at exactly the right time. As you go after God's will, you will be amazed at who God puts in your path, and when.
- V. **GOD CAN USE YOU, NO MATTER WHAT YOUR PAST IS.** Rahab was a prostitute, certainly "useless" in the eyes of most Christians. Yet, not only did God use her here; He named her in the lineage of Christ in Matthew 1, and He commends her faith in Hebrews 11. God does not measure people the same way we do. Give your past to God, and let Him use you however He chooses to.

Rahab and the Spies

Joshua 2
[0320]

Preparing to Enter Jericho

I. JOSHUA 2:1-7 THE SPIES ENTER JERICHO

1 They take refuge in the house of a harlot named Rahab

2-6 Rahab hides the spies from the king's men

7 The king's men leave the city to look for the spies

II. JOSHUA 2:8-14 RAHAB ASKS FOR MERCY

8-11 Rahab details her fear of the LORD

12-13 Rahab pleads for her family in return for her kindness

14 The spies promise to treat Rahab and her family fairly

III. JOSHUA 2:15-24 THE SPIES RETURN SAFELY TO THE CAMP

15-16 Rahab lets them down the wall with a scarlet cord

17-21 The spies make a detailed agreement with Rahab

22-24 The spies return and give their report to Joshua

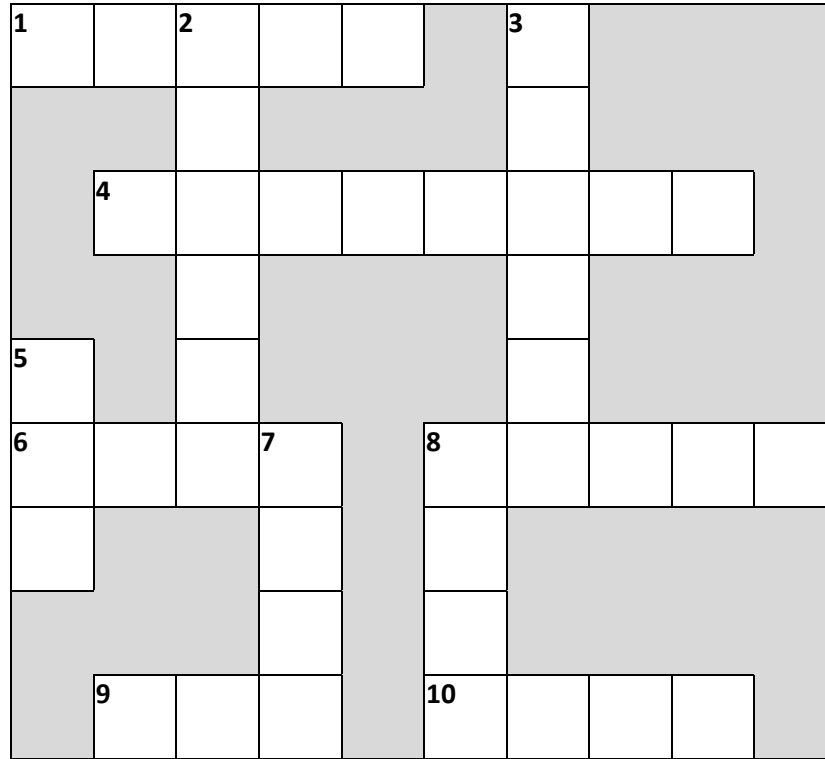
Titus 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.*

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Complete the crossword puzzle below using words from the Scripture passage and information from today's lesson.



ACROSS

- 1 Joshua sent two of these into Jericho
- 4 The Israelites were going into the _____ Land
- 6 There was a _____ around Jericho
- 8 This woman helped the spies
- 9 Rahab had heard how God had parted the _____ Sea for Israel
- 10 Rahab hid the spies under a pile of _____

DOWN

- 2 Joshua led the people of _____
- 3 _____ led the people of Israel
- 5 The number of spies that went into Jericho
- 7 Two men went in to spy the _____
- 8 Rahab hid the spies on her _____

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

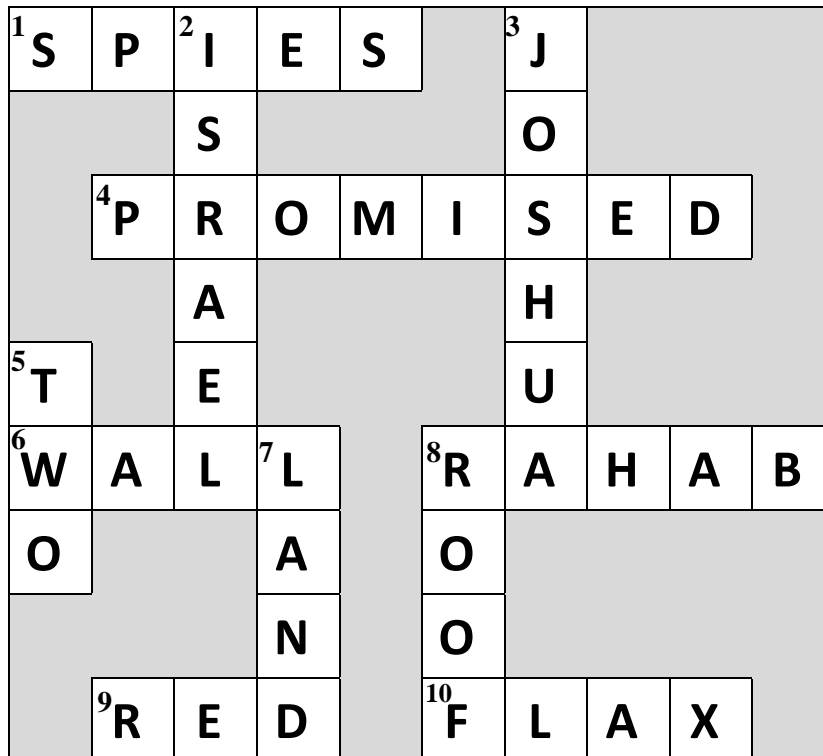
TITUS 2:11

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The answers to this week's puzzle



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