

Seek and Find

DEAR READER,

You have just read the story of Rahab as perceived by one author. Is this the whole truth about the story of Rahab and the fall of Jericho? Jesus said to seek and you will find the answers you need for life. The best way to find the truth is to look for yourself!

This "Seek and Find" section is designed to help you discover the story of Rahab as recorded in the Bible. It consists of six short studies that you can do on your own or with a small discussion group.

You may be surprised to learn that this ancient story will have applications for your life today. No matter where we live or in what century, God's Word is truth. It is as relevant today as it was yesterday. In it we find a future and a hope.
Peggy Lynch

THE VISIT

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia. He instructed them, "Spy out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho." So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night.

But someone told the king of Jericho, "Some Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: "Bring out the men who have come into your house. They are spies sent here to discover the best way to attack us."

Rahab, who had hidden the two men, replied, "The men were here earlier, but I didn't know where they were from. They left the city at dusk, as the city gates were about to close, and I don't know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them." (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath piles of flax.) So the king's men went looking for the spies along the road leading to the shallow crossing places of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king's men had left, the city gate was shut.

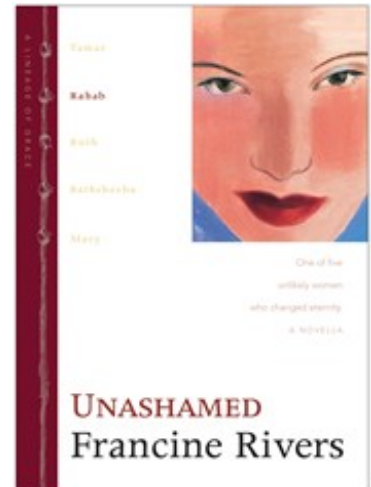
JOSHUA 2:1-7

- Joshua secretly sent two men to spy out Jericho. What things in this passage indicate that this mission was not a secret to the citizens of Jericho?
- Where did the spies go?
- Who is Rahab? How does she make her living?
- According to this passage, how did the king of Jericho view these two "visitors"?
- How did Rahab perceive these visitors?
- Contrast the king's and Rahab's responses to the visitors.

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

- Most of us will never face an invading army as Rahab did, but we do face overwhelming situations of other kinds. What kinds of problems are you facing right now? What kinds of choices do you have?

Read the following passage:



If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do.--JAMES 1:5-8

- What does this passage tell you to do?
- What warning do you find?

STOP AND PONDER

- How are you wavering in your decisions?

THE STAND

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went up on the roof to talk with them. "I know the Lord has given you this land," she told them. "We are all afraid of you. Everyone is living in terror. For we have heard how the Lord made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below. Now swear to me by the Lord that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families."

"We offer our own lives as a guarantee for your safety," the men agreed. "If you don't betray us, we will keep our promise when the Lord gives us the land."

JOSHUA 2:8-14

- List the reasons that the people's hearts had melted in fear and no courage remained.
- What declaration does Rahab make about God?
- What does Rahab ask of the spies?
- Rahab asks the men for a promise. Upon whom is that promise based?
- How do the spies respond?

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

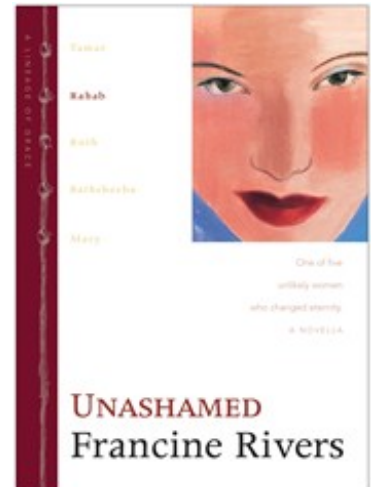
- What fears grip you? Why?
- What do you do when you are fearful?
- What kind of advice have you given to others who are fearful?

King David, one of Rahab's most famous descendants, wrote of God: "Even when I walk through the dark valley of death, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

- What does God offer you?

STOP AND PONDER

- Where is God in relation to you right now?



THE ESCAPE

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

Then, since Rahab's house was built into the city wall, she let them down by a rope through the window. "Escape to the hill country," she told them. "Hide there for three days until the men who are searching for you have returned; then go on your way."

Before they left, the men told her, "We can guarantee your safety only if you leave this scarlet rope hanging from the window. And all your family members—your father, mother, brothers, and all your relatives—must be here inside the house. If they go out into the street, they will be killed, and we cannot be held to our oath. But we swear that no one inside this house will be killed—not a hand will be laid on any of them. If you betray us, however, we are not bound by this oath in any way."

"I accept your terms," she replied. And she sent them on their way, leaving the scarlet rope hanging from the window.

The spies went up into the hill country and stayed there three days. The men who were chasing them had searched everywhere along the road, but they finally returned to the city without success. Then the two spies came down from the hill country, crossed the Jordan River, and reported to Joshua all that had happened to them. "The Lord will certainly give us the whole land," they said, "for all the people in the land are terrified of us."--JOSHUA 2:15-24

- Where was Rahab's house located?
- How did she help the spies escape?
- What instructions did she give the spies? Why?
- What warning and conditions of rescue did the spies give Rahab?
- What was Rahab's response?
- What signal was Rahab to use?

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

• Like Rahab, we have opportunities to help others. List some ways you have helped others.

• What advice have you given?

Jesus said, "Don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing. Why be like the pagans who are so deeply concerned about these things? Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs" (Matthew 6:31-32).

• What instruction and what promise does Jesus offer here? What is the condition?

STOP AND PONDER

• Who has first place in your life?

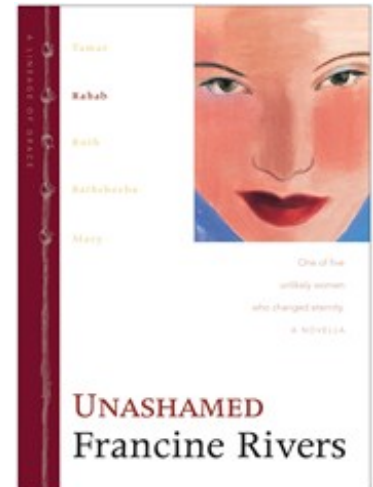
THE WAIT

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

Now the gates of Jericho were tightly shut because the people were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go in or out. But the Lord said to Joshua, "I have given you Jericho, its king, and all its mighty warriors. Your entire army is to march around the city once a day for six days. Seven priests will walk ahead of the Ark, each carrying a ram's horn. On the seventh day you are to march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the horns. When you hear the priests give one long blast on the horns, have all the people give a mighty shout. Then the walls of the city will collapse, and the people can charge straight into the city."

So Joshua called together the priests and said, "Take up the Ark of the Covenant, and assign seven priests to walk in front of it, each carrying a ram's horn." Then



Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests again carried the Ark of the Lord. The seven priests with the rams' horns marched in front of the Ark of the Lord, blowing their horns. Armed guards marched both in front of the priests with the horns and behind the Ark of the Lord. All this time the priests were sounding their horns. On the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They followed this pattern for six days.-- JOSHUA 6:1-14

- Why was Jericho "tightly shut"?
- What proclamation does the Lord give Joshua?
- List the battle instructions given by God.
- What instructions does Joshua give to the people?
- How do the priests and army respond?
- Rahab and her family members are also tightly shut up within the walls of Jericho, waiting for the impending battle. They must have been watching from the wall. What indications do you find that no one knew when the day of victory/rescue would be?

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

- Rahab and her family members were locked up inside her house within the walls of Jericho—waiting for the promised rescue. In what ways are you locked up?
 - What kind of waiting place are you in?
- Psalm 27:14 says: "Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord."
- What instruction is given in this verse?
 - What does it mean to you?

STOP AND PONDER

- On whom do you rely for strength and courage?

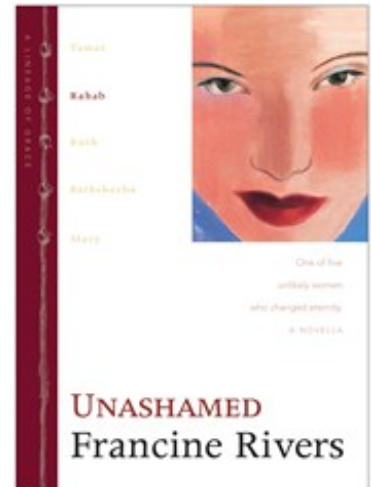
THE RESCUE

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

On the seventh day the Israelites got up at dawn and marched around the city as they had done before. But this time they went around the city seven times. The seventh time around, as the priests sounded the long blast on their horns, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the Lord has given you the city! The city and everything in it must be completely destroyed as an offering to the Lord. Only Rahab the prostitute and the others in her house will be spared, for she protected our spies. Do not take any of the things set apart for destruction, or you yourselves will be completely destroyed, and you will bring trouble on all Israel. Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron is sacred to the Lord and must be brought into his treasury."

When the people heard the sound of the horns, they shouted as loud as they could. Suddenly, the walls of Jericho collapsed, and the Israelites charged straight into the city from every side and captured it. They completely destroyed everything in it—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, donkeys—everything. Then Joshua said to the two spies, "Keep your promise. Go to the prostitute's house and bring her out, along with all her family." The young men went in and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and all the other relatives who were with her. They moved her whole family to a safe place near the camp of Israel.



Then the Israelites burned the city and everything in it. Only the things made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron were kept for the treasury of the Lord's house. So Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute and her relatives who were with her in the house, because she had hidden the spies Joshua sent to Jericho. And she lives among the Israelites to this day.--JOSHUA 6:15-25

- In the previous lesson we learned about the plan during the six days of waiting. What new instructions were carried out on the seventh day?
- What instructions were given regarding Rahab?
- Whom did Joshua send to rescue Rahab and her family? Where were they taken?
- What happened to the city and its contents?
- What items were spared and why?
- Rahab and her family were spared. What reason is given?

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

- When your world is falling apart and things are not going as you planned, what do you do to try to regain control?
- God says, "My thoughts are completely different from yours. . . . And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- What do you learn about God's ways and thoughts from these verses?
- Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it" (John 3:16-17).
- What is God's rescue plan for the world?
 - Why does He want to rescue you?

STOP AND PONDER

- Whom have you chosen to rescue you?

THE OUTCOME

SEEK GOD'S WORD FOR TRUTH

Read the following passage:

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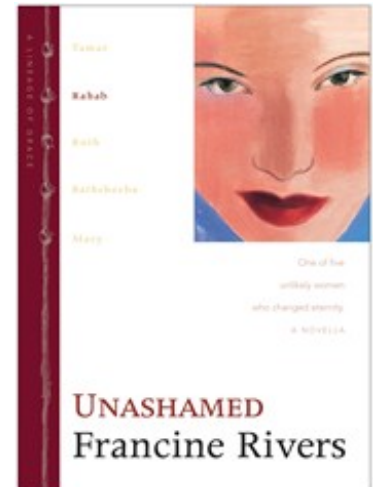
Joshua 6:25

- Of those rescued, how many made their home in the midst of Israel?
- What reason is given?

The story does not end here. We are not told what happened to Rahab's family members, but we do know what happened to Rahab. She married an Israelite named Salmon and bore him a son. Rahab is considered a woman of great faith, and she is held in high esteem in the Bible. The following passage about Rahab was written centuries after her death:

What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see. . . . It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute did not die with all the others in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.--HEBREWS 11:1, 31

- Based upon what you've learned about Rahab, how does this definition of faith apply to her?
- How did she demonstrate her faith?



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The apostle Paul wrote: "God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- From this, what else do you learn about faith?

The apostle Paul also wrote: "I did this so that you might trust the power of God rather than human wisdom" (1 Corinthians 2:5).

- Upon whom did Rahab base her faith?

And finally, the outcome of Rahab's story is the honor given to her in the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, where she is listed in the lineage of Jesus Christ, the Messiah (see pages 517–518).

FIND GOD'S WAYS FOR YOU

- Your story does not end here, either. What have you learned about yourself from this study?
- What changes, if any, have you made?
- How would you describe your relationship with God and why?
- How do you choose to live out your life?

STOP AND PONDER

- How have God's ways become your ways?

