

Joshua 2

The first 5 books of the bible (The Law) are largely about the consequences of rebellion against God. The scroll of these laws of God are even described like an ominous high altitude bomber flying over a land.

Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll.² And he said to me, “What do you see?” So I answered, “I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.”³ Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: ‘Every thief shall be expelled,’ according to this side of the scroll; and, ‘Every perjurer shall be expelled,’ according to that side of it.”⁴ “I will send out the curse,” says the Lord of hosts; “It shall enter the house of the thief And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house And consume it, with its timber and stones.” (Zechariah 5)



Up to this point in time the Law of God has been that sword that was called upon to put an end to unhealthy societal behavior, in order to preserve future generations.

⁸ *We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.* ⁹ *We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,* ¹⁰ *for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine* ¹¹ *that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. (1 Timothy 1)*

This book of Joshua provides the first sustained victory in the bible for God's people. The Bible tells us that there are a different set of rules according to our intentions. Now we learn about a *fear transfer*.

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. ¹⁴ For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. (Galatians 5)

Joshua has been given a *team* that has never won a game. There have been many generations of men who have died in their sins. The children of Israel failed to cling to God, so an entire prior generation perished in the wilderness. Now, we turn the pages of history with Joshua and see a non-Hebrew Canaanite prostitute finding God's favor and grace. How could the well-trained and appointed Hebrew heirs have repeatedly fumbled away God's blessings; while this *straight-on* sinner find acceptance and even honor in God's eternal family? It's simple. She had a very sober view of who God was, and who she was in his sight. She chose to stick with truth, and to seek mercy, rather than to justify or hide herself. God sees all things anyway. Recovery and salvation start with brutal intellectual honesty.

The message for us here is that we are comparable to Rahab. We are outsiders and sinners without an impressive pedigree. We have been grinding away in our own way to get what we want.

More importantly, Rahab is dealing with Joshua, not Moses. The Mosaic Law is exacting and has capital punishment for sin. Moses preached about personal holiness, and Joshua put his hope into action by following God's plans. Joshua and Jesus are the same name in different languages. In other words, Jesus did not only come to deliver God's people. He came to rescue us from our sins.

Rahab the Canaanite prostitute experienced the fear of God by sensing that she was living outside of God's people and plan for our life. You could compare this to the

fear of the LORD. Many people sense that nagging feeling of gravity, but few are willing to *come clean* and seek God unconditionally.

Joshua is not Jesus, but they do meet. There is an interesting verse where Joshua actually meets Jesus face to face.

*¹³ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, “Are You for us or for our adversaries?”
¹⁴ So He said, “No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, “What does my Lord say to His servant?”
¹⁵ Then the Commander of the Lord’s army said to Joshua, “Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.” And Joshua did so. (Joshua 5)*

Read Joshua 2: In this chapter, Joshua sends two spies to check out the land for the purpose of efficiently moving forward. This was not the first spy mission into the land of Canaan. Moses had sent 12 spies out 40 years ago. All of the spies except for Joshua and Caleb reversed course from fear and doubt. We see Joshua succeeding where Moses failed. God gives us the nerve when we are walking in his ways.

*And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them...”
³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.”
³² And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature.
³³ There we saw the ^[h]giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like^[i] grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.” (Numbers 13)*

After the 12 spies of Moses rejected God’s plan to go in and take their land, the children of Israel changed their mind yet again. They decided to go in unauthorized and on their own. That was a failure as well.

*³⁹ Then Moses told these words to all the children of Israel, and the people mourned greatly.
⁴⁰ And they rose early in the morning and went up to the top of the*

mountain, saying, “Here we are, and we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised, for we have sinned!”⁴¹ And Moses said, “Now why do you ^[m]transgress the command of the LORD? For this will not succeed.⁴² Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, for the LORD is not among you.⁴³ For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned away from the LORD, the LORD will not be with you.”⁴⁴ But they presumed to go up to the mountaintop. Nevertheless, neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses departed from the camp.⁴⁵ Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that mountain came down and attacked them, and drove them back as far as Hormah. (Numbers 14)

Now, Joshua is just sending just two spies to make provisions and retrieve reconnaissance and to move on. I’m sure that he does not want this to turn into another opinionated committee. It was not even a *yes or no* proposition. It was a gutsy move to enter the city gates of their enemy, who had been very tuned into the Israeli camp movements.

Staying with a prostitute would not seem odd. She would be entertaining strangers and out-of-town traders all the time. It is more than ironic that Rahab the prostitute eventually became the great grandmother of Jesus. She was a Gentile and a sinner, who wanted to change her and her family’s future. God’s spiritual family are those who are in awe of God. We are not any particular race nor do we have any qualifying credentials.

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1)

We are to fear God, and open ourselves to his lead. The Holy Spirit tends to take unsuspecting *left-hand turns* in the middle of nowhere. We do what we are told, then the magic happens around us. We should not conclude that the spies were very crafty. I have found that God wants me to obey him implicitly, and just prayerfully try my hardest. I need to put myself out there. I have also discovered

that my plans are frequently in vain. Like the Rahab connection, God meets their obedience with an abnormal deliverance from *left field*.

This chapter also introduces the concept of *the scarlet thread*. There are several places where a red thread or rope leads to the Messianic bloodline. The bible has a scarlet thread running through it. It is all about Jesus. Rahab found her way into the bloodline of Jesus. The only caveat for Rahab was to keep your people in your house. The church is like our house for salvation. When people wander away from the accountability and protections in the church they make themselves open targets. God has woven this concept through the lives of men in every generation.

²⁶ So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again. ²⁷ Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb. ²⁸ And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." ²⁹ Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez.^[d] ³⁰ Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah. (Genesis 38)

The idea of salvation in a red cord is also seen in Leviticus. The hopeless sinner with a death plague of leprosy can be healed from his corruption in the cleansing red blood of Christ.

⁴ then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. ⁵ And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. ⁶ As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water. ⁷ And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field. (Leviticus 14)



When we follow God's plans we do not live in fear. That fear transfers to others.