

5. Beginning in verse 15, Rahab fulfills part of her agreement by following through on the misinformation she gave the king's soldiers in Joshua, 2:4–5, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” (NASB)
6. We took up the issue of the trio of lies she committed in this passage. Her lies were strategic expressions of misinformation that resulted in the preservation of the two men's lives with the added consequence of protecting the chart pedigree of the Messiah.
7. Now that the search party is riding off toward the Jordan in pursuit of nobody, the subterfuge permits Rahab to give the two men instructions on how to safely rejoin Joshua at his Trans-Jordan encampment at Shittim:

Joshua 2:15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. (NASB)

1. The word “rope” is the noun **חֶבֶל** (*chevel*) and does refer to a rope in contrast to the “scarlet cord” mentioned in Joshua 2:18. This rope was part of Rahab's inventory of ropes stored on the roof of her house.

Ropes and cords were also frequently employed in military contexts. By means of a rope, Joshua 2:15, for example, Rahab let Joshua's spies down through a window in the city wall, enabling them to escape.¹⁴

2. Positioned on the outside wall, her window allowed the Jewish spies to exit the city under the cover of darkness. As they were preparing to leave, Rahab gave them the strategy they were to use to avoid capture in:

Joshua 2:16 She said to them, “Go to the hill country, so that the pursuers will not happen upon you, and hide yourselves there for three days until the pursuers return. Then afterward you may go on your way.” (NASB)

1. Jericho is located in the lowlands that occupy each side of the Jordan River. The walled city is at the base of what is referred to as the “hill country.” The two men are instructed to hide in these hills for three days. Once the search party returns to Jericho, they are then free to head west, ford the Jordan, proceed to Shittim, and report in to Joshua.

(End JAS2-51. See JAS2-52 for continuation of study at p. 541.)

¹⁴ Ibid., H.-J. Fabry, “חֶבֶל,” eds. Botterweck and Ringgren, trans., David E. Green, 4:175.



2. Rahab knew the soldiers would naturally assume the spies would head back toward the Jordan and wisely counseled Salmon and his friend to head west to the high country and wait out the search party for three days.
3. Just as she suspected, the search was called off after three days and the two were safe to move across the Jordan and linkup with Joshua.
4. Verses 17–20 relate the two spies’ detailed instructions to Rahab beginning with an introductory caveat should Rahab violate the oath she promised to them:

Joshua 2:17 The men said to her, “We shall be free from this oath to you which you have made us swear,

v. 18 unless, when we come into the land, you tie [קָשַׁר (*qashar*): to bind] this cord [חֵבֶל (*chevel*): rope] of scarlet thread [חוּט (*chut*): string] in the window through which you let us down, and gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father’s household. (NASB)

5. This verse describes the means by which Rahab and her family would safely exit the walled city of Jericho. Rahab’s rope (*chevel*) factory occupied the roof of the western wall. She is instructed to choose one of them made from scarlet string or thread (*chut*) and bind it (*qashar*) securely to the window sill.
6. The wordplay in this verse is both retrospective and prophetic. At the Exodus, the Jews are commanded to slay the sacrificial lamb and use its blood to smear on the doorposts and lintel of their houses signaling the Lord to “pass over” them.

Exodus 12:13 ‘The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.’ (NASB)

7. The blood is from a sacrificial lamb, qualified by its body’s absence of spot or blemish and to be killed on the fourteenth day. The “blood of the lamb” provided perfect protection of those within each home.
8. This ritual became the memorial of redemption provided by the blood of the spotless lamb. Jesus’ perfection in His true humanity qualified Him to go to the cross as our sacrifice. This ritual continued throughout Jewish history until the arrival of the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, Who fulfilled it.

9. We have studied the origin of the chart pedigree of Messiah with the birth of history's first full-blooded, natural born Jew, Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah.
10. On Mount Moriah, Isaac was offered as a sacrifice by his father, Abraham. The line of Messiah would obviously be cut off in its first generation by the divine command for Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering.
11. Having proved his loyalty to the divine commandment to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, God prepared for him a male sheep instead. The entire exercise was to dramatize two important facts: (1) Abraham was vindicated by placing his faith in the working objects of the five-paragraph Abrahamic Covenant to perform the duty. (2) Abraham was vindicated when he dutifully prepared to offer his only son as a sacrifice to God the Father.
12. The blood of Isaac, symbolizing the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ, was spared by the blood of the male lamb on the altar.
13. The scarlet rope dangling from Rahab's window was emblematic of the deliverance provided by the sacrificial lambs of the first Passover and the demonstration of the ultimate sacrifice of Messiah on Calvary's cross.
14. When Joshua's army made its advance upon the walled city of Jericho, its initial maneuver was encirclement of the city once each day for six days and then returning to camp. On the seventh day, they encircled the city seven times.
15. Afterward, the priests blew the trumpets of rams' horns and the people shouted simultaneously "and the wall fell down flat" (Joshua 6:20b).
16. As the soldiers invaded the city, Joshua gave this order to Salmon and his associate:

Joshua 6:22 "Go into the harlot's house and bring the woman and all she has out of there, as you have sworn to her."

v. 23 So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside the camp of Israel. (NASB)

17. Then, everything and every person in the city were destroyed or killed. Only precious metals were spared all taken to the tabernacle serving as the national bank of Israel.
18. The scarlet rope hanging from the window of Rahab's house had spared her and her family. They were the only survivors of the sacking of Jericho:



Joshua 6:25 Rahab the harlot and her father's household and all she had, Joshua spared; and she has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.
(NASB)

19. As a result of Rahab and her family being spared by Joshua, that scarlet rope symbolized the part it played in preserving the bloodline of the Messiah's chart pedigree.

Matthew 1:4c ... Nahshon the father of Salmon.

v. 5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse.

v. 6 Jesse was the father of David the king.

v. 7a David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba.

20. Rahab's inclusion in the chart pedigree of our Lord indicates divine approval of her spiritual life. True, she once had a disreputable reputation as a harlot. Every person from Adam to the present hour are born into sin whose residence is manifested by many and various expression of its presence.
21. Some facilitate mental-attitude sins, others verbal, and a good many overt. What is common among history's unbelievers is often overcome by faith in Christ and the transformation of thought by the power of the inculcated Word of God.
22. Regardless of the category of sin practiced by every person that ever lived is inconsequential once salvation occurs through faith in Christ. Rahab's was harlotry. Post-salvation her house was transformed into a place of hospitality and free enterprise.
23. Therefore, what was true of her prior to salvation was erased by God when she placed her personal faith in Messiah at which point her sins were removed from her as the east is from the west:

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.
(NASB)

24. Therefore, discussions by legalistic theologians who demean Rahab's former immoral degeneracy fail to realize their criticisms emerge from the source of present moral degeneracy and self-righteous arrogance. Merrill F. Unger comments on this subject:

Dismissing, as inconsistent with truth, the attempt to clear her character of stain by saying that she was only an innkeeper, and not a harlot, we may yet notice that it is very possible that to a woman of her country and religion such a calling may have implied a far less deviation from the standard of morality than it does with us, and, moreover, that with a purer faith she seems to have entered upon a pure life. As a case of casuistry, her conduct in deceiving the king of Jericho's messengers with a false tale, and, above all, in taking part against her own countrymen, has been much discussed. With regard to the first, strict truth either in Jew or heathen, was a virtue so utterly unknown before the promulgation of the Gospel that, as far as Rahab is concerned, the discussion is quite superfluous. With regard to her taking part against her own countrymen, it can only be justified, but is fully justified, by the circumstance that fidelity to her country would in her case have been infidelity to God, and that the higher duty to her Maker eclipsed the lower duty to her native land.¹

Principle: Some of the most wonderful people and mature Christians were formally, as unbelievers, marching to a different drummer. Where the sin nature takes one person may be quite different with another.

Principle: There are two major trends practiced by members of the human race. For the person involved in self-righteousness, the trend of his lust pattern is toward legalism and moral degeneracy.

Principle: For the person involved in self-indulgence, the trend of his lust pattern is toward antinomianism and immoral degeneracy.

Principle: Post salvation, inculcation of the Word of God transforms either the legalist or the antinomian into a person of honor. The latter was the case for Rahab.

James 2:25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? (NASB)

1. This verse begins with the interesting adverb, **ὁμοίως** (*homoíōs*), which is best translated, "And similarly." Way back in James 2:21, the first person James presents as having been "vindicated by works" is Abraham.
2. Abraham is the progenitor of the Jewish race. His and Sarah's gametes united to produce the first natural-born, full-blooded Jew, Isaac.
3. On the other hand, Rahab is a goy among the people of Canaan. She is Semitic, but nothing else is known about her bloodline.

¹ Merrill F. Unger, "Rahab," in *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1988), 1061.