

Joshua 2

Joshua 2:1–24

Rahab Protects the Spies of Israel

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Introduction: In Joshua 2, Joshua sends out two spies to scope out the land and we meet the famous Rahab the prostitute who hides the spies, extracting from them a promise to have her and her family spared. This request belies her faith in the God of Israel, Jesus Christ. There are implications that she had become estranged from her family (after all, she was a prostitute) and her family agreeing to come and stay at her home reveal their faith in Jesus Christ as well. Rahab is mentioned in the faith hall of fame in Heb. 11:31: **By faith, Rahab the prostitute did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.** Just as importantly, Rahab also married Salmon and their son was Boaz, from whom came Obed, then Jesse and then David (Matt. 1:5). In other words, Rahab the prostitute is in the direct line of both the humanity and the legal line of Jesus Christ.

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Joshua Sends Two Spies to Jericho; Rahab Hides the Spies

Literally:

And then Joshua ben Nun sent from the Shittim two men spying [i.e., going on foot in order to scope something out] surreptitiously, to say, "Depart, see the land and Jericho." And so they departed and they came¹ into a house of a woman—a fornicator (and her name, Rahab) and then they laid down there.

Joshua
2:1

Smoother English rendering:

And then Joshua ben Nun sent out from Shittim two men to go on foot in order to scope out the land surreptitiously, saying, "Go, view the land and Jericho." And so they departed and they came into the house of a prostitute—whose name was Stormy (Rahab)—and they lodged there.

We first met Joshua almost forty years previous in Ex. 24:13, where he is called Moses' assistant. Prior to the first time the Jews were going to advance into the land, Moses sent out a delegation of 12 men before, one from each tribe, to scope out the Land of Promise. Ten of the men returned reporting that they should not go into the land to take it; the minority report at that time—Caleb and Joshua—said that the land was just as God had described it and they should go in and take it. This time, Joshua sends out only two men. He does not need the problems that came before. They are being sent out not to determine whether or not they should go into the land, but to look over Jericho, their first target. Moses did not send the twelve men into the land to get their opinion as to whether they should enter the land or not—they offered that as a bonus.

Shittim is a transliterated word which means *acacia trees* and it is across the Jordan from Jericho. The NKJV translates this as *Acacia Grove*, which probably better gives us a feel for the name of that region. Acacia trees,

¹ The Septuagint adds *to Jericho* here.

also called *mimosas*, tend to thrive in a hot climate, dry climate. There are 450 species of acacia plants throughout the world, ranging from bushes to trees. Here, we are probably speaking of *acacia tortillis*, which has a hard, brownish-orange wood, often used for cabinet or furniture. Strong's #7851 BDB #1008. You might recall that Acacia Grove is where the Israelites became seduced by the daughters of Moab back in Num. 25:1 and God had to do some thinning out of the population at that time (Num. 25:9).

The word which describes the men is the Piel participle of *râgal* (רָגַל) [pronounced *raw-GAHL*], and it means *to foot it, to go about, to go about as an explorer, to go about as a spy, to go on foot to scope something out*. Strong's #7270 BDB #920. Their *spying* is described by *cheresh* (חֶרֶשׁ) [pronounced *KHEH-resh*], which means, as an adverb, *silently, secretly, surreptitiously*. This is confirmed by the verbal cognate. However, this is also found as a noun in I Chron. 4:14 Neh. 11:35 Isa. 3:3. Strong's #2791 BDB #361.

Now, there is an extremely important principle that we learn from Joshua's sending the men into the land as spies. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, and you want a job, you don't pray about it and then go out and sit on a park bench. You pray about it and then you go about the normal activity of getting a job, whether it be preparing and sending out resumes, interviewing various companies, scouring the want ads, checking with friends and relatives. When you have an important decision to make, you don't just pray about it fervently and then do what your old sin nature wants you to do. There are people—Christians—who have not been in fellowship for years (they don't know about the confession of sin which restores their fellowship with God), who, every time they are faced with a big decision, they fall into fervent prayer and then go by how they feel. I recall a family who had made an offer and had been accepted for the purchase of a house that I had listed. It was a beautiful house, both parties agreed upon a price that was very much to their advantage, and then, the seller had to pay \$3000 in order to re-do her well and septic system to satisfy the lender of the buyers. On the day they were to close, the buyers walked away from the deal, because *they had a bad feeling*. They didn't consider that they had cost the seller \$3000; they didn't consider that they had committed themselves to the purchase of the house; they didn't consider that the seller had put money down on another house to purchase and was ready to move—*they just had a bad feeling*, and so they did not follow through on their obligation. We do not operate in the Christian life by fervent prayer or by feelings. We do not make decisions in our lives based upon fervent prayer and based upon our feelings. Some decisions are no-brainers, yet Christians often act in these decisions as if they lack brains. Joshua does not fall into fervent prayer and then storm the land. He does not wait until he feels like going into battle. There is a proper way to wage war and part of it involves knowing who your enemy is. In order to prepare to march on Jericho, Joshua needs to have information about the population and about their fortifications. Therefore, he sends in spies. Joshua is acting as though he has a brain and he is doing what is prudent.

Let me give you another example. There are people who have bad debt, who are Christians, and some of them even fervently pray about this debt, *whether or not* they should pay it off. As a believer in Jesus Christ, you settle all previous debt. You might have debt that is over 7 years old and it has fallen off your credit report long ago and it no longer affects you—whether or not you should pay it is a no-brainer—you have an obligation as a believer to pay off all previous debt. I don't care what kind of answers you think that you are getting in your prayers. Most of the decisions in life that we have to make are very, very easy decisions. We are to run our lives as though we have character and integrity. Where do we learn about that? In God's Word. Where are we taught God's Word? In Bible class. This is proper and prudent behavior. Joshua is simply acting under proper and prudent behavior.

As Keil and Delitzsch put it: *Although Joshua had received a promise from the Lord of His almighty help in the conquest of Canaan, he still thought it necessary to do what was requisite on his part to secure the success of the work committed to him, as the help of God does not preclude human action, but rather presupposes it.*²

The action of the two men is given by the Qal imperfect of two very common verbs: first, *hâlak*^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*] which means *to go, to depart, to come, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229. The second verb is also a Qal imperfect; it is *bô'* (בָּו) [pronounced *boh*], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. Strong's #935 BDB #97.

² Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 27.

NIV Study Bible: *Jericho [was] the primary focus of the spies. It was a fortified city, was well supplied by strong springs, which helped to make it an oasis, and was located just five miles west of the Jordan. Its name probably means "moon city," and archaeological excavations there reveal continuous occupation back to at least 7000 BC.*³ Edersheim gives another view of Jericho: *[The spies]...must have been struck with the extraordinary "beauty and luxuriance of the district. Even now there is a bright green oasis or several miles square which marks the more rich and populous groves of Jericho." Its vegetation is most rich and rare; almost every tree is tenanted by the bulbul or Palestinian nightingale, with the "hopping thrush," "the gorgeous Indian blue kingfisher, the Egyptian Turtle-dove, and other singing birds of Indian or Abyssinian affinity." "On the plain above are the desert larks and chats, while half an hour's walk takes us to the Mount of Temptation, the home of the griffon, where beautifully plumed partridges, rock-swallows, rock-doves, and other birds abound. But, beyond all others, Jericho is the home of the lovely sun-bird,...resplendent with all the colours of the humming-bird."—its back brilliant green, its throat blue, and its breast purple, "with a tuft of rich red, orange, and yellow feathers at each shoulder." The little stream—which Elisha healed from its after curse—swarms with fish, while climate and prospect are equally delicious in that early summer-like spring, when the spies visited it. And what the wealth and beauty of this plain must have been when it was crowded with fatherly palms, and scented balsam gardens, we learn from the descriptions of Josephus (Ant. 15:4, 2). This paradise of Canaan was guarded by the fortress of Jericho—one of the strongest in the whole land. Behind its walls and battlements immense wealth was stored, partly natural and partly the result of civilisation and luxury. This appears even from the character and value of the spoil which one individual—Achan—could secrete from it (Josh. 7:21)...As the spies neared the city, the setting sun was casting his rays in richest variegated colouring on the limestone mountains which surrounded the ancient Jericho like an amphitheatre, rising closest, and to the height of from 1200 to 1500 feet, in the north, where they bear the name of Quarantania, marking the traditional site of the forty days of our Lord's temptation; and thence stretching with widening sweep towards the south.*⁴

What Rahab is called in this verse is the feminine singular substantive 'ishshâh (אִשְׁשָׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAWH], which is the name that Adam gave to the woman. This word is primarily translated *woman, wife* and is used of women bearing children (Num. 31:18); for a woman as belonging to a man (Gen. 2:24, 25 Deut. 20:7); for women conceiving (Ex. 2:2 Lev. 12:2); etc. This is a word which refers strictly to a *woman*. Strong's 802 BDB #61. This is further modified by the feminine singular Qal active participle of zânâh (זָנְיָה) [pronounced zawn-AW] generally means *to commit adultery* and less often *to commit fornication*. The key is the subject and the object. When the subject is married, they are committing adultery (Judges 19:4) and when they are not married, they are fornicating (which is committing adultery prior to marriage). Strong's #2181 BDB #275. So the men go into the house of a woman—a fornicator. This indicates that she was a prostitute.

We are often concerned about whether or not we are taking the correct turns in our life—God designed things in eternity past so that these two spies would walk right to Rahab's "Bed and Breakfast and Whatever." In fact, something should be said to that. Although we don't have much information here, it is a reasonable guess that Rahab ran a Bed and Breakfast right there. It is not necessary that she had a shingle in front of her home which said *prostitute* but rather that she had one saying *Motel-Vacancy*. There are two slightly different views at this point. One is that she was still a prostitute and her cover was this little bed and breakfast establishment; and the other is that she had gone legitimate. She was a prostitute at one time—in recent memory, in fact—but was no longer a prostitute and had used her savings to establish a more reputable business. Thieme taught that she now ran a legitimate bed and breakfast as well as a rope and linen business on the side (that will be implied by the stalks of flax which she kept on the roof and the scarlet rope which she possessed). Now, don't get me wrong—there is no reason to legitimize Rahab. That is, she does not *have* to be a *former* whore in order for God to use her. However, her being a legitimate business woman at this point in time is a definite possibility. Thieme suggests that the only thread that the towns people would sell her is scarlet, because of her profession (whether former or present).

The two spies had no idea what was known of the Jews on that other side of the Jordan and how much was known about their encampment across the river. In their traveling, what more likely place to stop than a Bed and

³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 290.

⁴ Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*, pp. 299–300. That which he quoted came from Tristan's *Land of Israel*, pp. 203ff.

Breakfast? It just turned out that the owner and manager, Rahab, at least at one time, ran more of a full-serve Bed and Breakfast, if you catch my drift. Zodhiates is more to the point: *Some have tried to render this passage “the house of a woman” or “house of an innkeeper,” but the translation “harlot’s house” is the correct one. The Hebrew term nânâh (2181) is the common word for an “adulterer” or “prostitute” (Lev. 21:7; Jer. 5:7). Both the Old and New Testaments affirm that such a woman can be pardoned (Luke 7:37). Rahab was not only pardoned, but raised to a position of honor. She married into an Israelite family, and was blessed by being the ancestor of David (Ruth 4:21, 22), thus placing her in the line of Jesus, the Messiah (Matt. 1:5)...It was not unusual for strangers and foreigners to go to Rahab’s house, thus the spies would not represent any unusual activity there. Also, the traffic through a harlot’s house would provide information on the local situation. Rahab is another case in which God did not bless someone for lying, but for her faith in the report that the spies gave (...Ex. 1:17–20). Note that in this case as well as in Exodus, the issue was loss of human life.*⁵

The name Rahab is actually râchâ^bv (רַחַב) [pronounced raw-KHAW^BV], which means *stormy, arrogant, proud, defiant*. Strong’s #7343 BDB #932 (see Strong’s #7292 BDB #923). This gives us a rough idea as to how or why she became a prostitute. She was a tough-minded, if not hard-headed, independent woman. *Stormy* might have been a name she chose for herself, or a name that she was given by her clients, which she adopted. Thieme tells us that you could not have picked a person more likely to be looked down upon by Jewish legalism. She was a woman, a Gentile, and a prostitute—she had three strikes against her. However, after forty years of evangelism, the quarter million population of Jericho had rejected the gospel as God presented it to them—they had known about the Jews being led by God out of Egypt, about His great miracles and deeds, and about the army of the pharaoh being defeated by Y^ehowah, the God of Israel. The only people who responded to the gospel were Rahab and her family, which we will discuss later on in this chapter.

Scotfield writes of her: *No more unlikely character than Rahab could have been divinely chosen for deliverance from ungodly Jericho. The salvation of Rahab, the harlot, illustrates that even in a doomed city a wicked individual could find grace by turning to God in faith. Those who charge Israel with barbaric cruelty in exterminating the inhabitants of Jericho fail to comprehend that Israel was God’s instrument of divine judgment. The people of Jericho, hopelessly depraved (cp. Lev. 18^{24–26}), had chosen to fight Israel instead of seeking mercy as did Rahab.*⁶ Let me emphasize an important point made by Scotfield—Israel was an instrument of God chosen to destroy the peoples of the land. This was not a responsibility that they had taken on for themselves because they were barbaric or blood-thirsty. They responded in faith and it was only in their lack of faith in God’s judgment over the peoples of the land which often resulted in the sparing of the lives of certain individuals.

What the two men did was to shâka^bv there. Shâka^bv (שָׁכַח) [pronounced shaw-KAH^BV] means *to lie down*, with several different connotations. It can mean *to lie down with the intention of lodging for the night* (Joshua 2:1 II Kings 4:11); *to have sexual relations* (Gen. 30:11, 14 Ex. 22:15); *to lie down in death* (Deut. 31:16 Isa. 14:8 Ezek. 31:18); and there is the figurative use *to relax* (Job 30:17 Ecc. 2:23). Strong’s #7901 BDB #1011.

Then it was told to a king of Jericho, to say, “Behold, men have come here the night out from sons of Israel to search out [or, to look around] the land.”

Joshua
2:2

Then the king of Jericho was told, “Sir, men out from the sons of Israel have come here tonight to scope out the land.”

The land of Canaan was not a kingdom of one tribe with several different cities, but rather several different tribes of people in *city-states*, if you will. The NIV Study Bible calls them small kingdoms. This state of affairs is attested to by the Amarna letters. We have several hundred letters written by Canaanite scribes from the 14th century, apparently many between the kingdoms of Canaan and the Egyptian kingdom during the reigns of Amunhotep III and Akhenaten (Egyptian kings).

The last verb is the Qal infinitive construct (preceded by the lâmed preposition) of châphar (חָפַר) [pronounced chaw-FAHR], and it means *to dig for, to search for, to search for that which is hidden, to search by digging*. BDB

⁵ *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; pp. 573–574.

⁶ *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 260.

does list a third meaning as *to look around you*, but only allows that for Job 11:17. However, this could be applied here; the two spies came to *look around* the land. Strong's #2658 BDB #343.

It would be pretty difficult for a force as large as Israel doing battle a few miles away to go unnoticed by the inhabitants of Jericho. They certainly had some sort of a G-2 force, which continued to follow the two men from Israel. While one went to the king, another possibly kept an eye out on the two men. It is not clear whether they were watched until they went into Stormy's Bed and Breakfast, and then they went to tell the king; or if one man stood watch at a distance from the B&B and another told the king. They did, however, know where the Israelites lodged. The king of Jericho is doing what we would expect him to do—protecting his kingdom in whatever way he knows how. However, **unless Jehovah builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless Jehovah guards the city, the police function in vain** (Psalm 127:1). **There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel against Jehovah** (Prov. 21:30).

Then a king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, to say, “Bring out the men the ones coming unto you who have entered to your house for to search out [the] entirety of the land they have come in.”

Joshua
2:3

Then the king of Jericho sent a message to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who came to you—the ones whose intention it is to look over the entirety of this land.”

In these few verses, we see several verbs used over and over again. The word *bô'* is used six times in the first four verses; thrice in this verse. We first find the Qal active participle of *bô'* (בּוֹא) [pronounced *boh*], preceded by the definite article. *Bô'* means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go*. As a participle with a definite article, it means *the ones coming in*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. *Bô'* is found after the relative pronoun, in the Qal perfect, referring to their entrance into Rahab's B&B. It is also the last verb in this verse, in the Qal perfect.

The king's G-2 force made a reasonable estimation of the situation. There are two million Jews opposite the river from them and only two have come in surreptitiously. Since the Israelites just recently warred against the inhabitants where they were, it would make sense that they were scoping out that side of the Jericho for more land to settle as well. Being by the coast was certainly a nicer place to be.

And then the woman had taken two of the men so then she was hiding him; then she said, “So, came to me the men and I did not know from where they came.

Joshua
2:4

However, the woman had taken the two men and she had hid them; so she said, “It is correct, these men did come to me, but I did not know where they were from.

After the verb *said*, we have the adverb *kên* (כֵּן) [pronounced *kane*], which is generally rendered *so*. A very free translation might be *so this is how the matter stands*. A good short rendering would be *thus*. It can also be rendered *rightly, well, so very, so long, so often, it is so*. Keil and Delitzsch give the very free rendering *it is correct*. Strong's #3651 BDB #467.

You will notice that in the literal reading, it is: **And then the woman had taken two of the men so then she was hiding him...** This means that at the end of the verb *hiding* we have a *wâw dagesh* (וּ) instead of a *mem* (מ). Every English translation that I know of translates this as a masculine plural suffix and only Owen and the REB even make note of the fact that, in the Hebrew, it is actually a masculine singular suffix. Many translators have assumed that this is a scribal error since time immemorial, but once the error was made, no scribe would dare change it. Keil and Delitzsch point out the singular in their commentary, but indicate that this is more of an Hebraism—that she hid *each one of them*.

Rahab's B&B received enough influx of people from Jericho that she knew what was going on and the fact that there were Israelites on the other side of the river was generally known. The response to them was also generally negative; therefore, Rahab does not want to tip her hand and indicate that she knows who these men are. The men had probably been seen entering Rahab's B&B. Whether this was observed by the men stationed by the king of Jericho or whether this came to him by informant, we do not know. We certainly do not have the entire

exchange between Rahab and the messengers of the king, but they had given her enough of a description of the two men that she refers to them as **the** men—i.e., the men from Israel. If Rahab had allowed the Israelites stay there and did not alert the authorities in some way, that would be treasonous. So her story is that two men came to her and she didn't realize that they were Israelites at the time.

The way these wâw consecutive's are bunched up in this verse, this all happened at once. The soldiers came to the door, Rahab quickly hid the Israelites (or was in the process of hiding them), and she quickly went out to meet with the king's delegation (which was certainly more than just one or two men).

With the verse, we find one of the few exceptions to truthfulness which is held in esteem in the Bible. **And in the same way was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?** (James 2:25). **By faith, Rahab the prostitute did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace** (Heb. 11:31). We are not dealing with the so-called *white lie*, which has no Biblical basis. The key here is that Rahab's loyalties were with the God of the Universe and with the Israelites. She had become, in effect, a spy just like the two Israelites. Her allegiance had changed from Jericho to Israel and she was now involved in counter-intelligence. Her lying was a part of an offensive action of Israel against Jericho, and therefore it was absolutely the correct thing to do. This is not something that we should up and run with. Most people lie because they have done something wrong and telling the truth would put them in a bad light. Telling the truth would indicate their lack of character. What Rahab does here indicates to us that a officer of the law can lie during an undercover operation or during a criminal interrogation to obtain the truth from a from a suspect; and it indicates that a spy can lie when engaged in foreign intrigue and not have to confess it as a sin.⁷ Most of us will never be in a situation where lying would be the appropriate action to take.

Of all the Bible expositors that I read, it appears as though only McGee got this one right: *A believer should certainly obey the authorities and those who have rule over us. A Christian should be the most law-abiding citizen in the land. But when the laws of a state conflict with God's revealed will, then the Christian has no choice but to obey the command of God. This was the experience of Peter and John when the authorities attempted to silence them in their witness for christ. "Whether I be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:19, 20). *The believer is to obey the Word of God today rather than the word of man. That should be our attitude as children of God.*⁸

Now, let's give this a little thought—did the spies going into Jericho carry signs on them saying, *we're Jews and we will bury you?* The whole notion of spying is tied to secrecy and duplicity. They didn't go into Jericho as prophets, warning the people of what was to come, and calling upon them to repent. They went there surreptitiously to scope out the fortifications. Now, we don't have any lies told by the spies recorded here, and the possibility exists that they didn't lie. However, they were hiding from the law of the land and they placed Rahab at risk when they hid on her roof in the stalks of flax. This is the situation where **"We must obey God rather than men."** (Acts 5:29b). This in no way means that we break God's laws in order to oppose man's laws that we do not like (e.g., violence against workers in an abortion clinic). For the average believer, he might go his entire lifetime and never had to break a human law in order to obey God.

"Then it came to pass the gate to close in the dark and the men had gone out. I do not know where the men departed [to]. Pursue; hasten after them for you will overtake them."

Joshua
2:5

"And then when the gates closed, I noticed that the men had already gone out. I do not know exactly where they went to. However, if you go out quickly to look for them, you should be able to locate them."

The first sentence indicates that at dark, the gate closed to the city. The city of Jericho was surrounded by walls, and some of the buildings made up a portion of those walls. We have at least one gate which could be opened

⁷ Most commentators speak disparagingly (including Calvin and Augustine) of this lie, but few offer a viable alternative. A few suggest that Rahab could have carefully worded her answers so that she did not lie, but so that she withheld the truth. I personally cannot come up with any alternative to the actions of Rahab which would have been more correct.

⁸ J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; pp. 20–21.

or closed, which is mentioned here. Rahab lived inside the city gates; in fact, the back wall of her house was actually a part of the city wall. Her home had a door which faced inward toward the city, which was inside the city gate. She had a window on her back wall which provided access outside the city walls (Joshua 2:15). The falling of darkness, the shutting of the gates, and the men going out were actions which all occurred at roughly the same time (in her story).

We have two different words for going out, both very common verbs. The first is the Qal perfect of *yâtsâ'* (יָצָא) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*], which means *to go out, to come out, to come forth*. It is found well over a thousand times in the Bible. Strong's #3318 BDB #422. The next verb indicating movement is the Qal perfect of *hâlak*^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK*^e], which means *to go, to depart, to come, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and 3212) BDB #229.

Between these words we have the phrase *I do not know*; one early printed edition of the Masoretic text and the Syriac throw in another *and* to tie these two phrases together. I think that had more to do with the speech pattern of the Scribe as opposed to that being the way the word should be translated.

Rahab was apparently well-known and trusted. Although she had the name *Stormy*, she could still wrap some men around her finger. She was a good actress—a topic which I would rather not explore any further. In any case, she was able to get men to do what she wanted them to do.

And she, [even] she had brought them up [to] the roof then she concealed them in stalks of the flax the ones laid in order for her upon the roof.

Joshua
2:6

However, she had already taken them up to the roof and had concealed them under the stalks of flax which had been laid out to dry.

It should be easy to understand this verse; we are just going to take it apart and look at some other renderings:

The Amplified Bible

But she had brought them up to the roof, and hid them under the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order there.

The Emphasized Bible

But she had taken them up to the roof,—and concealed them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order for herself upon the roof.

NASB

But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof.

Young's Lit. Translation

...and she hath caused them to go up on the roof, and hideth them with the flax wood, which is arranged for her on the roof.

This verse begins with the *wâw* conjunction and the personal pronoun *she*, which is unnecessary, and therefore emphasizes that she was the person who did this. She didn't entrust this to a servant or to another household member. The verb is the 3rd person feminine singular, Hiphil perfect, 3rd person masculine plural suffix of *ʿâlâh* (עָלָה) [pronounced *ʿaw-LAWH*] and it means *to go up, to ascend, to rise*. Here, it means *she caused them to ascend to*. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. There is no preposition with *roof*; simply the definite article. This is followed by the *wâw* consecutive and the Qal imperfect of *ʾâman* (אָמַן) [pronounced *taw-MAHN*], which means *to hide, to conceal*. Strong's #2934 BDB #380.

Flax was grown in the Land of Promise, obviously prior to the arrival of the Israelites, and from it people made linen. We find that it was used for making linen towels, the wrappings for dead bodies, sails for boats and clothing. The plants grew only 2–4 feet high, had beautiful blue flowers (and, on occasion, white flowers), and would be pulled out with their roots and laid out to dry. Their stalks were as thick as a cane. Rahab used the top of her house, which was a flat roof, in order to do this. She had enough flax laid out to dry and arranged in such a way as to cover over the two spies. This was a common practice and the soldiers who had come to her house took no notice of it. *The flat roofs of Eastern houses, being exposed to sun and air, are well adapted for the reception of grain or fruit, which may be placed there to ripen or to be dried.*⁹

⁹ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 118.

What follows is the definite article and the Qal passive participle feminine plural of 'ârak^e (אָרַךְ) [pronounced *aw-RAK*], which means *to set in order, to arrange in order, to set in a row, to prepare*. Strong's #6186 BDB #789. *Rahab* is not the subject of this verb; in fact, the verb acts more as a descriptor of the *stalks of flax*; however, the feminine plural is confusing—neither *stalks* nor *flax* are feminine. I am thinking that the meaning of this feminine plural is that Rahab and the men did the arranging, under her direction, and then she hid them under the stalks. What she did here was slightly different than the misinformation which she had given to the police. Hiding the spies, although she had not necessarily received a specific command against doing such a thing, was certainly in violation of the laws of the city state of Jericho. This was certainly treasonous behavior. However—and you need to hear me out on this completely—there are a few times when you may disobey the law of the land when it is in conflict with the law of God. The Egyptian midwives a century earlier had been commanded by the Pharaoh to kill at birth any Hebrew males children. However, in general, they did not, fearing God more than Pharaoh. God blessed them in this and it was because of their disobedience to the law of the land that Moses was born (Ex. 1:16–22). The daughter of Pharaoh saved the baby Moses alive and lied that he was not a Hebrew child (Ex. 2:1–10). They lied and their actions stood in opposition to the law of the land because innocent lives were at stake. They DID NOT, however, form protest groups, lobby the legislature for change, although that is not necessarily wrong. More importantly, they did not commit acts of violence and break other laws which were just in the eyes of God. You may have to disobey a law because it is in direct opposition to God and you may have to lie to a government official to preserve an unquestionably innocent life (and we are speaking of very rare situations), but there is no justification for you to break any other laws under these circumstances. In other words, if you bomb an abortion clinic, if you threaten those who work in an abortion clinic, as a for instance, then you are no longer operating within God's perfect will. In other words, you may not break a just law in order to protest an unjust law.

And the men pursued after them the way of the Jordan by the fords and the gate was shut after which the pursuers had gone out after them. Joshua 2:7

And the servants of the king then search for the men along the Jordan where one could walk across. Then the gate to the city was closed after the pursuers had left.

The *fords* were not the cars parked next to the Chevy's; these are shallow places in the Jordan which might be crossed by foot. There were no bridges in that day, the first groups of bridges being built by the Romans. There were apparently at least two places at least along the Jordan where the river could be crossed—at Jericho (Joshua 2:7 3:28 12:5, 6 II Sam. 19:15) and at Bethabara, where John the Baptizer was baptizing (John 1:28). When the snows had melted from the mountains of Lebanon, the Jordan was generally too high to ford. We do have some clarification which we should deal with now. At the end of Joshua 3, God holds back the waters so that the Israelites can cross. This does not mean that the river was at its highest and unable to be crossed. Obviously, the two men crossed and there is a mention of the fords in this verse. Apparently, the rainy season had begun (Joshua 3:15), but it was not yet in full swing. And, even during the rainy season, the Jordan can be only 100 ft. wide in places as well as only 5–12 feet deep near the Dead Sea.¹⁰ It was easy for the two men to cross, as the depth at these fords averaged only about 3 ft.;¹¹ but it was not quite as easy for a half a million soldiers to cross later. The preposition which precedes *the fords* is 'al (אֶל) [pronounced *al*] and it means, primarily, *upon, against, above*. When 'al is used in connection with something geographical, particularly *water*; it has the connotation of *contiguity or proximity*; so here, it means *by*. Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752. The men certainly did not cross over the ford to pursue them, as that would have put them in the neighborhood of the Israelites.

This is followed by *and the gate was shut* which is followed by the preposition 'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced *ah-KHAHR*], which means *after*. Strong's #310 BDB #29. When the pursuers went out after the two spies, the gates of the city were shut, firstly to keep the spies out if they were out, and secondly, in if they were inside.

¹⁰ Most of this information came from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill C. Tenney, ed.; Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976, Vol. 2; p. 589.

¹¹ According to *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 290.

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Rahab's Testimony

And they before that they lay down and she [even] she came up to them on the roof. Joshua 2:8 **And while the Israelite spies were lain down on the roof, she came up to them.**

This roof very likely had a parapet (see Deut. 22:8) about the top—that is, a barrier, or low protective wall around the flat roof. One could stand up there and be partially protected and one could hide up there and not be seen from below. Throughout the Bible, we have a lot of activities which occurred upon the roofs. Samson, who had his eyes poked out and was robbed of his strength, was the entertainment for those who stood on a roof above him looking down (Judges 16:25–27). It was from his roof where David first saw Bathsheba bathing and he got out of fellowship due to his lust and subsequent actions (II Sam. 11:1–27). Absalom made love to his father David's mistresses upon a roof in front of all Israel (Absalom and the mistresses were inside a tent on a roof when this took place—II Sam. 16:22).

Joshua is writing this perhaps years later. His mind does not think in a chronological fashion. Furthermore, he was not there, so he received the story from two men after the fact. The men have come to Stormy's B&B and she immediately hides them on the roof? That wouldn't make sense. What she does first is confess her faith to them. This is why we have the adverb of time, *terem* (טֶרֶם) [pronounced *TEH-rem*], which means *not yet, before that*. Strong's #2962 (and #2958) BDB #382. Apparently this all occurred fairly close together in time. They were on the roof, possibly scoping out the area. They had not laid down yet. Stormy came up to the roof and confessed her faith to them. This is why, when she hid the men, they trusted her. What one would expect is that this woman might, at best, pretend that she was hiding them on the roof, and then lead the soldiers in pursuit to the roof and point the spies out. And apart from any sort of explanation, this is what the two spies would have expected. However, Stormy is motivated. She has her reasons for siding with the spies against her own people. And that she begins to explain in the next verse:

Then she said to the men, "I have known that Y^ehowah has given to you the land and that your terror has fallen upon us and that all [the] inhabitants of the land have melted away from before your faces. Joshua 2:9 **Then she said to the men, "I know that Y^ehowah has already given to you this land and that a fear of you has fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away in your presence.**

The greatest thing in the Christian life is *I know*, a phrase that we find over and over in the Bible. This is the Qal perfect of the verb *yâda'* (יָדָעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHQ*], which means *to know*. It is found 1000 times in the Old Testament. Strong's #3045 BDB #393. Most people have the mistaken impression that the Christian life consists of the two phases, get saved, then go to church and act moral. In many instances, this is the worst possible follow up to salvation. If you are not filled with the Holy Spirit (and I am not referring to some holy roller experience) and taking in God's Word, then you are stagnant or retrogressing. A majority of believers start out the Christian life as babies and then retrogress from there. They become enemies of the cross. If the church does not teach the Bible and if your morality is strictly done by effort of the flesh, then you will retrogress from spiritual infancy. You cannot lose your salvation, but you can stand in total opposition to God's plan. The key is *I know*; the key is knowledge of God's plan, which comes through knowledge of His Word. There just about aren't enough days left in your life. When I look ahead to my life and my desire to exegete the entire Bible, I don't know that I have enough years remaining. God saw to it that His Word was lengthy and filled with guidance. If all we needed was a pep talk and some inspiration now and again, with a couple mentions of a divine truth here or there, the Bible would not be 1200 pages long; it would be much simpler and much shorter. However, what we require at birth is food; and what require at spiritual birth is spiritual food, and that comes from learning the Word of God. God does not leave us just hanging there. He provides. Personally, I have only felt comfortable in my self-study of the Word after years of preparation under a marvelous pastor-teacher, R.B. Thieme. And, a great deal of what I do is just gather information from sources and put all of that together. What I teach is far from original. So far, I have

had perhaps a half dozen or so original thoughts which, to the best of my knowledge, have not been presented elsewhere. And these are not thoughts concerning great basic spiritual issues, but are minor, yet important points. The essential faith has been taught generation after generation by great men, upon whose shoulders I stand, and apart from whose ministry, I would have nothing to give you. So, the basis of what I teach, I received and God will provide that to anyone who desires to know His Word. You don't have to try to get it on your own the first time out. In fact, if you pick up a Bible with the intention of reading, studying and understanding it, you will have little or no luck in this endeavor. God provided for us in this age pastor-teachers whose job it is to delve deeply into the Word and then present it to his congregation.

The gospel circulated in the ancient world in such ways that we would have not anticipated. Human viewpoint would suppose that in our *information* age, in the time of radio, movies and television; in a time of telephones and computers, that only in this way could the gospel be spread. In the time of Rahab, the gospel clearly came across the Jordan, preceding these men. Many, if not all, of the inhabitants of Jericho, knew about the Jews camped on the other side and they knew that God had given them the land. Or, they at least knew that they had claimed that their God had given them to land. They knew about the wars on the other side of the Jordan and that the Jews had seem to come out of nowhere and conquer the Midianites and the king of Bashan. There had apparently been a stand-off between the peoples of Jericho and the Midianites and it was quite a powerful message for the people of Jericho to know that the Midianites had been soundly defeated. And, for those who had an interest in the gospel, they heard that the God of the Israelites, Y^ehowah, had given their land to the Israelites. Furthermore, all the ancient peoples knew about the slave Jews walking out dry shod through the sea of reeds before the Egyptians, whom God so profoundly trounced. Because of the wars that the Israelites had been involved in, most of the peoples of the land feared them. As God had promised: **"I will send My terror ahead of you and I will throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you [and run]."** (Ex. 23:27). **"This day I will begin to place the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under the heavens, who, when they hear the report of you, will tremble and they will be in anguish because of you."** (Deut. 2:25). As Moses told the Israelites: **"There will be no man able to stand before you. Y^ehowah your God will lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you."** (Deut. 11:25). **Now it came to pass when all of the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard how Jehovah had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel until they had crossed, that their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the sons of Israel** (Joshua 5:1).

McGee: *[Rahab] gives an insight into the thinking of the Canaanite at that time. The word is out that a great company of people is coming into that land. They believe they are going to take the land. The population is stirred up, and they are afraid. This is the report that Rahab gives the spies. I guess she was in a position to get all the gossip, and she could see that all of her people were terrified because of Israel's advance.*¹² So, now it comes down to, whom do you trust? Rahab trusted in Jehovah, the God of the Israelites. Rahab gives her testimony:

"For we have heard how Y^ehowah caused to dry up waters of the sea of reeds from before your faces in your coming out of Egypt and what you did to two kings of the Amorite that [were] beyond the Jordan to Sihon and to Og, which you destroyed them.

Joshua
2:10

"For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the waters of the sea of reeds before you as you exited Egypt and we have heard what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan in Sihon and Og, that you destroyed them.

What she is saying is not difficult to grasp; however, there are some nuances in the grammar which I would like to touch on, so let's see what some others have done here:

The Amplified Bible

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the [east] side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

¹² J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 21.

- The Emphasized Bible** For we have heard how Yahweh dried up the waters of the Red Sea from before you, when ye came forth out of Egypt,—and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites who were over the Jordan unto Sihon and unto Og, whom ye devoted to destruction;
- Owen's Translation** For we have heard how dried up Yahweh the water of the Red Sea (lit., sea of reeds) before you when you came out of Egypt and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan to Sihon and Og which you utterly destroyed them.
- Young's Lit. Translation** 'For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the waters of the Red Sea, at your presence, in your going out of Egypt, and that which ye have done to the two kings of the Amorite who are beyond the Jordan; to Sihon and to Og, whom ye devoted.

To begin with, it was not just Stormy who had heard about the Israelites, but all of Jericho, as she uses the 1st person plural, Qal perfect of *shâma'* (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*], which means *to listen, to hear*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. Then we have the untranslated word indicating a direct object and the relative pronoun *'ăsher* (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*], which generally means *that, which, when* or *who*. However, it is also a particle of relation, a sign of relation or a connecting link. As a connective, it can also be translated *the fact that = how* (Deut. 29:16). Strong's #834 BDB #81.

What they had heard that God did was the Hiphil perfect of *yâ^bvêsh* (יָבֵשׁ) [pronounced *yaw-^BVEYSH*], which means *to be dry, to dry up, to wither*. Interestingly enough, this word was probably not even a part of the vocabulary of Moses. We find it used twice in Genesis (8:7, 14), several times in Job and from Joshua and onward, but never by Moses; whereas, he would be the person that you would most expect to use this word. Strong's #3001 BDB #386. The Hiphil is the causative stem—God did not directly dry up the waters, but he caused the area where the Israelites crossed to dry up. What God had done was not to evaporate the water or to dry up the area through lack of rain, but He stacked up the waters as though a glass dam had been installed. **And the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right and on their left** (Ex. 14:22; see also Joshua 4:23). Whereas, I have spoken of most of the miracles of the exodus as having been accomplished by seemingly *natural means*, the result of which was seemingly miraculous; this feat was clearly and unequivocally supernatural. This miracle will be repeated in Joshua 3:17.

Not only had Stormy heard of the drying up of the water in the sea of reeds, but she also had heard about Israel's battle with the Amorites. The Jews had originally just asked for passage through their area, but a war ensued where the Israelites devastated Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan (Num. 21). What the Israelites did to them was the Hiphil perfect of *châram* (חָרַם) [pronounced *khaw-RAM*], which means *completely devoted to, devoted to, or completely destroyed*, the connection between the two ideas is that it is completely removed, either from man's use or from the planet earth. Strong's #2763 BDB #355 (& #356). This particular word will be applied to all of Jericho in Joshua 6:21: **And they completely devoted everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.**

McGee: Notice: "We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you." How long ago was this? That happened forty years before they arrived at the Jordan River! During those forty years God had been giving the people of Canaan an opportunity to turn to Him. How do we know that? Because God had said to Abraham, that his seed would be strangers in a foreign land for four hundred years; then in the fourth generation they would come again because "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16). That was 420 years before this. In other words, God was going to give the people of Canaan 420 years to decide whether or not they would turn to Him. The critic declares that the God of the Old Testament was a great big bully, that He was cruel and barbaric. When God gave the people of Canaan 420 years to repent, in my opinion that is long enough. But God extended the time by forty more years and saw to it that they heard how He had revealed Himself by delivering His people from Egypt. God did not destroy a people that had not heard about Him. He gave them ample opportunity to turn to Himself. My question, Mr. Critic, is—how much longer do you think God should have given them? In the New Testament God has not changed. He has made it very clear that those who reject Jesus Christ are going to hell. Does it shock you to hear that in this very "civilized" society that discounts the existence of hell? When God's judgment falls, I am sure there will be some soft-hearted and soft-headed folk on the sideline who will say, "He should have given them more time." More time? My friend, over 1900 years have gone by. God

astonishment amongst her countrymen.¹⁴ And the people went out to see what had happened; and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they became frightened. And those who had seen it reported to them how the man who was demon-possessed had been made well. And all the people of the country of Gerasenes and the surrounding district asked Him to depart from them; for they were gripped with great fear; and He got into a boat, and He returned. But the man from whom the demons had gone out was begging Him that he might accompany Him; but He sent him away, saying, "Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you." And so he departed, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him (Luke 8:35–39). When you witness to some people, they will tell you that they would believe if God came down and spoke to them; if God would prove to them that He existed. We are responsible for what is in our hearts and the choices that we make. Throughout the ministry of our Lord, people observed His tremendous miracles and some believed in Him and some did not. People in retrospect speak of Jesus with great respect, but ignore completely what He taught. They insert and impose their own false values and systems of belief upon Him. However, "...there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved...and there is no salvation in anyone else" (Acts 4:12). "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me." (John 14:6).

McGee makes an extremely important point here: *Not only did they [the Canaanites] hear this, but they knew it was true. Even so, they did not turn to God. There are a great many people today who know as an historical fact that Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again, but they are not saved. What saves you? It is trusting Him as your personal Savior. It is to have a personal relationship with Him.*¹⁵ Rahab did not deal with the number of Israelites who were outside the city of Jericho—she may or may not have known this (I suspect that she did; in fact, she probably knew more about what went on in Jericho and without than anyone else). However, the key in her statement of faith is "...for Jehovah your God—He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath." It isn't numbers, it isn't relative military might, it isn't the experience of the troops. These are not the pertinent factors to Rahab. What is pertinent to her is that the true God is on the side of the Israelites and there is no use in taking a stand against God. With this verse, she has revealed her faith in Jesus Christ, the God of the Universe, the God of the Jews, and with her faith, has delivered her and her house (who very likely believed in Jesus Christ as well). *And when the jailer had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!" And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."* (Acts 16:27–31).

"And now, swear, I respectfully implore you, to me by Y^ehowah that I have done with you grace and you will do, moreover—[even] you—with a house of my father grace and you have given me a pledge of reliability.

Joshua
2:12

"And now, I respectfully implore you to swear to me by Jehovah that as I have dealt graciously with you, that you will likewise deal graciously to the house of my father and that you will give me no uncertain assurances.

Let's look at a couple of other translations:

The Amplified Bible

Now then, I pray you, swear to me by the Lord, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a sure sign.

The Emphasized Bible

Now therefore I pray you swear unto me by Yahweh, since I have dealt with you in lovingkindness that ye also will deal with the house of my father in lovingkindness, and will give me a token of faithfulness.

Owen's Translation

Now then swear (I pray thee) to me by Yahweh that as I have dealt with you kindly will deal, you also, with my father's house kindly and give me a sure sign.

¹⁴ *Barnes' Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 355.

¹⁵ J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 22.

Young's Lit. Translation 'And now, swear ye, I pray you, to me by Jehovah—because I have done with you kindness—that ye have done, even ye, kindness with the home of my father, and have given to me a true token,...

The first two words are, literally, *and now*. The first verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Niphal imperative of *shâb'va* (שָׁבַע) [pronounced *shaw-VAH*] means *to swear, to take a solemn oath*, and often *to extract an oath (from someone else)*. It is usually found in the Niphal, although its meaning is active. Strong's #7650 BDB #989. This is followed by the polite particle of entreaty, *nâ'* (נָא) [pronounced *naw*], which means *please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you*. Strong's #4994 BDB #609. The next few words are *to me by Y^ehowah that*, giving us: "And now, swear, I respectfully implore you, to me by Y^ehowah that..." A great difference between that time and this is the strength of a person's word. Often, today, when someone says something, it is what they believe you want to hear. They will adjust it or modify it or even change it altogether later to suit their own needs or for their own advantage. One of the most disturbing things to me when I became a teacher was how easily and how sincerely a child would lie to me. Some of it was certainly learned behavior and some of it was a total lack of personal integrity and character. In any case, it was unnerving. I recall one student during a test who had turned around to another student who sat to his right and one desk behind, and put his hand on that student's test and turned it toward him so that he could see it better. I had already warned him about cheating and he did this while I watched him from behind. Both he and his friend lied and said that absolutely no cheating went on, that he had not turned around and put his hand on his friend's test; and then his parents immediately transferred him out of my class so that he "could get a fair shake." Furthermore, I was amazed about his parents. No doubt, they looked into their son's big brown eyes and he told them with great sincerity that he did not cheat, meaning that I, who had given them both a second chance on taking this test so that they could do better, completely manufactured some bogus story to cause their son trouble. I was totally dumbfounded by this even after years of teaching and dealing with the crass dishonesty of youth and the lameness of parental guidance. If I recall right, this kid even got an appointment to a military academy. As a youth, I had honesty drummed into me, one of the many things that I will always be grateful to my parents for doing. Rahab and the two spies had a sense of honor and honesty. She would extract an oath from them which she could rely upon.

The next verb is the very often used Qal perfect of *âsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. This is followed by *with you* and the masculine noun *cheçed* (חֶסֶד) [pronounced *KHEH-sed*], which means *grace*. Strong's #2617 BDB #338.

This is followed by *and you will do*, followed by the adverb *gam* (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*], which means *also, in addition to, moreover, furthermore*. Strong's #1571 BDB #168. This is followed by the 2nd person masculine plural pronoun, giving great emphasis that she is extracting this promise directly from the two spies.

The next phrase is, *with a house of my father grace*, giving us: "And now, swear, I respectfully implore you, to me by Y^ehowah that I have done with you grace and you will do, moreover—[even] you—with a house of my father grace..." Obviously, the noun for *grace* is used more like an adverb.

The last phrase is not in the imperative mood, but it is the Qal perfect of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*], which means *give, grant, place, put, set*. Strong's #5414 BDB #678. Then we have the masculine construct of *'ôth* (אֹת) [pronounced *oath*], and it means *sign, token, pledge, assurance*. Strong's #226 BDB #16. What follows is the feminine substantive *'emeth* (אֱמֶת) [pronounced *EH-meth*], which means *firmness, faithfulness, truth, certainty, stability, perpetuity, fidelity, reliable, stable, dependable*. The idea is that one is consistent and fulfills their obligations or their promises. These two words are often found together (Psalm 25:10 40:11 57:4 108:5). Strong's #571 BDB #54. Therefore, this should be rendered: "...You have given me a pledge of faithfulness (and dependability)." The Qal perfect, rather than the Qal imperative, indicates that she trusts these men to be true to their word and that they will return grace for grace. This *sign* or *pledge* of reliability to Rahab was the word of the spies. *Rahab had acted toward the spies as though she was an Israelite, and now she asks that Israel treat her similarly.*¹⁶

¹⁶ The NIV Study Bible; ©1995; p. 291.

“And you will have caused to survive my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters and all which to them and you will have caused to deliver our souls from death.”

Joshua
2:13

“And I trust that you will see that my entire family and their personal possessions will be delivered from destruction.”

Stormy now states just exactly the extent of their promise to her—i.e., what she expects of them. I find this rather fascinating because my thinking is that Stormy does not live at home, nor is she in business with any of her siblings or her parents. She, because of her profession, is probably estranged from her family; or, at the very least, their relations are strained. This impression will be confirmed, at least in part, by v. 18, where the two men urge her to gather her family members to her house.

The first verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect of *châyâh* (חַיָּה) [pronounced *khaw-YAW*], which means *to remain, to survive, to exist, to sustain life, to deliver out of danger so that one remains alive, to preserve life*. Strong's #2421 & 2425 BDB #310. The perfect tense treats this as though it is a completed action. Again, this implies a great deal of trust in these men. My guess is that these are the first men who came to her B&B to lodge and when made aware of the daily specials, declined. After naming off her family, she adds the phrase *and all of which to them*. This is an idiom for *all that they have* (Rotherham, Young) or, *all who belong to them* (NASB, NIV, Owen). The former is probably the most literal, but the latter is how we should probably take the meaning.

The second verb is the Hiphil perfect of *nâtsal* (נָצַל) [pronounced *naw-TSAHL*], which is a verb not found in the Qal. In the Piel, it means *to strip, to plunder*; in the Niphal, it means *to deliver oneself, to be delivered*; and, in the Hiphil, it means *to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve*. Strong's #5337 BDB #664. The remainder of the verse is, literally, *our souls from death*. We will read about the final result in Joshua 6:21–25: **And they completely destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword. And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring the woman and all she has out of there, as you have sworn to her.” 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. And they burned the city with fire, and all that was in it. Only the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the tent of Jehovah. However, Rahab the prostitute 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.**

Stormy has complete faith that God will deliver Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, and desired to get on the right side of God. What is sad is that we are dealing with a large population of people, and only one of them and possibly her family express positive volition toward Jesus Christ. What follows is the pledge of these two men to Rahab.

McGee: *She not only believed, but she is acting on that belief. This is her reason for putting her life in jeopardy to protect enemy spies. She heard; she believed; then she acted upon her belief. This is salvation, friend. When you hear the Gospel, the good news of what Christ has done for you, you must not only believe it as an historical fact, you must trust Christ yourself. So this woman trusted the fact that God was going to give them that land. She turned to the living and true God. “By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace” (Hebrews 11:31).*¹⁷

Then the men said to her, “Our soul instead of yours, to die; if you do not make known this word [of] ours and it will be in a giving of Y^howah to us the land and we will do with you graciously and faithfully.”

Joshua
2:14

Then the men said to her, “Our life is offered in exchange for yours, just so long as you do not make known this business of ours. When Jehovah gives us this land, we will deal with you graciously and faithfully.”

¹⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 23.

There is at least one nuance in this verse which is hard to grasp—the Qal infinitive of *to die*. Therefore, let's see what others have done:

- The Amplified Bible* And the men said to her, Our life for yours! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the Lord gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.
- The Emphasized Bible* And the men said unto her Our souls in your stead unto death if ye utter not this our business,—so shall it be when Yahweh shall give us the land that we will deal with thee in lovingkindness and in faithfulness.
- NASB So the men said to her, “Our soul instead of you to die if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.” (The literal alternatives were given in this translation)
- Young's Lit. Translation* And the men say to her, 'Our soul for yours—to die; if ye declare not this our matter, then it hath been, in Jehovah's giving to us this land, that we have done with thee kindness and truth.'

I mention this as Owen presents this as the Qal infinitive construct, which usually connects the verb to the next word; however, this is part of the previous phrase. What the men say is, *our soul* and then we have the preposition tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced *TAH-khahth*], which means *instead of*. Strong's #8478 BDB #1065. This is followed by *to die*. Certainly, this was an idiom for *our soul for yours in death* or, *we would die on your behalf*, or *we would die in your stead*. *Their lives for hers*, is how we see this phrase, but it actually reads: “**Our life for yours [plural]**.” The plural refers to the lives of her family members. This is an oath wherein they pledge their life upon their word. It is not unlike the oath *may lightning strike me dead* except that it is serious and spoken by men of character.

Rahab has confessed her faith in Jesus Christ, Who is Y^ehowah the God of Israel and the spies give her the mechanics of her salvation—*our soul for yours to die*. The Old Testament perception of salvation was not near as perspicuous as ours is, and although those who had placed their reliance upon Y^ehowah, the God of Israel, were saved, they did not know exactly how or why. These men could not have delineated salvation by faith in Christ based upon His death on the cross—however inadvertently they spoke these words—God the Holy Spirit saw to it that this is recorded for us in Scripture. The human authors of Scripture, although they wrote using their own vocabulary, from revelation and personal experiences, not as secretaries but as authors, rarely did they fully grasp the impact of all that they wrote. On the surface, this is what Joshua recorded sometime after hearing this G-2 report from his two spies. On the surface, this is what the two spies actually said to Stormy the prostitute. However, God the Holy Spirit saw that this was placed into Scripture almost as a subliminal message. You will recall the failure of Moses, which seemed rather insignificant on the surface. God told Moses to speak to the rock and out from it would pour a river of living water. We understand the full analogy today. Moses struck the rock already with his rod, and from that rock flowed a river of life to the Israelites who were about to perish from thirst. This is a representation of salvation. God the Father struck Jesus Christ, the Rock of Israel, with the rod of judgment, pouring upon Him the judgment for our sins. When the second generation of Israelites thirsted for salvation, Jesus Christ did not need to be judged a second time for their sins. He paid for man's sins once and for all. So, when faced with the thirst for life, Moses needed to only speak to the Rock—it had already been judged. **For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all (Rom. 6:10a). So, Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many shall appear a second time for deliverance, apart from sin, to those who eagerly await Him (Heb. 9:28).** My point is simply that the Divine Author of Scripture, God the Holy Spirit, understood the implications of all that has been recorded for us in the Bible. In no way did the authors of the Old Testament fully grasp the impact of all that they wrote and in no way did the authors of the New Testament fully develop every salient point from the Old Testament.

What follows is the hypothetical particle, the negative and the Hiphil imperfect of *nâgad* (נִגַּד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*], which means *to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to declare, to inform*. Strong's #5046 BDB #616. What you did not realize is that verb is in the 2nd person masculine plural.¹⁸

¹⁸ This is found in the singular in the Vulgate and in one early printed edition of the Masoretic text. Some of the codices write *you* (singular), but read *you* (plural).

Then we have *our word* followed by the demonstrative adjective; changing the order, we would have *this word [of] ours* or *this, our word*. As we have seen, *dā^bvâr* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw^b-VAWR*], means *word*, but can refer to *a saying, doctrine, command, business, personal matter*. It is something which proceeds from the mouth and the context determines its exact parameters. Strong's #1697 (or #1696) BDB #182. So far, this gives us: **Then the men said to her, “Our soul instead of yours, to die; if you do not make known this word [of] ours...**

Then we have, *and it will be*, followed by the *bêyth* preposition, which generally means *in*. The verb *to give* is in the Qal infinitive construct followed by the proper name for God. Although most translations record this as *the LORD gives*, it should either be rendered *a giving of Y^ehowah* or *Y^ehowah's giving*. This is followed by *the land*, the *wâw* conjunction, and the Qal perfect again of *to do*, and the prepositional phrase *with you* (singular). Both the spies and Rahab had no doubt that the land had been given by God to the Israelites.

Finally, Stormy had asked them in v. 12 to deal with her father's house in *grace* and said they had given her a *reliable* sign or pledge; the same two words, *grace* and *reliable* (or, *truthful, faithful*) are used again—and they are nouns used as adverbs. The full rendering of this verse is: **Then the men said to her, “Our soul instead of yours, to die; if you do not make known this word [of] ours and it will be in a giving of Y^ehowah to us the land and we will do with you graciously and faithfully.”** Now, had these men no character, they would only be telling Rahab what she wanted to hear and, at the invasion, she and her family would die with the remainder of her people. However, these men have integrity and their promise is one of *grace* and it is a *pledge of reliability, of perpetuity, of faithfulness*. Our Lord Jesus Christ has integrity—His promise to us is one of *grace* and it is a *pledge of perpetuity and faithfulness*. **Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ “** (John 7:37b–38; Isa. 44:3 55:1 58:11). **Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but he will have the light of life.”** (John 8:12). **Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”** (John 14:6). **Let us hold fast the confession of our confidence without wavering, for He Who promised is faithful** (Heb. 10:23).

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The Promise of the Spies to Rahab

Then she let them down by the rope in the window because her house in the city wall and in the wall she was dwelling.

Joshua
2:15

And then she let them down by a rope through the window to the outside of the city wall.

We find the *bêyth* preposition used four times in this verse. Now might be a good time to examine that tiny, prefixed preposition. Generally, this is found as *b^e* (בְּ) [pronounced *b^e*], but prior to some monosyllabic words, it is occasionally *bâ* (בָּ) [pronounced *baw*]. Gesenius breaks this down into three classes. (A). It's primary use is with the ablative and it is generally rendered by our English *in*. When the thing referred to is a multitude or a group, then *b^e* can mean *in, among, in the midst of*. It can refer to the limits of something, the boundaries within which something falls, e.g., *within* the gates (Ex. 20:10), *within* three years (Dan. 11:20). Once and awhile, this is used after verbs of motion, carrying the connotation of *into*. (B). The second class of usages has to do with the designation of *nearness* or *vicinity* or *motion to a place*, so as to be *at* or *near* it. Proximity is the key. It may be rendered *at, by near, on, before, in the presence of, upon*. With regards to motion, the *bêyth* can mean *to, unto, upon*. This preposition differs from *'el* (אֶל) [pronounced *e*], as the latter implies motion to a place, whether the end is arrived at or not. *Bêyth* signifies that the end was reached and that's where the subject is remaining. Often the end or termination of the motion or action is signified by *bêyth*, rather than just direction. The motion can be down to (*to, upon, in, upon, over*) or *against*. In this same class, it can have a more metaphorical use, either related to the *kaph* prefixed preposition (*in Our image, according to Our likeness*—*bêyth* is first and *kaph* is second); or it can be used much like the *kaph* preposition (*like, as, in the manner of*—Job 34:36 37:10 Psalm 37:20 39:7 Isa. 44:4 48:10). Since the two are so similar and easily mistaken one for the other, it would be a strong possibility with a damaged manuscript, possible that these are scribal errors in some of these latter instances (Job 34:36 has manuscripts which differ with regards to which preposition is used). *Bêyth* is used for

for, at when a price, reward or exchange is involved. “I will serve you seven years for Rachel.” (Gen. 29:18). A life for a life, an eye for an eye is another example. Finally, in this second class, this can refer to having respect to anything: *in respect to, on account of, in that, about concerning*. (C). The third class of uses may be called the *bêyth* of accompaniment or of instrument, which is related to the notion of *nearness*. Here, *bêyth* may be rendered *with* or *by*. *With* can denote either instrumentality or accompaniment. There is a fourth class, not covered here. No Strong’s # BDB #88.

In this verse, when she lets them down *by* a rope, that is the instrumental use of *bêyth*. Their action was *in* the window. Her house was *in* the city wall; it was *in the midst of* the city’s wall. Her house was a part of the city’s wall system; it was *in* the wall or *in the midst of* the wall. Prior to the time of Rahab, we have archeological evidence that some houses were built right into the city wall. During the Late Bronze era, the wall of Jericho may have included a casement wall (a hollow wall with partitions) and Rahab may have occupied some of those rooms as well as her home adjacent to this wall.¹⁹ In any case, the spies had been hidden on top of her roof under some flax stocks which had been laid out to dry. After the servants of the king had come by looking for them, Rahab let them out a window to the outside of the walls after the city gate had been closed and secured. With that window, there had to be enough identification with the rest of Rahab’s house in order for the remainder of this chapter to make sense.

Then she said to them, “The hills go lest you [even] you meet the pursuers; and hide yourselves there three days until a returning of the pursuers and afterward, you may go to your way.”

Joshua
2:16

Then she said to them, “Go into the hills so that you do not run into your pursuers. If you remain hidden there for three days, they will have returned and you can go your way.”

The translation of this verse is pretty straightforward, with the possible exception of the verb *hide*, which is in the 2nd person plural, Niphal perfect. The Niphal is generally the passive stem, but here it acts as a reflexive. It could be rendered *and remain hidden there three days*. There was certainly more of a conversation between Rahab and the servants of the king of Jericho. Furthermore, she probably spoke with a number of people who had come into her house and knew what was going on. Rahab certainly heard a lot of the local gossip and in speaking to the soldiers who had come looking for the spies, she determined that it would require several days before the spies would be safe to return to their fellow Jews. Apparently the soldiers had posted a guard or a lookout along the banks of the Jordan.

Make no mistake about it. This is what really happened. These are real events described accurately. The spies really did go into the house of the prostitute, Rahab, also known as *Stormy’s Bed & Breakfast*. Now, let me draw you the analogy. They were in a house of sin, just as we all dwell in a house of sin. Rahab had believed in Jesus Christ and was depending upon them to deliver her and her family in the coming destruction. They had promised their lives on behalf of hers. And now they are to remain hidden for three days. Their soul for hers and now they will remain hidden for three days. Our Lord would remain three days in the center of the earth before He could return to His people. These spies remained hidden for three days until they could return to their people. Rahab remained in the house of sin, as we remain in a body of sin, until Joshua (Jesus) came for her. On the one hand, Jesus was a sojourner in a foreign land, just as these spies were foreigners in the foreign land. However, on the other hand, Jesus Christ created the earth and all the earth is His; these soldiers had been given the land; all the land was theirs. You fully understand that this is a delineation of real events which really happened. While a great war rages on around them, Rahab and her household are protected by the red cord, the sign of the blood of Christ. Those Jews during the tribulation will see war occur all around them and they will be delivered through the blood of Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus will call to His own at the end of the tribulation and gather them to Israel, Joshua (Jesus) will call to those inside the house after the tribulation around them and gather them to Israel as well. Throughout Scripture, we have analogies and parallels to our salvation and this is one of the many. God the Holy Spirit guided the writers of Scripture to include just what was necessary. When you read through this, you often miss many of the details; or you give them little or no thought. God the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, knew exactly what to include. And there are too many of these analogous occurrences to just ignore or to write off as

¹⁹ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 291.

simply coincidence. Talk to any hard-hearted, unbelieving Jew and no matter what you point to in Old Testament Scripture, they will say, "This does not mean that Jesus is the Messiah." First, ask them what do they need to see in direct prophecy and what do they need to see in analogous prophecy to satisfy them that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. If they can tell you what they would need to read in the Old Testament which would convince them of Who Jesus is, then it is already in the Old Testament—guaranteed. Ask them what would Jesus need to do and say in order to convince them that He is their Messiah, and if they can give you an answer, then it is there—in the New Testament.

Then said to her the men, "We [stand] cleared from this you oath which you caused us to swear;"

Joshua
2:17

Then they men said to her, "We will be acquitted from this oath which you caused us to swear..."

This is not a difficult verse to understand, but a moderately difficult one to translate. Let's see what others have done:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The men said to her, We will be blameless of this oath you have made us swear. [The responsibility is now yours.]
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And the men said unto her, —Free will we be from this thin oath which thou hast made us swear;
NAB	The men answered her, "This is how we will fulfill the oath you made us take:..."
NIV	The men said to her, "This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us..."
NKJV	So the men said to her: "We will be blameless of this oath [or, free from obligation to this oath] of yours which you have made us swear,..."
Owen's Translation	And said to her the men, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours which you have made us swear."
REB	The men warned her that, unless she did what they told her, they would be free from the oath she had made them take.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And the men say unto her, 'We are acquitted of this thine oath which thou hast caused us to swear;

This verse must properly be understood when taken with v. 18. It is not a complete thought in itself. The first phrase is easily rendered *Then said to her the men...* Our difficult word is the masculine plural adjective *nâqîy* (נָקִי) [pronounced *naw-KEE*] and it means *acquitted, clean, cleared, free from, unpunished, innocent*. In this passage, it means *free from the obligation to*. This word is found in the plural throughout this passage, although I know of no good way of rendering that. Strong's #5355 BDB #667. So the men have agreed to see that she and her family are spared, but they have to set some reasonable conditions. These are warring men and they can't stand guard over this house as they invade. So there will need to be some kind of sign.

"Look, we are coming into the land; a hope-cord of thread of the scarlet the this you will bind in the window which you let us down through it—and your father and your mother and your brothers and all [the] house of your father you will gather unto yourself the house.

Joshua
2:18

"Listen, we are coming into the land. This scarlet hope-cord of thread you will tie to the window—the one which you have used to let us down with—and you will gather your father, and your mother, and all of your brothers, along with the entire household of your father into your house.

The word for *cord* is possibly a homonym. It is the construct of the Hebrew word *tîq^evâh* (תִּקְוָה) [pronounced *tik^e-VAW*] which means *hope, expectation*. Here, it is a *cord*; at least, according to BDB and Gesenius. However, since we do not have a reason beyond tradition to render this *cord*, I am going to render it *hope-cord* as it is rendered *hope* or *expectation* in 30+ times in Scripture (Ruth 1:12 Job 4:6 Psalm 9:18). We will find this word by itself in Joshua 2:21, also rendered *cord* by most translators. In any case, their *hope* is tied (no pun intended) to this *thread of scarlet*; which goes hand-in-hand with the parallels which I have previously drawn. Strong's #8615 BDB #876. What follows *tîq^evâh* is the construct of *chûṭ* (חוּט) [pronounced *khoot*], which means *thread, cord*,

line. It is something which could be snapped easily in Judges 16:12. In its other occurrences, that may or may not be the case (Gen. 14:23 | Kings 7:15 Eccles. 4:12 SOS 4:3 Jer. 52:21*). However, nowhere do we find this word used where it could **not** conceivably be a *thread* or a very thin line of string. I recall Thieme speaking of a Hebrew word for *faith*, where it was a thread, that, by itself, could be snapped easily; but when wound into a rope, took on the strength of the rope. Strong's #2339 BDB #296. This is followed by the definite article and the word for *scarlet* and then the demonstrative adjective and a definite article. Although Rotherham places *this* prior to *cord*; I think that it belongs prior to *scarlet*. Literally, would give us: *a hope-cord of thread of the scarlet the this*; or, *a hope-cord of thread of this scarlet*. This hope thread of scarlet provided the spies with the only way out of the house of sin; furthermore, it offered those inside the house protection from the judgment to come. Again, the analogy is clear: their *hope* was in this thread of scarlet, just as our hope is in the blood of Christ. They didn't have several exits from this house of sin—only one. Those in the house were protected from the judgment to come, just as our lives are spared eternal judgment to come as we fall under the blood of Christ.

Barnes: *The...cord was spun of threads dyed with cochineal; i.e., of a deep and bright scarlet colour. The colour would catch the eye at once, and supplied an obvious token by which the house of Rahab might be distinguished. The use of scarlet in the Levitical rites, especially in those more closely connected with the idea of putting away of sin and its consequences (cp. e.g., Lev. xiv.4, 6, 51; Num. xix.6), naturally led the Fathers, from the St. Clement of Rome onwards, to see in this scarlet thread, no less than in the blood of the Passover (Ex. xii. 7, 13, &c.), an emblem of salvation by the Blood of Christ; a salvation common alike to Christ's messengers and to those whom they visit.*²⁰

Religious liberals ignore roughly 80% of what Jesus said. **“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it”** (Matt. 7:13–14). This is quite the antithesis of the liberal statement, *all roads lead to Rome*, unless one sees Rome as hell, and then it is almost accurate. For the spies, there was one way out of that house of sin.

This thread of scarlet is a persistent theme from the beginning of the Bible to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. As we have studied in Genesis, in order for God to cover Adam and the woman with coats of skin, He had the slay the animals before them (Gen. 3:21). The problem with Cain's offerings is that they were bloodless sacrifices—they were the works of his hand (Gen. 4:1–7). God called upon Abraham to offer up his only son, and, at the last minute, provided Abraham with a blood sacrifice substitute. In the first Passover, the blood of the sacrificial lamb was slapped against the top of the door frame and along the sides of the frame. When God saw the blood, he passed over that house and did not take their first-born. Here, the Israelites, executing God's will, will see the scarlet thread and spare the occupants of that home from the death sentence which God had passed upon all of Jericho.

Unfortunately, there are a great many philosophical questions that we will never know the answers to that a passage such as this one presents. Are the only people in all of Jericho positive toward Jesus Christ to be found in Rahab's family? We can partially answer that. Probably not. There were likely several—but not many—inhabitants of Jericho and the land who heard about the God of the Jews and trusted in this God. However, they also likely returned to their old lives and never took the matter any further. This is common today, even after having the complete Word of God in our possession. There are millions upon millions of believers who go as far as salvation and that is where they stop with their spiritual lives. They might go to church and they might become more moral and even sin less. However, that is not spirituality and that is not the spiritual life. The spiritual life comes from the filling of the Holy Spirit (NOT an holy roller experience, but it comes the first time with salvation) and the filling of the Holy Spirit is renewed each time we confess our sins. And spiritual growth come from our spiritual food, which is the Bible. **Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity** (II Peter 3:18). Now, to those who stagnate (which often occurs from day one), God has no obligations other than eternal salvation. Some of them are used to ambush other believers; some lead lives of misery and confusion due to their negative volition toward God's revealed Word; and some are taken out of the world in warfare and sickness.. No doubt there are some believers in Jericho who

²⁰ Barnes' Notes, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. II, p. 356.

were killed by Joshua and his troops upon their invasion of Jericho. Rahab, on the other hand, was a growing believer whose faith took action. Once we have believed in Jesus Christ, our growth will result in works. It may not be obvious to anyone else, but we will have works (which are not limited to witnessing and to teaching God's Word). James tells us: **And in the same way, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?** (James 2:25).

Now, as to the deeper philosophical questions: exactly how much of the soul is independent of the genetic structure of the body and whether God could place any soul into any body, I don't really know and I don't believe that Scripture gives us the answers to these questions either. We know psychologically that two people raised in the same family with as much equality as possible can result in two very similar and sometimes two very different people, despite the fact that their genetic makeup is very similar and their environment is very similar. Whether the differences are the function of slight genetic differences or a very significant differences exist in the soul apart from environment and genetics, we do not know and I don't believe the Bible reveals that. However, what is paramount, is that we are responsible for the decisions that we make, despite our genetic predisposition and despite our environmental challenges. When we reject God's sacrifice of His Son, we have no excuse in eternity—we will stand condemned before God and we will spend eternity apart from God no matter what we said, thought or did on earth. When we are believers and we reject God's Word and the teaching He has provided for us, we will be fully responsible for that form of negative volition as well (however, we will not be separated from God for eternity—only from the greatest blessings of eternity).

In the previous verse, we went into great detail concerning the many faceted preposition *bêyth*. It is found thrice in this verse; with the words *land*, *window* and *it*. Stormy is to gather her family to her house—again, we are dealing with a very small percentage of Jericho who are spared. They are not told to gather to several different houses; they are all gathered into one house. There will be one place where they can be delivered. And the soldiers of Israel must be able to look to see the scarlet thread, and they will pass over that house and that house only.

The idea is that they can, when debriefing Joshua, tell him which house should be spared; this can be told through their system of authority throughout the entire army and that house would be spared. Now, there is no way that each individual soldier would know the family members individually; therefore, the family must remain inside this house and remaining inside the house will protect and deliver them in the destruction to come.

McGee: *And if the king of the city of Jericho had turned to God, he would have been saved. In fact, the whole city could have been spared if they had believed in God.*²¹

“And it will come to pass all who go out from [the] doors of your house [to] the outside—his blood upon his head and we cleared; and all who be with you in the house, his blood on our head if a hand is upon him.

Joshua
2:19

“And, if anyone leaves your house, his blood will be on his head and he is not longer our responsibility. However, we assume personal responsibility for those who remain with you in your home.

After we have the word house, we have the definite article and the word *chûts* (חֻטִּים) [pronounced *khoots*], which means *outside*, *street*. In the plural, it means *streets*, generally speaking. Strong's #2351 BDB #299. There is no preposition; the preposition prior to the word *doors* takes care of everything, linguistically speaking. We require an additional preposition to make the sentence smoother. In the last phrase, when the spies say that the blood of another is on their head, they are assuming responsibility for the lives of the people inside of Rahab's home. When Pilate attempted to release Jesus Christ as innocent, the people called out for **“His blood be upon us and upon our children!”** (Matt. 27:25b).

So that you don't get lost in the detail, this is the end of a thought begun back in v. 17. Let's put it altogether: **Then they men said to her, “We will be acquitted from this oath which you caused us to swear. Listen, we are coming into the land. This scarlet hope-cord of thread you will tie to the window—the one which you have used**

²¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Joshua Judges*, ©1976 by Thru the Bible Books; p. 23.

to let us down with—and you will gather your father, and your mother, and all of your brothers, along with the entire household of your father into your house. And, if anyone leaves your house, his blood will be on his head and he is not longer our responsibility. However, we assume personal responsibility for those who remain with you in your home.” The spies have told Stormy that these are the conditions and they will stand acquitted or cleared or clean from any guilt if her family do not abide by these conditions. They must all gather to Stormy’s B&B; which, apart from her possible estrangement from her family, would not seem out of the ordinary. And it could be seen by outsiders as a reuniting of the family. If Stormy’s business was completely legitimate, then she would have had *no vacancy* signs out while her family was with her. If she had not yet become legitimate, then the sudden influx of her family would make outsiders (the Johns) uninvited. Under either scenario, only those with positive volition will be in the house, a very similar situation to the ark. Only one family was in the ark—and they were the only ones who were believers in Jesus Christ.

It will take place at a house that the two spies are familiar with. There will be a sign to indicate to the Israelites not familiar with the city of Jericho which home is to be spared. And, since the members of the family will be unknown to the soldiers, they must remain inside the house in order to be spared. The mechanics of this are simple and they will adequately protect the family of Rahab. The spies rightly point out that they cannot be responsible for the family of Rahab if they leave the house, but that they are responsible for any harm coming to those inside the house.

“And if you declare our word this and we are cleared from your oath which you caused to swear.”

Joshua
2:20

“But if you make the business of ours known, then we are not responsible for the oath that we have given to you.”

The first verb is the Hiphil imperfect of *nâgad* (נָגַד) [pronounced *naw-GAHD*], which means *to make conspicuous, to make known, to expound, to declare*. Strong’s #5046 BDB #616.

In this verse, this is the first time that we actually have a verb which accompanies with word for *cleared, acquitted*. It is the Qal perfect of the verb *to be*.

Then she said, “According to your words so it [is].” Then she sent them away and so they went. Then she tied a hope-cord of scarlet in the window.

Joshua
2:21

Then she said, “The matter stands according to your words.” So she sent them away and they departed. Afterward, she tied a scarlet hope-cord in her window.

In this verse, everything is tied together with *wâw* consecutives, generally indicating a set of sequential steps. After *she sent them away*, we have the verb *hâlak*^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*], which means *to go, to come, to depart, to walk*. Strong’s #1980 (and 3212) BDB #229. The last verb is *qâshar* (קָשַׁר) [pronounced *kaw-SHAHR*], which means *to bind, to tie, to league together, to conspire*. Strong’s #7194 BDB #905. Again, as before, the scarlet color speaks of deliverance by a sacrifice: **For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all of the people, saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded to you.” And in the same way, he sprinkled both the tent and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. And, according to the Law, almost all things are cleansed with blood and without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness** (Heb. 9:19–22; Ex. 24:8).

I have mentioned in Joshua 1 that much of this is not in chronological order. Rahab did not immediately hang this scarlet rope out her window prior to the spies’ return to Acacia Grove. It is mentioned here because it fits the context. She would have waited until the Israelites surrounded the walls of Jericho.

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The Spies Return to Acacia Grove

So they departed then went into the hills then remained there three days until the pursuers returned and so the pursuers had been searching in all of the way and they had found nothing.

Joshua
2:22

So the spies departed and went into the hills, remaining there three days until their pursuers returned to Jericho. The pursuers had given up their search, having found nothing.

Throughout this chapter, we have used the verbs *hâlak*^e and *bo'* over and over again. We find them again here. The third verb is the Qal imperfect of *yâsha*^v (יָשָׁא) [pronounced *yaw-SHAH^v*] and it means *to remain, sit, dwell*. Strong's #3427 BDB #442. *Directly west of ancient Jericho were the high, rugged hills of the central mountain ridge in Palestine. They are honeycombed with caves, making the concealment, and escape of the two spies relatively easy.*²² Keil and Delitzsch mentioned some mountains north of Jericho, which is almost a wall of rock rising from the plain to a height of 1200–1500 ft. and filled with caves and grottoes on the eastern side. They were closer to Jericho than the western mountain range.²³ In either case, their pursuers would have been looking for them in the opposite direction at the fords of the Jordan.

The pursuers were said to *bâqash* (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced *baw-KAHSH*] in all of the way. *Bâqash* is in the Piel perfect and it means *to seek, to search, to desire, to strive after, to attempt to get, to require, to demand, to ask*. This verb is not found in the Qal. Strong's #1245 BDB #134. The final verb is the Qal perfect of *mâtsâ'* (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*] and it means *to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*. Strong's #4672 BDB #592. It is found with the negative.

One of the interesting things about this mission is that these spies spent very little time searching out the land and hanging with the people. The numerous *wâw* consecutives combined with a recounting in less than chronological order seems to indicate some confusion and some quick thinking on the part of Rahab. This would further indicate that the spies, at least, once they got to Rahab's, got a very small quantity of information. This does not mean that they did their jobs poorly or that the mission was not successful; it simply means that they did not accumulate a lot of information. They got an idea as to the fortification of Jericho; they learned that Jericho had a reasonable, but not infallible, G-2 system; and, most importantly, they learned that the people were afraid of them. Part of their mission, which was not anticipated, but of the greatest importance—they were able to set things up so that Israel would deliver alive all those who trusted in Jehovah.

Then they returned and so they came down out of the hills then passed over and came unto Joshua ben Nun. Then they recounted to him all that came upon them.

Joshua
2:23

So they returned and had come down out of the hills, then passed over the Jordan and went into Joshua ben Nun. Then they recounted to him all that they had discovered.

The second to the last verb is the Piel imperfect of *çâphar* (סָפַר) [pronounced *saw-FAHR*], which means, in the Piel, *to recall, to recount, to declare*. Strong's #5608 BDB #707.

Then we have a slight grammatical twist at the end. We have the very common noun construct *kôl* (כֹּל) [pronounced *kole*] and this word means *the whole, all of, the entirety of, all, every*. Strong's #3605 BDB #481. It is followed by the definite article. This generally means *all of the, the entirety of the*. But then we have the Qal active participle of *mâtsâ'* (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*], which we just saw, means *to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*. Strong's #4672 BDB #592. Generally, a participle would be rendered *the discoveries, the coming upon them, the findings*. However, this is followed by a direct object sign, making this participle more like a main verb. Appended to the direct object notation is the 3rd person masculine plural, referring to the men. Therefore, instead of translating the definite article as *the*, we

²² *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 291.

²³ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. II, p. 29.

will render it *that* (as does Young and Rotherham). This gives us: Then they recounted to him all that came upon them [or, that happened to them].

And then they said to Joshua that, “Y^ehowah has given in our hands all of the land. And furthermore, all those inhabiting the land are melted from before our faces.”

Joshua
2:24

Finally, they told Joshua, “Jehovah has give all of this land into our hands. Also, the inhabitants of this land stand in absolute terror before us.”

The last description of the inhabitants of the land includes the Niphal perfect of *mûg* (מוּג) [pronounced *moog*], which means, properly, *to melt, to flow, to flow down*. However, figuratively, this means *to melt because of fear of men*. Strong's #4127 BDB #556. The Niphal is the passive; they had melted due to fear of the Israelites. Nowr, recall the reason. These Canaanites, etc. did not realize that Israel was just hanging out in the desert originally out of fear of them. They only recalled what Israel had done to Egypt some forty years previous and were afraid of something which had occurred a long time ago. They did not seem to ponder what had happened to Israel during this time. They did not recall Israel being soundly defeated when they first attempted to enter into the land. What the Israelites had done to Egypt at the hand of God was so spectacular that these people of Jericho still remembered forty years later and were still afraid. The information brought back by the spies is in sync with what God had told them forty years before: **“And I will...deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you.”** (Ex. 23:31b). And God will later reassure Joshua: **“Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them will stand before you.”** (Joshua 10:8b).

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