

"Deep Mercy and Lavish Grace" Joshua 2

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[0:00] Our first reading is found in Joshua chapter 2, verses 1 through 14. And Joshua, the son of Nun, sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go, view the land, even Jericho.

And they went and came into a harlot's house named Rhea, who lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither tonight of the children of Israel to search out the country.

And the king of Jericho sent unto Rhea, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house, for they be come to search out all the country.

And the woman took the two men and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I was not whence they were. And it came to pass, about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out.

Whither the men went, I wot not. Pursue after them quickly, for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

[1:03] And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan, unto the fords. And as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof.

And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all in the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when you came up out of Egypt. And what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of the Jordan, Sion and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt. Neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you. For the Lord your God, he is God, in heaven above and in earth beneath.

Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that you will also show kindness unto my father's house and give me a true token, and that you will save alive my father and my mother and my brethren and my sisters and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

[2:14] And the men answered her, Our lives for yours. If ye utter not this our business, and it shall be done, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

Amen. The popular historian Tom Holland, some of you would know him from the podcast The Rest is History, or some of his books, especially the big tome called Dominion.

He has rightly observed that in the 21st century, we in the West have collectively replaced Satan with Hitler, as the epitome of evil.

I don't think he's wrong. I think he's spot on. And for, in some ways, right reason. I mean, the 20th century has been marked by horrific atrocities, and horrific atrocities that take the form of ethnic cleansing.

The Armenian genocide by the Ottomans, the Holodomor genocide in the Ukraine under Stalin, and the former Soviet Union, the ongoing conflict in Sudan, the Rwandan genocide, and of course, because Hitler is the new Satan, the Holocaust committed by the National Socialists.

[3:32] When we think of pure evil, you know, this is what comes to mind. And the short form of all of it is Hitler. And we are rightly disgusted and horrified by ethnic cleansing.

So last week, I introduced Joshua chapter 1. It's our first week in a 10 to 12 week sermon series in Joshua. I introduced the book by mentioning that on first reading, the book, it lends to a reading that God has divinely mandated ethnic cleansing.

The land of Canaan, the promised land, the land that would be the land of Israel, it is to be taken over, and the inhabitants forcibly removed, even in some cases, it is said that they are to be devoted to destruction.

So, I said last week, and I'll say this week, there's hard bits in the Bible. Our commitment here at the church isn't to somehow, in every single way, answer every skeptical objection to the faith.

I think in some ways, we help you with that. You're the ones that are going to have to wrestle with that. But what we will do always is walk towards some of these uncomfortable bits, not away from them.

[5:03] So, the question is, is God indeed a bloodthirsty, Hitler-like character? Should we be hesitant to assume the goodness and merit of this book, or any of the books in the Bible, or the God that this Bible proclaims?

And as we look at Joshua chapter 2 this morning, we're going to focus on a Canaanite woman. Not an Israelite, but a Canaanite woman. A woman who lives in Jericho, who in every respect, ought to be the antithesis of what we might expect this, a hero to be in this story.

She is a remarkable figure, and one who will help us to see that the God of Scripture is most certainly not a bloodthirsty, Hitler-like character, but a God of deep mercy and lavish grace.

Joshua chapter 2, we're going to spend, we're going to look at the entire chapter, but we're going to spend the majority of the time in verses 1 to 14. I've broken up verses 1 to 14 into two points, and they are going to really focus on this person who is Rahab, this Canaanite woman.

The first point, a bold act she will commit, and then a humble confession she will make. A bold act and a humble confession. Look with me starting in verse 1, and we'll just read verses 1 and 2.

[6:32] And Joshua, the son of Nun, or Nun, sent out two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, Go view the land, especially Jericho. And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and lodged there.

And it was told to the king of Jericho, Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land. Listen, before we get into this first point about Rahab's bold act, it's helpful for us to understand the story thus far.

So, just really briefly, the Lord, he, in chapter 1, in the first, especially the first nine verses, he proclaims a comforting word to Joshua that as he was with Moses, so he will be with him.

He comforts him with his presence and his promises. If you remember last week, those are the two big things that God promised to Joshua, but also to the people of Israel.

His promises and his presence. Then, we didn't read this, but the rest of the chapter, it is Joshua actually commanding the people.

[7:40] He's taking command, and he is telling them, Listen, make provisions, get ready, and the people get behind him with one voice. We will follow you. We will go your way. The Lord is with you.

Anybody, anybody who opposes you, they will surely die. The Israelites, they are of one mind. They are about to take on the people, the inhabitants of Canaan.

They are going to take hold of the promised land from the Lord. But here's the thing. Joshua's been here before. Okay, 40 years earlier, Moses, he gets a spy, one from each of the 12 tribes, okay?

12 spies go into the land. They come back. Two of them, Joshua being one of them, say, Listen, we can do this. The people are big. They're strong. They have better guns than us.

They have better tanks than us. They have a whole fleet of fighter jets. I mean, but whatever. We have slings. We have spears.

[8:39] We can take them on. The rest of them, no chance. They're bigger than us. They're scary. And the fear really permeated through the rest of the Israelites.

And what happened? God's people ceased to trust in him, and they spent the next 40 years wandering into, until the generation, this generation of unbelief died, and the next generation came up.

So what ends up happening? We get to our point now, the beginning of chapter 2. Joshua, now this might be a bit of me reading into the narrative, but just bear with me.

It says that he secretly sent two spies, okay? What he didn't do is he didn't then, like Moses, take a spy from each of the tribe.

He takes two, and he secretly sends them in to the land to scout it out. What he's not doing is he's not saying, listen, we're going to do a repeat of what happened 40 years ago, because God forbid it's a repeat of 40 years ago.

[9:40] And then there's another 40 years of wandering. Maybe it's wandering for 80 years or 120 years. Joshua is a good leader, and he's learned from his mistakes. So what does he do?

He sends secretly the spies, two of them, into the promised land in a bit of a recon mission to see what is going on. So the spies, they're sent out by Joshua.

They go to Jericho, and they go to the house of Rahab, who was a prostitute. Now, there's been great lengths, a lot of ink spilt by commentators, both rabbinic commentators, so Jewish people that do not believe that Jesus is the Messiah, and also Christian commentators, trying to say, like, listen, Rahab, she ran an inn.

It was a nice tavern. That's what she was doing. This could be translated a different way. There's a whitewashing of Rahab. Because the implication would be, if Rahab's a prostitute, then the spies have just gone into a brothel.

And we can't have our heroes do something like that. But the reality is, the translators that we're reading from, and most of them, they've gotten it right.

[10:56] Rahab is indeed a prostitute. Whether or not the men, though, went into her home for reprehensible actions, they were given over to their desires.

I think the text is very clear that they did not do that. There's a lot of other words that the Hebrew could have employed to get that across. But it seems, though, that what ends up happening is the spies are going to a prostitute's house because, and we'll see this in a bit, she deals in the currency of information.

She deals in the currency of information. She has her finger on the pulse of what's going on in Jericho. She knows who's coming in, who's going out. She knows some secrets. She's actually, in many respects, the right person to go to if you want to get a real good lay of the land, if you want to understand what's happening in Jericho.

So the spies go in. And this is where our story picks up. Because almost immediately, their cover seems to be blown. So whether or not, you know, they let something slip, maybe they were dressed in non-Jericho garb, maybe their accents gave them away.

The text isn't clear on the reason why, but almost certainly, their cover's blown as soon as they go into the city. And this is where it picks up. Look with me at verses three, and we'll read to verse seven.

[12:29] Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land. The king knows what's happening.

And by the way, it's not like a king sitting on a throne. This is like a bit of like a city state. So think about like a ruler or a warlord, something of that nature. But nevertheless, we're going to call him king for the rest of our time in Joshua chapter two.

Verse four. But the woman, Rahab, had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them. But she had brought them, the two spies, up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof.

So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out. Rahab lies to the highest authority in the land.

[13:39] She risks her head for two spies that she's never yet met. Sorry, that she hasn't met up until that moment. It's a bold act that she does. She's committed an act of treason.

She has helped out a foreign power and it is at the potential cost of her life. You know, she's hidden them upstairs on the roof, a flat roof.

The flax is drying or aging or whatever. She's hidden them amongst the bundles of flax. All it would have taken is one person to say, we're searching this house.

We're not going to believe you. Maybe we'll pursue them to the fords of the Jordan. But first, let us look around a few corners in a few closets under this and that.

And that would have been it. She took a huge chance at hiding them. And then she took an even greater chance by lying to her king. She has officially switched sides.

[14:43] She has chosen to put in her lot with a group of former slaves turned wanderers without military might, without a home base, without any technological means of scaling the walls of the forbiddable city that is her literal home.

We'll find out she's literally living in the walls. It doesn't make sense from an earthly point of view. She's already on the winning side, the strong side, the mighty side.

Why on earth would she throw her lot in with the Israelites? So we'll find out her motive later on, but right now, her motive is yet to be disclosed. But she uses the only bit of currency that she has for the cause of God's people.

It's her information and her reputation. So when I said before, this would have been a home, almost certainly a place where she would deal in information. Notice that the king's men didn't say to her, listen, we're going to overturn this place first and then we're going to pursue after these men.

They just believed her. She had a, I mean, listen, she's somebody with almost no agency in the ancient world. Nevertheless, her reputation was such that they believed her at face value.

[16:03] She risks it. She totally dealt her last card. She put all her chips into the middle of the table. She showed great kindness to these spies.

What's interesting, and we'll touch on this closer to the end of the sermon, the kindness that she showed, the writer of the Hebrews, the book of Hebrews, chapter 11, describes Rahab and what she did as an act of welcome to the spies.

James chapter 2, again in the New Testament, says her actions were works that justified her. But before we go on any further, let's just consider this.

She's done something wonderful. The New Testament picks it up and gives her her flowers. But Rahab lied. She bore false witness.

She broke one of God's ten commands. Not only that, but she committed treason against her people. And yet, somehow, in some way, this furthered the purpose of God in whom there is only truth and no deceit.

[17:17] So, why on earth is God using this liar and treasonous person to see his purposes furthered as the people are about to take the land?

Listen, if you get into some of this stuff with the commentaries, it's wild how much there's wrestling with it. Some commentators have tried to justify Rahab's lie as ethical to explain it away as actually not a lie at all.

Yes, lying is bad, but it's like a poisonous herb. This is John Cassian. He was a fourth century monk. He says, yeah, but what she did, it's like taking a poisonous herb, but you mix it with a couple other ingredients and then you apply it on a wound and it becomes healing, a source of healing. Others, like Augustine and also John Calvin, they'll say about Rahab's lie, yeah, it was a lie, but she was atoned for because she did it with the right motive.

Listen, the scriptures are very clear on a lot of things about lying, about putting our lot in with God and his people. In this case, there is no comment in the text made about it.

[18:36] It's simply that she lied and this somehow, some way, factored into God's plan. And I think it's wonderful and I think it should give us not a pause for confusion, but a great confidence in God and his word.

Why? Because it simply describes what happened. The scriptures are not trying to whitewash the human experience. They're deeply spiritual, the scriptures are, but they're also deeply human and in that way they are relatable.

Who here has not been in a moral conundrum? Okay? A situation where there are not, it's not the difference between a right way and a wrong way, but there's like, which one's less bad?

This is, this is the human experience. It's messy. And the scriptures just, they record it. It's a remarkable thing. A dear man and wife, they were here for a number of years.

They've since gone back to Germany. He's a Dutch national and he would tell the story about his father who would consistently lie to the Nazis because they were hiding Jews on their property, on their farm.

[20:01] It's a lie. I mean, they're lying to the occupying forces, they're deceiving, they're bearing false witness. On the same token, they're saving a life, but it's coming at great cost.

What do you do when you have moral conundrums? Okay? When things aren't exactly super clear, what do you do? I think in many respects what we are called to do is to pray and to seek the Lord's face and to ask for wisdom and then just to act and ask the Lord for his mercy and grace no matter what.

I thought you were going to get like a rock solid fantastic answer on how to navigate like a principle to navigate moral conundrums. Life is messy. Okay? We live in a broken sinful world.

God is using, okay, he's using a prostitute, somebody who's sexually immoral, who's also lying, who's also deceiving, who's doing it we'll find very soon.

Okay, on one hand it's an act of faith, on the other hand she's just saving her bacon. You know, like this is a lot of gray here and I think we need to remember that gray is the predominant color in this world when it comes to moral things.

[21:21] It just takes a lot of wisdom to navigate it. But remember how Joshua opens up in chapter 1 verses 1 to 9.

Three times in four verses what does the Lord say to Joshua? Be strong, be courageous. Be strong and courageous. What does he say? Only be strong and courageous.

And then Joshua, we didn't read it last week, but if you read the second half of chapter 1, he tells the people be strong and courageous. who's the first person that we are finding in the narrative who is being strong and courageous?

It's Rahab. A non-Israelite, but somebody who's just seeing what's in front of her and really, truly, by faith, making a very difficult decision with the very messy, with the cards that were dealt to her.

It's a messy situation. And I'll end this point by just saying this. God draws straight with crooked lines. And it's a wonderful truth because even through all of this, God's purposes will not be thwarted.

[22:36] Jericho will not win in the end. There is not a stronger God. There's not a mightier deity. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will prevail.

So Rahab, she has a purpose behind her actions and they are bold indeed. For what we see next is one of the most candid acknowledgments and humble confessions in the entire book of Joshua and maybe potentially the Old Testament.

Look with me starting in verse 8 and this is our second point, a humble confession. We'll read verse 8 and then up into the first half of verse 11.

Before the men lay down, Rahab came up to them on the roof and said to them, I know that the Lord has given you the land and that the fear of you has fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.

For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to Sihon and Og whom you devoted to destruction and as soon as we heard it our hearts melted and there was no spirit or breath left in any man because of you.

[24:00] Rahab is saying to the two spies that the story of God's exodus the story of God's victory for the Israelites in the desert it's been made known to the people of Canaan in fact the entire Canaanite population has long been aware of the Lord's acts in the exodus story they have heard it she says they're frightened in fact they were terrified it said their hearts melted the breath left their lungs it's like if you hopefully it hasn't happened as an adult but when you were a kid in the school in the schoolyard and some random kid punches you in the stomach and you're winded maybe that just happened to me it's like that it's like you're grasping for life and then the air rushes back and you're okay but it is like they are completely undone the story of the exodus is God's supernatural victory for

Israel out of Egyptian slavery the mention of Og and Sihon as the Israelites were in the desert these two Amorite kings they attacked Israel first thinking that they would take advantage of them because they were weak and yet God gave them supernatural victory again he brought them out of the Red Sea in a very dramatic way and to the people of Canaan these are not myths this is history this is a historical count in which the one and only eternal God acted supernaturally in the natural world supernaturally in the natural world to protect and to save his people and because God's actions are always an expression of who God is of his character we can't separate ever God's actions from who God is the Canaanites now understand that there is a

God with might and power who fights for his people he is not to be trifled with so what is Rahab ultimately saying the status quo in Jericho it's overturned their gods have never performed such acts their confidence in their high walls is at an all time low the morale is rock bottom they are no longer backed by strong gods and if the God of Israel can destroy Egypt and part the Red Sea and give them victory in the desert what are mere walls that surround this city what good are they so there is only two responses when the reality of who God is and what he has done becomes real to us and real to them we can either submit to him bend a knee to his might to his glory or we resist and we continue on in our false hopes and our futile attempts at autonomy and try to be free on our

own terms but what ends up happening is we make not ourselves the Lord of our own lives but we make everything our appetites our desires the the influences around us we make those things the Lord of our life and in the end we are not free people we are people that are living in a type of delusion and this is what we're witnessing in Joshua chapter two on the one hand we have Rahab right she is somebody without any agency one with little power who chooses to risk her life to help these two random spies and in doing so she participates in God's plan and then on the other hand we have the mighty king of Jericho and his men we have the walls we have the fortifications we have the strength of Jericho and what does he do I mean Rahab if we're taking her at her word if God's scriptures are true that he's afraid as well and what does he end up doing he tries to snuff out

God's people and therefore snuff out God himself there's only and always two responses to the reality of who God is and what he has done so how do we resist the Lord today I mean what fortified city do we live in so to speak we can deny his existence deny his care for his people or attribute his works to chance or the universe or to karma I just Friday connected with there's a long story but I'm going to say connected that's not exactly how it happened but this guy I just met him and anyways he was kind of blown away at the circumstances by how we met there's a couple other people involved as well and he said it's unreal how the universe just puts us together eh and this other guy who was with me said how about we just sub out universe and put the Lord he's like same difference who cares he didn't use that language he used a bit more flowery language but you know here's the thing we we are constantly wrestling and resisting!

[29:44] how often do you do it how often do I do it constantly resisting constantly taking great courage not in the Lord and who he is and what he does but in our own fortified cities I think we do it all the time nevertheless why is it that this same news the same reporting one person Rahab she she takes it the heart she bends the knee why is it that the king of Jericho instead puffs up his chest this false bravado and tries to destroy God's people why why is it that when the gospel is heard when the truth of God is proclaimed!

Why do some people accept it and some people deny it? Here's my other wonderful principle that's hopefully that you can take to the bank I don't know I'm not sure God gives faith to some and to others he doesn't Bishop J.C.

Ryle he was a bishop in the 19th century the first bishop of Liverpool he says this this is from a book called holiness and I think it's apt it's very good for us this morning he says this quote the same fire which melts the wax hardens the clay the same sun which makes the living tree grow dries up the dead tree and prepares it for burning same God it's the same message some people are wax some people are clay some people are living tree some people are rootless God knows and therefore God is the one who grants faith let's continue verse 12 well I'll go back to verse 11 and as soon as we heard it our hearts melted and there was no spirit left in any man because of you the second part of verse 11 for the

Lord your God he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath now then please swear to me by the Lord that as I have dealt kindly with you you also will deal kindly with my father's house and give me a sure sign that you will save alive my father and mother my brothers and sisters and all who belong to them and deliver our lives from death listen she has shown the slaves kindness or the spies kindness and the word here is it's remarkable the word here is the word that is used I mean it translates into kindness but it's it's steadfast love it's mercy it's loving kindness it's the same word often used in scripture where God is showing kindness and mercy to his own people it's a covenantal deeply gracious kindness that she is showing to the spies and to

God's covenant people by extension and she implores the spies to swear by the Lord not to swear by her gods not to swear by you know something else but swear to the Lord and she uses the divine covenant name of the Lord the name that God himself gave to Moses for the people of Israel for his people and she says by Yahweh by the Lord by the covenant making covenant keeping God swear to me that you will show kindness to me like I have shown kindness to you she's a Canaanite woman who maybe the night before was praying at a shrine to whatever god that she served her family gods her regional gods her the city gods she was a pantheist almost certainly and now she seems to be a monotheist monotheism is very novel in the ancient world it doesn't really exist outside of Israel and now this

[33:57] Canaanite woman what is she doing she is acknowledging the Lord and confessing his name here's the thing I think her motives are probably mixed nevertheless and this is this is a

principle that you can take home to the bank you know eight days a week it's it's not so much the degree of faith that she has but the object that her faith is in who is the Lord God you will pray maybe even tonight with mixed motives you will try to seek the Lord for the right reasons and probably the wrong reasons and we should actually do a bit of self inventory so that we are seeking the Lord ultimately for the right motives and what is that to know him to seek his face and to enjoy the comfort that comes from knowing the one true God but nevertheless

God is merciful and kind and the fact that you will call on his name even tonight even what what is the result verse 14 and the men said to her our life for yours even to death 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 Rahab doesn't have the authority she's not the head of her house to somehow speak as the lead and yet she does the spies don't have authority to make these treaties with random people that they come across they were just sent to spy out the land nevertheless it still happens and nevertheless we seem to see that

God is all over it the Lord is the one who is at work in this back and forth we're going to briefly touch on verses 15 to 21 but there's a detail in here that is just remarkable and I want to see if you can pick it out now I'll give you a little hint okay the exodus is this remarkable event there's 10 plagues the tenth plague was the death of the first born and then there was something that went down that somehow saved the Israelites during that tenth plague and now see if you see any connection to it in verses 15 to 21 verse 15 then she that is Rahab let them down by a rope through the window remember her house is in the side of the wall and the gates are shut so they're trapped unless they escape through the window then she let them down by a rope through the window for her house was built into the city wall so that she lived in the wall and she said to them go into the hills where the pursuers will encounter you and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned then afterward you may go your way the men said to her we will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear verse 18 behold when we come into the land you shall tie the scarlet cord in the window through which you let us your brothers and all your father's household then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street his blood shall be on his own head and we shall be guiltless but if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house his blood shall be on our head but if you tell this business of ours then we shall be guiltless with respect to your they departed and she tied the scarlet cord in the window did you catch that a scarlet cord was meant to mark her home as a safe haven for her family a place where destruction would pass over her home her house her family so what we're seeing here is a second

Passover except this time it's not in Egypt and it's not with the Israelites this time it's in Jericho and it's with a Canaanite woman salvation has been extended not only to God's people but to anyone who would believe and here's what God is doing he is taking a brothel and turning it into a safe haven it's remarkable what God's redemption does it's remarkable how he transforms what we think is lost and he makes it glorious and beautiful and life giving this is the God that we serve this is the God that we're invited to discover in Joshua and the rest of scripture I'll close with this I opened up with talking about how Hitler is the new Satan and we should be rightfully shocked and disgusted by ethnic cleansing and atrocities of the like and how we have to ask the question is the scripture divinely mandating ethnic cleansing and

I'll just say this if you read the end of chapter one like the last say four or five verses of chapter one and then read the beginning or the end of chapter two starting in verse 22 into chapter three the narrative actually flows lovely it seems almost seamless Joshua rallies the troops okay in chapter one and then in chapter three how does it begin then Joshua rose or sorry we'll go back in in verse 22 they departed the spies and went into the hills remained there three days the pursuers returned they talked to Joshua the son of none telling him all that happened truly the Lord has given all the land into our hands and also all the inhabitants of the land melt away before us verse one of chapter three then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim again the reference to where they are and they came to the Jordan he and all the people of Israel and then eventually would cross the Jordan and on begins the conquest the narrative is actually quite seamless if you take out this

[41:05] Rahab story and yet for 21 or 20 verses God in his wisdom puts a story in about one woman making a faithful decision that benefits her entire family and you realize that this has nothing to do with ethnic cleansing it has everything to do with the Lord extending his lavish grace and his incredible mercy on anyone that would just bend a knee to his goodness and his kindness God is

always extending the boundaries and the borders of his family anybody who would come in and how do we know it's anybody because it is not the king of Jericho who bends a knee but the lowly Rahab who does it's remarkable this isn't about ethnic!

cleansing at all in every instance that we're going to see within this book and before in Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy whenever there's a battle whenever there's God telling the Israelites to devote a certain people to destruction it's either delayed somewhat indefinitely or he has extended mercy where they have rejected it or a group as in with the Amorites they make the first move and then the Israelites are in a defensive posture God has never said I don't like this people group because they are of this ethnicity I will devote them to destruction instead we see Rahab who escapes and here's a wonderful thing about Rahab she is mentioned in the lineage of Jesus himself four women are mentioned in Jesus' lineage in

Matthew chapter one and Rahab Rahab the prostitute of Jericho the Canaanite is there a grandmother of the Messiah himself it's absolutely remarkable that God includes the people that he includes friends ultimately this story is significant not because of Rahab's faith primarily but because it testifies to the deep mercy and lavish grace of the one true God the triune God Father Son and Holy Spirit I'll just ask you this question are you more like the king of Jericho or like the woman Rahab will you put your lot in with the one true God the God who gives grace upon grace or will you oppose him will you retreat back into your fortified cities will you put up higher walls retreat back into greater darkness take a defensive posture against the God who actually just wants to bless you and bless you and bless you some more listen when the sun shines will you find yourself wax or clay

I think if you're hearing this this morning it's a wonderful opportunity we don't need to get lost in why God chooses some and he doesn't choose others you are hearing God's call right this minute what will you do may!