



2 God Uses Rahab

Key Theme

- God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect plans.

Key Passages

- Joshua 2:8–15, 6:25; Hebrews 11:31; Matthew 1:5

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain why Rahab had faith in God.
- Describe how God used Rahab to accomplish His plan for His people.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Students will place bookmarks at Joshua 2, Joshua 6, Hebrews 11, and Matthew 1. Students will put the Memory Verse Strips in order and then practice saying the verse together and/or with a partner.



Activity 1: God Uses Rahab Class Notes

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Students will fill out the God Uses Rahab Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the class notes before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

page 6

Rahab was a sinful woman who became an unlikely hero of the faith. Providentially, God granted her faith and used her to accomplish His plan for the Israelites. Rahab was rewarded and later included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. She is mentioned in Hebrews as a great woman of faith.



Activity 2: Rahab Review Game

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Students will play a board game in teams to review the lesson material.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Cut paper strips for each student to mark today's study passages—Joshua 2, Joshua 6, Hebrews 11, Matthew 1.
- If you haven't done this, print and cut out the Memory Verse Strips from the Resource DVD-ROM for every 2–3 students. Print on cardstock if possible.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper strips
- Memory Verse Strips in envelopes or small plastic bags
- If you want to do this as an individual activity, make one set per student. Put complete sets into envelopes or small plastic bags.



GOD USES RAHAB CLASS NOTES

- Print one God Uses Rahab Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- God Uses Rahab Class Notes for each student
- God Uses Rahab Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils or pens



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Rahab's Home on the Wall Picture from the Resource DVD-ROM for use during the lesson.

- Rahab's Home on the Wall Picture
- Student Take Home Sheets



RAHAB REVIEW GAME

- Print one Rahab Review Game Board from the Resource DVD-ROM for every 2–3 students.
- Print one Rahab Review Game Questions from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Print and cut out the Rahab Review Game Numbers from the Resource DVD-ROM. Place numbers in a cup.

- Rahab Review Game Boards
- Buttons or coins (game pieces) for each team
- Rahab Review Game Questions
- Rahab Review Game Numbers in a cup



Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Before you begin to prepare for your lesson this week, please prepare your heart and mind by reading Joshua 2; Matthew 1:1–16 (noticing in verse 5 that Rahab is an ancestor of Jesus); Hebrews 11:31; and Acts 4:13–21.

The Israelites under Joshua’s leadership were again on the move. God had promised Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob that He would deliver the Promised Land to them. The generation of Moses’s day—because of their lack of faith, disobedience, and idolatry—was denied entry into this Promised Land. Moses and the entire generation (except for Joshua and Caleb) then died. Joshua was now the leader of the younger generation, and God had demanded his complete obedience to Him and His Word in order to be a part of the fulfillment of His purpose (Joshua 1:6–9). As already demonstrated, the way to success would be far from easy. There were many nations to conquer, yet God would provide the means—the strength and courage needed for success—provided the Israelites remained obedient.

Now Joshua, as the new leader of the people, was sending two of his men on a spying mission to view the land, especially Jericho (Joshua 2:1).

The two spies entered Jericho and found lodging with Rahab, the prostitute. Although this may seem odd at first glance, upon further consideration, Rahab’s home on the wall could offer a safer and inconspicuous haven for the men. However, in God’s divine providence, the men were found out. When Rahab realized who they were, she was introduced firsthand to the God of Israel she had heard of and feared (Joshua 2:10–11). In the face of this providential visit by two of God’s people, Rahab demonstrated her faith and offered protection to the spies (Joshua 2:3–6, 2:15–16). Her faith saved her family from destruction (Joshua 6:17). And her faith, by God’s amazing grace, put her in the Messianic line (Matthew 1:5).

The question we might ask is how would this woman, this harlot, know about the God of Israel? She was well aware—as apparently all in Jericho were—that Israel was a nation whose God had delivered His people in a dramatic, miraculous fashion from Egypt. This God had also provided victory for His people over the most notorious kings on the other side of the Jordan, including King Og of Bashan (Deuteronomy 3:4). This was no small feat, and Rahab had come to worship this God of Israel.

Rahab was willing to stake her life and her family members’ lives on the ability of God to defeat her own people and yet deliver her! She misled the pursuers who were sent by the King of Jericho to apprehend the spies, and she concealed the spies until she helped them escape back to Israel (Joshua 2:2–6, 2:15–16). Rahab acted upon her belief that the God of Israel would carry out His promises to give the land to His people, and by doing so, she showed an utter dependence upon Him. This faith was remarkable enough to be held up to all future believers as an example of faith (Hebrews 11:31)!

The fact that God would bring to saving faith and use a Gentile woman to fulfill His purpose foreshadowed His intention to break “down the middle wall of separation” (Ephesians 2:14) between Jew and Gentile in Christ, and to make Gentiles “fellow heirs, of the same body” with Jews in Christ (Ephesians 3:6). This grand scheme of Christ’s salvation of sinners from every nation was in the background when God used Rahab to help deliver Israel’s spies in return for the protection of her and her family from the ultimate fall of Jericho (Joshua 6:25).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Many raise the question as to whether God blessed Rahab’s lie to the king’s men when they came for the Israelite spies. If so, when is it OK to lie? Or, is it ever right to lie? No. Lying is sin against a holy, perfect God (Proverbs 12:22). However, God frequently uses the sinful acts of both the righteous and unrighteous to execute His purposes.

God wanted to show His amazing grace and sovereignty in this situation. Rahab was a deliberate sinner, and in likelihood an idolater, given that she lived an immoral life in a city of an idolatrous nation. Her knowledge of the true God was no doubt incomplete, being based upon what was discussed among her people, not upon a principled or careful instruction from Scripture. It was from this incomplete knowledge of God that she chose to lie on behalf of the spies. And in God’s mercy, He overlooked the sin, acknowledged her faith, and redeemed the situation.

To focus on the lie instead of the reward that our holy, sovereign, merciful God granted her does not give God the glory due His name. One lesson to be learned from Rahab is not about Rahab at all but about God—how He did not judge her nor reward her according to her sin but saved her by grace through the faith He

gave to her as a precious gift (Ephesians 2:8), just as He does for all of His people.

Rahab's imperfect actions of faith and courage resulted not only in her salvation from destruction but also in a place in history as an ancestor of Jesus, a place in God's providential plan that resulted in Jesus's birth and saving mission (Matthew 1:5). If we wonder why God would use a woman like Rahab to fulfill His purposes, perhaps we have not fully faced the effect our own sin has against a holy God. Only then can we recognize the greatness of God's mercy in offering forgiveness to us through Jesus's death and Resurrection.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Heavenly Father, you dwell enthroned in heaven above and on earth beneath. How marvelous is your Word, Lord. You have revealed your sovereignty and your mercy in the passages we are studying this week. Please help me understand your truths and at the same time present them in a way my students will understand. May the beauty of this account of Rahab—a harlot who believed—give hope, courage, and strength to my students. Holy Spirit, move among us in such a way that we all become excited about the ways an almighty God can use us to accomplish His perfect plan.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will mark their Bibles at Joshua 2, Joshua 6, Hebrews 11, and Matthew 1 with strips of paper.
- They will put Memory Verse Strips in order and recite the verse together and/or to each other. They may work individually or in teams.

Use this time at the beginning of class to review the memory verse. We have provided a template on the Resource DVD-ROM you can use to make Memory Verse Strips to be put in order each week. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God Uses Rahab Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Uses Rahab Class Notes
- God Uses Rahab Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Pass out the God Uses Rahab Class Notes at the beginning of class. The students will fill in the blanks as you teach the lesson.

We will be filling these class notes in as we study the Bible today. Try not to work

ahead. I'll let you know when you are to fill in the blanks.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete our class notes today during class, we will see that God chose Rahab to be an unlikely hero because of her faith in the one true God.

After filling in each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

Please turn in your Bibles to chapter two of the book of Joshua in the Old Testament. We're going to read Joshua 2:8–11. While you're turning there, let me remind you that Joshua was the new leader of the Israelites.

? And, as we discussed in our last lesson, after Moses died, God required obedience from Joshua, but in return what would God give him? *God promised to give him strength and courage so he would be able to accomplish the great plans God had for him.*

Right! What God needed Joshua to do wasn't going to be easy. There were nations to conquer—large cities—powerful, strong people. But God would provide all they needed as long as they remained obedient. It was time to take God's people to the Promised Land.

? Do you see how our memory verse is a reminder for us? *Refer to the Memory Verse Poster. Have the students read it together.*

This verse reminds us that God promised to be with Joshua wherever he went. God commanded Joshua to meditate on the law and continue to be obedient to it. God assured Joshua he would then be prosperous and have success. Obedience and trust in God and His Law would give Joshua strength and courage to persevere.

Before Joshua would lead the people of Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land, he sent his men in to spy out the land and the city of Jericho to see what it was like. The spies sought refuge with Rahab, a harlot or prostitute. A harlot was a woman who did not obey God's command to have only one husband. She led a sinful life.

Show Rahab's Home on the Wall Picture from the Resource DVD-ROM. Rahab lived in a unique location. Her house was built right on the wall of Jericho. Her home offered a safe place for the spies to hide. However, somehow the king found out where they were. He sent his men to find them. Rahab protected the men. She hid them on her roof! Our lesson is going to be about this woman, Rahab. She lived in Jericho where the people hated God and worshipped false gods.

Why would Rahab, a harlot from a pagan city, protect Israelite spies? She was not even an Israelite! Let's read our text and see if we can find the answer.

We are going to read Joshua 2:8–11. Keep in mind that the spies were on Rahab's roof. The king's men came right to Rahab's house looking for the spies. Rahab told the king's men that the spies were not with her. The

Joshua 2:8–11

king's men believed her and left, following Rahab's suggestion to search in a different direction. So I ask again, why would Rahab protect these men? She lived in a pagan city that hated God and worshipped false gods. Listen carefully and see if you can figure out why Rahab protected the Israelite spies. *Have a volunteer or volunteers read Joshua 2:8–11.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's examine this passage more closely together to see if we can answer some important questions. Those verses give us insight to the heart and mind of Rahab.

Observe the Text

- ? Who was Rahab talking to in this passage? *Joshua 2:8. The spies.*
 - ? The spies, good! Now look at verse nine. Remember Rahab was living in a pagan city that worshipped false gods. Yet, what did she say about the Lord? *Joshua 2:9. She knew the Lord of the Israelites—that He had given them the land. Have students fill in #1 on the class notes—Lord, land.*
 - ? She said that she knew the Lord of the Israelites! Interesting. How did she know Him? Look at verse 10. *Joshua 2:10. She had heard how God dried up the water of the Red Sea.*
 - ? So, which event was that? When God dried up the water of the Red Sea? Who did God do that for? *The Israelites when they were leaving Egypt. Moses.*
 - ? And what was that event called? It is the second book of the Bible. *The Exodus. Have students fill in #2 on the class notes—Exodus.*
- The Lord of the Israelites was famous throughout the land because He had led the people and accomplished the impossible. Word about Him had spread!
- ? What did Rahab come to believe about God as a result? *Joshua 2:11. She acknowledged who God was. He is the Lord God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Have students fill in #3 on the class notes—Heaven, earth.*

Discover the Truth

From those few important verses, we know that God had opened the heart of Rahab as she heard the accounts of the Israelites. She had heard that God had saved them from the Pharaoh in Egypt. No doubt she had heard how God parted the Red Sea to allow them to escape. She had heard that God had allowed them many victories over their enemies before they even reached Jericho. At some point, Rahab accepted that the God of the Israelites was different than all the false, pagan gods worshipped in her city. She believed that the Lord God of the Israelites is God in heaven above and on earth beneath—the one true God!

Hebrews 11:31

There is a verse in the New Testament that tells us about Rahab. It's in Hebrews 11:31. Turn there in your Bibles. *Have someone read Hebrews 11:31.*

- ? Something saved Rahab from being killed in the end. What was it according to this verse? *She had faith. Have students fill in #4 on their class notes—Faith.*

Yes. Rahab had faith. God granted Rahab faith, setting her apart from all the other people living in Jericho. She had heard of the Lord of the Israelites and trusted Him. She demonstrated her faith by saving the spies and believing God would do what He said He would do. God is sovereign, and Rahab was a part of His sovereign plan. The spies came to her house, she received them in, and they were saved from the king's men. Believe it or not, God had even more in store for Rahab! .



SOVEREIGN

(Refer to Attributes Poster.)

Joshua 2:12–15

So let's read about what happened next. Rahab was about to ask the spies for something. *Have a volunteer read Joshua 2:12–15.*

READ THE WORD

EXAMINE THE WORD

Ready for some more questions? Questions will help us better understand what we just read.

Observe the Text

- ? **What did Rahab ask for? What was her request of the spies?** *Joshua 2:12–13. She asked the spies to spare the lives of her family members. Have students fill in #5 on the class notes—Family.*
- ? **What was the response from the spies in verse 14?** *Joshua 2:14. They would spare her life and the lives of her family as long as she kept quiet about them. And they would deal kindly with her. Have students fill in #6 on the class notes—Quiet.*
- ? **The spies promised Rahab safety, but how did they get away?** *Joshua 2:15. Rahab let them down with a rope from her window.*
- ? **Does anyone know if Rahab kept quiet and really was saved from the destruction of Jericho?** *Take answers.*

Well, let's turn to Joshua 6:25 to see what happened to Rahab and her family. *Read the passage aloud.*

- ? **What happened to them?** *Rahab and her family were saved. Have students fill in #7 on the class notes—Family.*

God in His great mercy spared Rahab because she had faith in Him. Rahab's faith led to her whole family being spared. It is truly a great ending to know that Rahab and her family were all able to dwell in safety with the Israelites after the conquest of Jericho. God was merciful to her.

MERCIFUL

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

Discover the Truth

This true historical event shows us how God used Rahab to accomplish His plan. She was from another city, she had worshipped false gods, and she had not loved the God of the Israelites. Yet she had heard of God—His mighty deeds—and placed her faith in the one true God. And because of that she saved the spies. God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect plans.

- ? Turn to Matthew 1. Do you have a heading there before the chapter starts? **What does it say?** *If the students don't have a heading, show them your Bible. The heading should read "The Genealogy of Christ."*
- ? **This is the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Who can tell me what a genealogy is?** *Allow discussion. Review the definition.*
- ? **Yes. This is a listing of Jesus Christ's family. And look at Matthew 1:5. Whose name is there? In the line of Jesus's family? Someone we have been talking about.** *Rahab.*

So God used this woman—this sinner—in a very special way to accomplish His perfect plan. Rahab was a sinner saved by faith and used by God to protect the Israelite spies. She was not even an Israelite. And then she was included in Jesus's family. Rahab was an ancestor of King David! *Refer to the Seven C's Timeline. Have students fill in #8 on their class notes—Rahab.*

- ? **Wouldn't you say that is quite amazing?** *Yes!*



Genealogy:
an ordered listing of the family line of someone—parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on.



Rahab Review Game

MATERIALS

- Rahab Review Game Boards—one for every 2–3 students
- Buttons or coins, one per team to use as a game piece
- Rahab Review Game Questions
- Rahab Review Game Numbers in a cup

INSTRUCTIONS

Students will compete in small teams, moving forward as they get the review questions correct. The first team to the finish line is the winner.

See more detailed instructions for this game on the Rahab Review Game Questions from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- ? **Is everyone ready for a fun review of today's lesson?** *Yes!*

Your team will have a good chance of winning if you were paying attention during the lesson. Try to work together as a team to get the best answer. *Play the game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

In many ways, Rahab was an ordinary person, just like us! When we look at the faith she had, we should be inspired. God uses people like Rahab, and like us, to accomplish His perfect plans. You did a great job reviewing this lesson. God loves it when we study His Word!



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today we found out what God says in His Word about a woman named Rahab. We found out quite a bit about her background. Remember? She was a Gentile woman, not like the Israelites, she had a sinful background as a harlot, and she lived in the pagan city of Jericho. She was NOT like Joshua, the spies, and their people.

- ? **And we learned about Rahab's faith. How did she come to know about the Lord of the Israelites?** *She heard about what He had done for the Israelites—about the Exodus and their victories over other kings.*

Yes. God gave Rahab faith in Him and opened her heart to His truth in spite of her background. God used her to accomplish His plan. Rahab heard about the Lord and the great things He had done. She came to believe that He was the one true God. And she is mentioned with honor in the book of Hebrews. She is recorded as a woman of great faith. We also discovered that Rahab is listed in Matthew as part of Jesus's genealogy.

? What is the big deal about Rahab? Remember why she was an unlikely hero? *She was not an Israelite, she lived in a pagan city, she came from a sinful background, yet she was used by God and included in the genealogy of Jesus.*

In God's providence, Rahab was saved by faith and used by God to protect the Israelite spies so they could conquer the Promised Land. And she ended up being a part of Jesus's family—one of His ancestors! An unlikely hero? Indeed!

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Think about how this account of Rahab can apply to us.

? If God used this sinful Gentile woman to accomplish His plans, couldn't God use us, too? *Yes.*

? Let's see if we have anything in common with Rahab. Are any of us Gentiles? *Yes.* Do any of us come from unbelieving families or cities? *Yes.* Do any of us come from sinful backgrounds? *Yes.* Have we ever done anything wrong? *Yes.* *Allow for discussion.*

I think most of us are a lot more like Rahab than we may have realized. Even though Rahab was an ordinary, sinful woman, she came to BELIEVE in the one true God. God can use us like He used Rahab.

God used Rahab to help the Israelites acquire the Promised Land, and He included her in Jesus's family line. Rahab was a sinner. We are all sinners. But God in His mercy will forgive our sins . . . if we ask Him to. Rahab was saved by faith and used by God. When we have faith, when we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior, the blood of Jesus redeems us. Then God can use us to fulfill His purposes, just like He used Rahab.

➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for who He is—a merciful Father who forgives our sins.
- Thank God for giving us the example of Rahab in the Bible so that we can trust Him to do great things through us, too.
- Ask God to give the students the desire to believe and trust God enough to live their lives in obedience to His Word.

