

## **Mercy Extended – Bible Study**

by Rochelle Howard, the Adult Rehabilitation Center Command's Property and Contracts Assistant

**Opening Prayer** - Ask the Holy Spirit to give you revelational insight as you read and study these passages.

### **Background:**

The Amorites were a part of the Canaanite civilization that was so evil, idolatrous, immoral, and corrupt that God couldn't allow them to threaten the survival and spiritual welfare of the Hebrew nation. Sending the two spies was a part of a bigger plan to overthrow the enemies of God's people. Rehab became a part of that plan when she allowed the spies to lodge temporarily in her home. She acknowledged that these were men of God. She also discerned that the Lord had given them the land. She had heard the miraculous stories of how God was with His people, and although part of an idolatrous and immoral background, she saw the need in this emergent moment and immediately established a brilliant plan for their escape (Joshua 2). Her plan could have backfired, and her life given as ransom for treason, but her faith prevailed.

The only thing Rahab asked the spies in return (once the Canaanite nation was destroyed) was that they swear an oath by the Lord and spare her life, both of her parents, her siblings and all that they had. The following passages lead us up to the fulfillment of that promise to Rahab, after their conquest and the destruction of Canaan.

**Read: Joshua 6:21-25 (NLT)**

### **Read verse 21**

V21 "They completely destroyed everything in it with their swords – men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys."

### **Discussion.**

Imagine that scenario for a moment. Everything and everyone around you is being destroyed one by one. Be honest. Would you have the persevering faith to believe that God's promise is going to come true despite how dire the circumstances appeared?

**Read v 22-23.** Do you think Rahab's family expected the worst once they were brought out in the open? How do you think her parents felt, especially since they were probably distanced from Rahab? I wonder if they thought the worst, "What trouble have you gotten us into this time, Rahab?"

**Read v 24-25.** As promised, not only was Rahab's life spared, but her entire family, just as God promised.

### **Questions.**

Has there ever been a time that you knew in your heart that God promised you something and when it happened you couldn't believe it? Name a time God blessed you and blew you away? Have you ever felt undeserving of His grace (unmerited favor/ blessings)?

Rahab's faith and "her story" or history teaches us a few things:

1) **Never count out a person because you don't see their value.** You might know a little something about their past, but you never know where their heart is with God. Life is tricky because one day you can be successful, feeling like you're on top of the world, and the next unexpected economic crash hits and you're at Ground Zero, possibly in poverty.

The next person God uses to save you in the future may be an unlikely or unexpected source, so be kind to others. I'm sure if we could interview Rahab she would explain what the mercy of God looks like. She would testify of the labels society once placed on her but if you read Matthew 1, she's now included in Jesus' genealogy. Not Rahab the harlot, but Rahab the wife and mother, a part of Jesus' family.

2) **Faith believes the unseen.** It doesn't compromise because of how things look in the natural. "Faith shows the reality of what we hope for, it is the evidence of things we cannot see" (Hebrews 11:1, NLT). Faith believes to the end, despite what circumstances dictate.

3) **God's mercy is inclusive.** Society looks for those who fit in. They look for value in how much you own, what car you drive, and what clothes you wear. God looks at the heart, not the external. It is a level plane of grace extended to all; the misfit, the incarcerated, the justice impacted, the lost, the forgotten, the rich, the poor, the President, and even the janitor.

**Rahab may not have a star on the walk of fame, but she is listed as a champion of faith on the tablet of God's heart (a greater recognition), and so are you.**