

JOSHUA 2

GOD PROVIDES
PROTECTION THROUGH
UNEXPECTED MEANS

INTRODUCTION

- Joshua sends spies into the land of Canaan in preparation for the invasion. The spies are nearly discovered, but they find refuge with Rahab, a prostitute.
- Because she saves their lives, the spies reciprocate by agreeing to spare her and her family when Israel invades the city.
- The spies return to Joshua and share that “The LORD has given all the land into our hands!”

**GOD PROVIDES
PROTECTION,
DIRECTION, AND
VICTORY**

JOSHUA 2:1-11

UNDERCOVER ASSIGNMENT

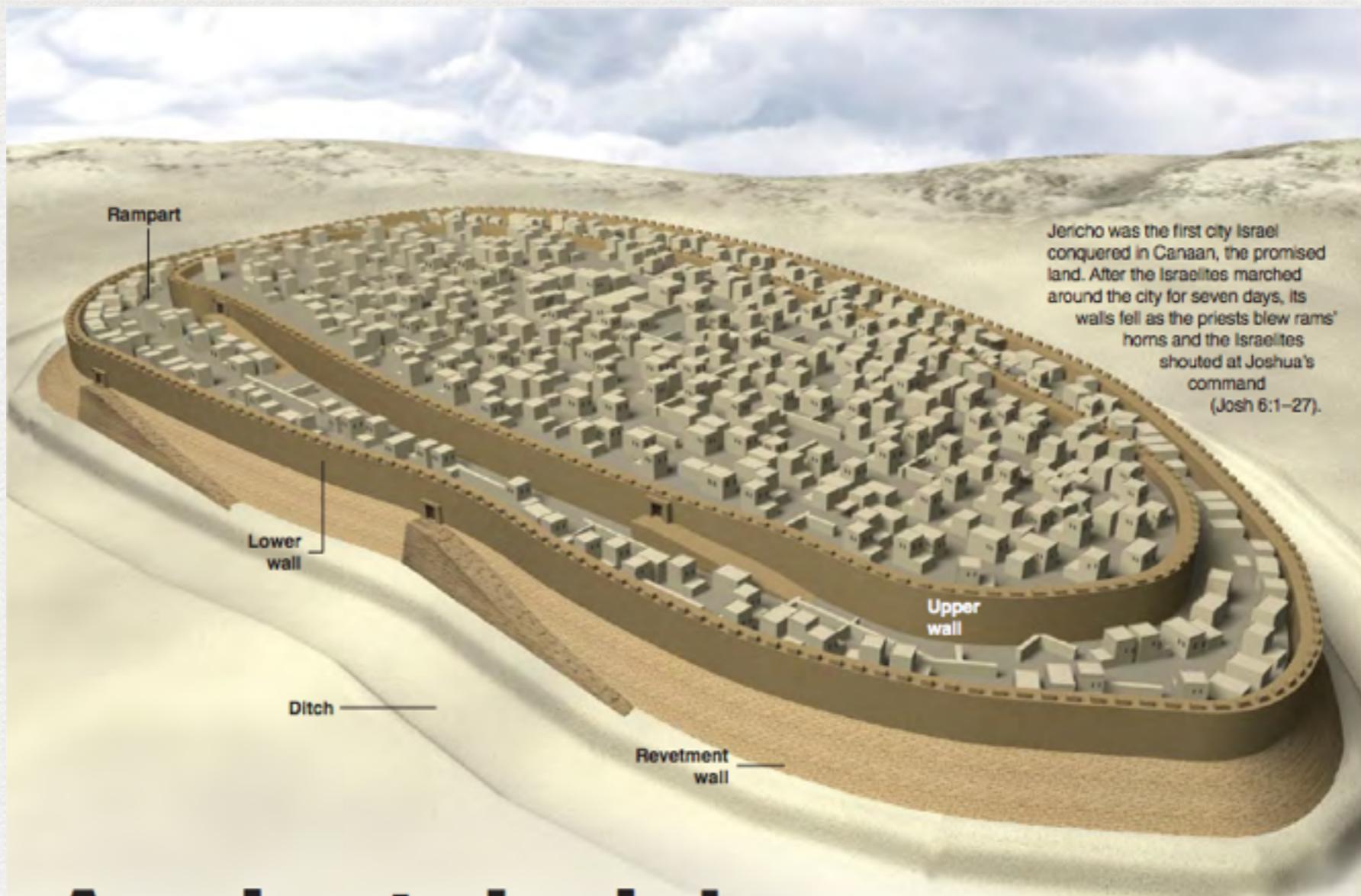
- Jericho is 14 miles west of the Jordan River. It was a walled fortress that protected the other cities in the land of Canaan.
- Joshua sends out spies not to decide if they should attack but to gain information about the fortress.
- The original spying party in Numbers 13 returned with 10 of the 12 giving a dreadful report - Israelites are weak “like grasshoppers” before the inhabitants.

UNDERCOVER ASSIGNMENT

- Joshua does not share the same opinion.
- The 10 spies made the mistake of comparing the strength and military prowess of the Canaanites and the Israelites.
- Joshua understood that the Canaanites wouldn't be fighting Israel. They would be fighting God. He says (Numbers 14) that "their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us."

UNDERCOVER ASSIGNMENT

- Notice that Joshua only sends 2 spies to Jericho.
- It is possible that the Israelites didn't even know that Joshua sent the spies.
- They were to "search out the land" but focused their attention on the strategically significant Jericho.
- Why did they go to Rahab's house? This is where they could get lost in the crowd - lots of people coming and going.



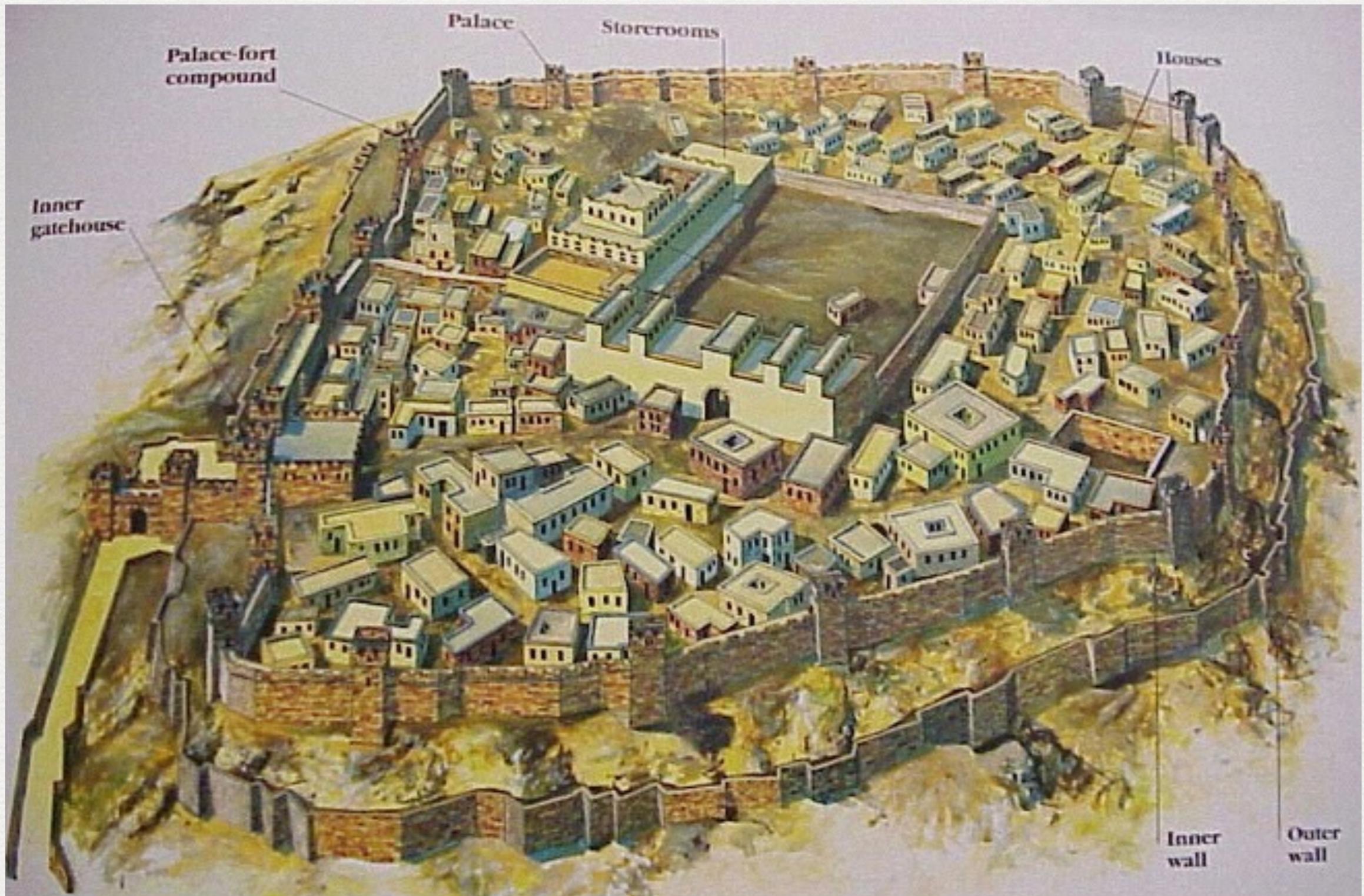
Jericho was the first city Israel conquered in Canaan, the promised land. After the Israelites marched around the city for seven days, its walls fell as the priests blew rams' horns and the Israelites shouted at Joshua's command (Josh 6:1-27).

Ancient Jericho

Toward the end of the Bronze Age

Archaeological excavations reveal that Jericho was violently destroyed sometime toward the end of the Bronze Age. The walls seem to have been thrown down by sudden force, as if by an earthquake. Charred wood shows that what was left of the city was burned. Excavators have also found food supplies buried in the destroyed city, which shows it was not captured by siege.





Palace-fort compound

Palace

Storerooms

Houses

Inner gathouse

Inner wall

Outer wall

UNDERCOVER ASSIGNMENT

- The Scriptures are not shy in pointing out that Rahab is a prostitute, not someone who would appear to be a strong candidate to be used by God.
- The encounter demonstrates the providence of God, connecting these men of Israel to a sinful woman who would become a proselyte of the true God.
- Somehow the King is alerted to the presence of the spies, and Rahab must quickly hide them.

UNDERCOVER INTELLIGENCE

- Once the soldiers had gone, Rahab provides a unique perspective to the Jews.
- “(She) said to the men, ‘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’” (Joshua 2:9).
- The people of Jericho had heard that the Israelites had fled from Egypt by crossing the Red Sea, and dominated the kings east of the Jordan.

UNDERCOVER INTELLIGENCE

- The people of Jericho were afraid as word spread that these spies had come from Shittim to Jericho because they knew that they were next.
- Rahab describes the thoughts of the people of Jericho in this way:
- “As soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath” (Joshua 2:11).

UNDERCOVER INTELLIGENCE

- The argument of Joshua in Numbers 14 is now echoed in the statements of Rahab.
- The people of Jericho were not afraid of Israel because of their manpower or tactics; they were fearful because they saw God fighting for them.
- The whole community of Jericho had heard of the miracles that God had done for Israel, and as a result they knew that the God of Israel was the true God.

**GOD CAN REDEEM AND
PURPOSE ANY SINNER**

JOSHUA 2:12-24

UNDERCOVER REQUEST

- Before God brought down the walls of Jericho, He destroyed the stronghold that held Rahab captive.
- Rahab's confession to the spies shows her understanding of Yahweh and how He is at work in the heavens and on earth.
- Rahab, a Canaanite, through her conviction of the one true God, now becomes a part of Israel.

UNDERCOVER REQUEST

- She reminds the reader of “outsiders.” They are separated from God, alienated from Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. She was without hope and without God in the world.
- “Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12).

UNDERCOVER REQUEST

- We are brought near to God because Jesus broke down the wall of separation (Ephesians 2:14).
- A declaration of faith brings salvation to the outsider.
- Rahab, too, was brought near by her declaration of faith in the God of Israel.
- Her faith was evident not just in word, but also in deed.

UNDERCOVER AGREEMENT

- Through her confession, Rahab vows to serve Yahweh by protecting the two Israelite spies from the men of Canaan and in return, her family will be given the same protection from Israel.
- Verse 14 shows the oath between Rahab and the spies. This oath is a promise of protection.
- She then lowers them out her window and provides protection. Then sends them to the limestone caves half mile west of Jericho.

UNDERCOVER AGREEMENT

- “And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:25-26).
- What is the significance of the scarlet cord (vs. 18)?
Genesis 38 - scarlet cord was tied around the wrist of one of Tamar’s twin boys at birth. Also the blood on the door during the Passover.

UNDERCOVER AGREEMENT

- Ultimately, Israel's victory over Jericho was entirely spiritual. God authored every detail of their battle plan.
- What that meant for Rahab and her family was that their salvation came straight from the Lord.
- He is the one who affirmed her faith by salvaging the wall where her home was, despite total destruction all around. This is God's grace.

UNDERCOVER AGREEMENT

- God's desire is to rescue every outsider (1 Timothy 2:3–4).
- This part of the Joshua narrative confirms God's welcome for all people and the opportunity for the chief of sinners.
- The oath made between Rahab and the spies reflects the oath that God has made to us through His Son.
- God keep His promises and covenant to us.

UNDERCOVER AGREEMENT

- Sometimes “insiders” are reluctant to invite these “outsiders” into the family, but God is not slow to invite.
- “(For) we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures. ... But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy” (Titus 3:3–5).

UNDERCOVER REPORT

- The spies stayed in the hills until their pursuers had completed their search.
- They said to Joshua that the Lord had given them the land because the inhabitants hearts melted in fear.
- God not only saves Rahab, but uses Rahab. He gave her a husband named Salmon. They have a son named Boaz who is the great grandson of David, who becomes Israel's king and shows up in the genealogy of the Savior (Matthew 1:5).

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

RAHAB'S ACT OF FAITH

- For all our negative beginnings, Rahab rises like a star in the pages of biblical history.
- She makes it to the Hebrew hall of faith: “By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.”
- James tells us, “Was not Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and send them off in a different direction” (James 2:25).

RAHAB'S ACT OF FAITH

- Notice the contrasts in this passage:
- Abraham was a man of prominent position and exemplary character.
- Rehab came from a background of degradation and insignificance.
- James insisted that these contrasting personalities showed deeds which demonstrated their righteousness.

RAHAB'S ACT OF FAITH

- Rehab is listed with four other women in the genealogy of Jesus: Tamar, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary.
- Mary was a Jew, but all the others were foreigners.
- This demonstrates the inclusiveness of the Abrahamic Covenant - Abraham and his descendants would be a blessing to to the nations.

RAHAB'S LYING

- The Bible condemns lying. In fact, the Bible teaches that God Himself cannot lie (Numbers 23:19).
- Does the Bible condone what Rahab did?
- Option one: she chose the greater good: lying to save the lives of the spies.
- Option two: Rahab's lie was a sin, and God forgave it along with her other sins.

APPLICATION

REST

- Rest because God is with you.
- The same God who encouraged Joshua, emboldened the spies, enlightened Rahab, and provided victory for Israel is the same God who has promised always to be with His children.
- As Jesus tasked the disciples to enter a lost world and redeem it, He reminded them that in the face of this great challenge He would never leave them.

REST

- He walked with them through wonderful moments: the birth of the Church, the healing of the broken, and the conversion of the masses.
- He also saw them through their darkest hours: times of betrayal, dashed hopes, and even the threshold of death. He has promised to walk with you.
- In victory and agony, you are secure. He has not forgotten you and He has a plan for you.

GIVE

- Give God your plans.
- Plans are important and valuable.
- However, God will arrange the steps of those who delight in Him (Psalm 37:23–24).
- When the plan changes, you can rest, knowing that, as you walk in obedience, the Lord will direct you.

GIVE

- Instead of worrying about tomorrow, devote your energy and attention to what God has called you to today (Matthew 6:34).
- Believers are not promised problem-free or danger-free lives (John 16:33 speaks to the struggles that Christians are promised).
- However, God also promises His provision (Matthew 6:25–33).

REDEEM

- Never underestimate God's ability to redeem.
- Jesus gave His life for the lost. The downtrodden of society are not too far gone for the redeeming touch of the Savior.
- When encountering those who are discarded by even the world, look for opportunities to share the mercy that you have received. God desires to bring outsiders to Himself and provide a new life.

