

(Deliver Our Lives from Death)

Joshua 2:9 – 4:18

~ We picked up Rahab the harlot in the last leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. That's her title in Scripture, so that's what we will call her. She jeopardized her life receiving the spies and lying to the king of Jericho. She completely disobeyed the authorities; however, we are told very definitely to obey the laws and those who rule over us – Scripture makes that clear. Paul said we are to subject ourselves to the powers that be and respect those who are in power. Well, I believe the Christian today should be the most law-abiding citizen around. So, how is the Lord going to reconcile those two facts and get Rahab into the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews with the other great believers in faith?

Rahab, of course, was not an Israelite. Only after Jericho was destroyed could we label her a child of God. That would be one explanation to our question in the previous paragraph; but see - when God's revealed will for our life conflicts with the laws and policies of the state – like the praying episode with Daniel in chapter six when it was clearly made illegal to pray – then the Christian has no choice but to resort to civil disobedience. Obedience to the commands of the Word of God when He reveals them to you takes precedence – always. Obedience to men ALWAYS takes a back seat to the laws and commands of God. So, Rahab is off the hook in that regard.

However, let's hear Rahab tell us about her own reasons for doing what she did; and this should open up a tremendous vista of spiritual truth to us as well as shine a sidelight on other very important issues we face in this present hour in which we live. Remember, we left the spies on the roof of Rahab's place hiding in the stalks of flax from the kings men in our last

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report. After she got rid of the king's men by telling them a lie, she comes up on the roof to make her proposition to these men....

II

9 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 the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

~ Rahab let's us in on the stirred up public sentiment regarding this band of nomads who have set up camp on the eastern bank of the Jordan River at the time in which we are studying and call themselves Israel. The word is out that these people are coming to take the city away from them. The people in Jericho are understandably shaken. Rahab was certainly in a position to get the gossip of the public because she did business with everyone from the mayor to the garbage collector, too. Well, everyone had heard that the Lord parted the Red Sea for these people. That happened forty years ago. The people in Jericho knew all about it. See, during those forty years, God was giving the inhabitants of Jericho every opportunity to turn to Him. Remember, God told Abraham the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. That just happens to have been four hundred and twenty years previous from the time we are studying. God gave the Amorites a LONG time to decide whether or not they would turn to Him; and they did not. On one hand, the children of Israel were kept out of the land due to their disobedience. On the other hand, the people in Jericho were simultaneously being given the opportunity to turn to the True and Living God.

Naturally, the liberal takes all of this to mean that the God of the Old Testament is just a great big bully with no heart who went in arbitrarily and allowed the people of Jericho to be wiped out. My question is: how long should God have given them to turn to Him? Was four hundred twenty years not long enough? Obviously, the final forty were filled with the message the children of Israel were coming into the land. They had every

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chance to receive or resist. For us, this translates into: are you going to believe God or are you not going to believe God? God never destroyed a people who had not heard about Him and who had not been given every available opportunity to turn to Him. That should really sound a major alarm bell in your mind, friends.

Those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ are going to burn in hell, my beloved. Isn't that an awful thing to say? Well, God makes it abundantly clear in Holy Writ that Judgment is a promise. We sure don't hear much about that in our affluent churchy society today. Perhaps four hundred twenty years wasn't enough time? See, friends, we're counting upwards of two thousand years now; I would conclude that God was very, very patient with all of us. God is slow to anger, and He is merciful. The world is being given ample opportunity today – and, trust me, they have heard everything about Christ now....

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

11 And as soon as we had 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.

~ Not only did these people hear something, but they also knew that something was true. Many people today know about the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as a historical fact – but they're not saved. They aren't saved because, instead of trusting Him, their hearts melt. We can only be saved by developing a personal relationship with Christ – and that is all-important. Rahab did more than believe, friends, she is now acting on her belief. She received salvation because she heard, believed it, and ACTED upon that belief. When we hear what Christ has done for us then we can begin to trust Him as our Savior. The facts of the

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historical record are simply meaningless until we step out in faith and trust Him ourselves. That's what Rahab did and that's why Rahab is in Hebrews - AND in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ....

12 Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token:

13 And that ye 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.

14 And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear .

18 Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

19 And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless:

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and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.

20 And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

21 And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not.

23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them:

24 And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

~ Let's understand that when God destroys Jericho, He isn't wrong in doing so. These are not poor, helpless, ignorant people who had no idea what was going to happen. God had led Israel through the desert waiting patiently to see if these other people would turn to Him. Any man or woman in the city who had sought to turn to God would have been saved along with Rahab. In fact, the entire city could have been spared if they had only believed God. God gave this world His Son and whosoever will believe on Christ shall not perish. With that said, no one should perish; even though we are lost sinners until we are saved. This is the picture of our eternal destiny which we have deliberately over-exposed. It's not a question of whether this campaign is going to happen against Jericho; Joshua is leading God's chosen people at this time and he has every intention of taking the land....

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III

1 And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

~ Have you crossed over Jordan, safari readers? Did you even know you were supposed to? Naturally, we're not talking about crossing the physical Jordan River in Israel; we're on a Spiritual Safari. Those who worship God must do so in Spirit and in Truth. The command we see here is not to us; it is written to Joshua to, in turn, command the children of Israel. Spiritually speaking, however, we have for us one of the greatest truths in the entire Word of God. The way Israel crossed the Jordan River was different from the way they crossed the Red Sea. When they crossed the Red Sea, Moses went down and smote the waters with his rod; and that spoke of judgment. Now, the Ark is to go before them being carried by the priests from the family of Kohath. That speaks of redemption. God said He opened the river for them; and we'll see exactly how that happened....

2 And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host;

3 And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

4 Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore.

5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

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6 And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying , Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the Ark of the Covenant, and went before the people.

7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8 And thou shalt command the priests that bear the Ark of the Covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

9 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

10 And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12 Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

13 And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

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15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)

~ There was to be a tremendous distance – about three thousand feet – maintained between the children of Israel and the Ark. The Ark has been mentioned at least eight times so far and, friends – let’s be perfectly clear – the Ark speaks of Christ. With the Jordan overflowing, we know it was at flood stage; those on the other side must have thought they had several weeks before the children of Israel could even attempt a crossing. I’m sure they were making plans for all sorts of things; and having a “hurricane party” – so to speak. Well, they also had it in the back of their minds how this nation had crossed the Red Sea. I’m sure they were thoroughly confused and highly anxious and full of unspoken unknowns....

16 That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

~ No one knows where the city Adam was; but I can tell you it is the city that YOU and I came from! This speaks of the father of the human family; and by Adam came death. The implication is: this speaks of the death and resurrection of Christ that reaches forward to us, two thousand plus years later; and it also reaches back to Adam and Eve and every member of the human family in between to remove the curse. When the priests carried the Ark down into the water, there was no water. It was the Ark that opened up the way for them and that way led across the Jordan River. That should all be remarkable to you, friends....

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

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IV

1 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man,

3 And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man:

5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:

6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

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9 And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the Ark of the Covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

~ When Joshua wrote this book, those stones were down in the water. They were taken over to the west bank of the Jordan River and were made memorial stones at the place where the priests had stood. The Ark speaks of Christ, and the stones speak of His resurrection. See, the children of Israel cross over the Jordan by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The other stones on the other side speak of God's power to bring us through. They also speak to grace and that Christ is at the right hand of God. The submerged stones were unseen; but Joshua knew they were there. God saw those hidden stones, too; and you and I are reckoned by them. They speak of how the waters of death are passed over. The other stones speak of the law. Christ died for us because you and I stand guilty before God.

The crossing of the Jordan River does not spiritually represent a believer's death, as we have said. It speaks of the death of Christ. When you and I appropriate that truth, then we can enter into the Heavens. Ultimately, it will bring us into the actual Heaven. That can only ever happen by the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Gospel that Paul preached unto us; this is that which we have heard. This is what we can trust, and this is the only thing that will ever save us. We cross over Jordan by faith today; entering Canaan speaks to our entering into the Heavens down here on earth where we lay hold of our spiritual blessings. If ye be raised with Christ then seek those things which are above – where He is today....

10 For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over.

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11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

12 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them:

13 About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho.

14 On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

16 Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before
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