

## **ULC Sermon Study Resource**

**Matriarchs — Rahab**

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**December 6, 2020**

**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Icebreaker: What's your favorite Advent tradition? Favorite Christmas tradition?**

**Reading:** Joshua 2:1-21

### **Outline:**

#### I. Rahab's hospitality (v. 1-7)

- a. Rahab welcomes the spies into her home and lies to the king's men to protect their lives.
- b. Although some might question the ethics of Rahab's actions, James points to Rahab as a prime example of faith working itself out in love (cf. James 2:25-26) and Hebrews recounts Rahab's hospitality to the spies in its "faith hall of fame" (cf. Hebrews 11:31).

**Q: How is Rahab's story an example of loving one's enemy?**

#### II. Rahab's faith (v. 8-11)

- a. Rahab is a Canaanite prostitute, not part of the nation of Israel/God's covenant people.
- b. Yet she believes that Yahweh "...is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath", and she has more faith in God's power than many Israelites do (cf. Numbers 13-14).

**Q: How does Rahab's faith in the God who saves lead her to show hospitality?**

#### III. Rahab's family (v. 12-21)

- a. Rahab's actions save her family from the destruction coming to Jericho, and a scarlet cord is used as a sign of this deliverance.
- b. The "scarlet thread" of sacrificed animals, Passover doorposts, priestly garments and Jesus' blood shed on the cross is a major motif of salvation throughout the Bible.

**Q: How do you see God drawing Rahab and her family to himself in this story?**

### **Reflection/Application Questions:**

- 1) What should we do when we're faced with a situation where two moral principles conflict?
- 2) How can you creatively practice hospitality *in the midst* of the present pandemic?
- 3) Where is your heart closed to welcoming others? How can you ask God to soften your heart?
- 4) How can we seek the salvation of those who seem "far off" from God?
- 5) Where do you see the "red thread" of God's salvation throughout the Old and New Testaments?

### **Suggestions for further study:**

- 1 Kings 17:8-24   **Q: How does the widow of Zarephath show Elijah hospitality?**
- 2 Kings 4:8-37   **Q: How does the Shunammite woman show Elisha hospitality?**
- Ephesians 2:11-22 **Q: How does faith in Jesus bring peace to those once far off?**

**Closing Prayer:** "Lord God, we thank you that you are the God who saves. So great is your desire to save that you would move the events of your people Israel in order to save Rahab, and you move the events in our lives and in our world to save each one of us. We thank you that you sent your son Jesus as the fulfillment of the scarlet thread to lay his life out for us on the cross, that we might be welcomed by you and brought into your family. So God, as your people we ask that you would teach us to extend the hospitality you've shown us to those around us. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen."