

Connect360: Being Available to God

April 10, 2023

- *Lesson 4 in the Connect360 unit "How Great Is Our God: Passing the Faith Along" focuses on Joshua 2:1-21.*

Men sent by the king of Jericho pursued the Hebrew spies. The inn closed, and Rahab went to the roof to talk with the spies.

Her spiritual insight and faith are impressive as she related her thoughts. She confessed she "knew" that the Lord (using "Yahweh," the covenant name of Israel's God) had given Israel this land, and that great terror of Israel had come upon the people, so everyone's heart was melting.

The people were all scared to death. Jericho had heard about how the LORD (Yahweh) dried up the Red Sea when the Hebrews came out of Egypt (2:10), and about how the Hebrew's God and their forces demolished the armies of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan (cf. Numbers 21:21- 35). Rahab conveyed the people of Jericho's courage had melted and were terrified of Israel, for the LORD God is God in heaven above, and on the Earth below (2:9-11). Nobody has such a God!

That is quite an insightful confession: The LORD God rules over all. The LORD God is greater than the gods of Canaan, making his people stronger than the people of Jericho. Rahab admitted God already had given Jericho to Israel.

Whenever you are reading the Old Testament and see LORD spelled with capitalized letters in your English Bible, it is translating the Hebrew name "Yahweh," which is the name Israel, and people in relationship with God,

used to address the God of the covenant. It reminds us of the uniqueness of our God, and that God is committed to us, and we to him.

Rahab was so certain God would use Israel to conquer Jericho, she wanted a guarantee that Israel would show her the same kindness and mercy, which she had shown to the spies. The Hebrew word she used, is another word believers know about God. It is the Hebrew word *hesed*.

Rahab had not just heard of God as a God who can devastate others in war. She also knew him to be faithful to those who are faithful to him, forgiving those who have not lived up to his standards, remaining devoted and helping those who are devoted to him. She knew God's kindness is great, even saving people who do not deserve saving.

She had shown her commitment by saving the lives of the spies. Now she asked for some kind of proof that when Israel came, and the walls of Jericho tumbled down, she and her mother and father, her sisters, and brothers, and all their children, would experience the kindness, mercy and love of God and be spared. She wanted some kind of tangible symbol God would save her and her family from death.

The spies agreed to her request. "Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the Lord gives us the land" (2:14). In other words, welcome to God's family.

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