



*A Systematic Expository Study on the book of JOSHUA*

## **STUDY 5: THE STUMBLING BLOCK OF RAHAB'S LIE** **Joshua 2:4-7.**

For many centuries, the lie that Rahab told to protect the spies has been a stumblingblock to many people. Some so-called Christians have made it a debatable issue whether falsehood is not sometimes permissible. Many nominal Christians have maintained that lies are sometimes lawful if the purpose or aim of telling such a lie is not to hurt anyone, but to save their face, keep their job or do some good which they cannot otherwise do. Without grace and salvation, it is almost impossible to always tell the truth. Without faith and absolute trust in God to overrule all situations, it is difficult to tell the truth at all times and in all situations. Without fixing our eyes on eternity, the easiest thing to do in some trying circumstances is to avoid the truth and tell lies.

Rahab was a heathen. In her time and even now, heathen morality had not arrived at the notion that the truth must in all cases be spoken. There are those that even ask others to tell lies for them. This has always been known as part of heathen practice (Judges 4:17-21).

### **RAHAB'S IGNORANCE AND SIN**

Joshua 2:4-7; Romans 3:7,8; Acts 3:17-19; Ephesians 4:17,18; 1 Timothy 1:13; Acts 17:30; 1 Peter 1:14.

By all standards, Rahab was ignorant of the law of God. She had no **"book of the law"**, neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to her. No evangelist or teacher had taught her God's righteous truth. She did not know, she could not have known that **"all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone"** (Revelation 21:8). So she told a lie, to protect the spies from being discovered. Her sin of lying is not an excuse for a Christian who has been taught and **"nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine"** (1 Timothy 4:6). We have no excuse; ***a good motive can never render a sinful action desirable or justified.***

Was her lie justified and approved by God? No. Doesn't the success of her protective lie show that her lie was not counted as a sin? No. Though water flowed from the rock which Moses smote in his anger, yet that was no proof that God approved of his wrong action in smiting the rock twice. God sovereignly overruled Rahab's conduct, yet that did not vindicate her. If Rahab had told the truth, would not the spies have lost their lives? No. The same God who dried up the hand of Jeroboam when he ordered the arrest of the man of God from Bethel (1 Kings 13:4), who sent an angel to destroy 185,000 Assyrians in one night (Isaiah 37:36), who used two angels to blindfold the Sodomites and protected Lot when he later went out to warn his in-laws (Genesis 11:19-14); the same God who protected Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the furnace of fire (Daniel 3:22-25), who preserved Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6:22,23), who delivered Peter from the prison miraculously (Acts 12:5-11) and sent an angel to smite Herod with sudden death (Acts 12:20-23) could have delivered the spies. God does not need us to commit sin in order to fulfil His holy purpose.

Sin does not cease to be sin just because something good came out of it. God will not judge us by the outcome of our actions but on the basis of those actions themselves. Lying is sin and **"whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin"** (1 John 3:9).

### **REBEKAH'S IMPATIENCE AND SUFFERING**

Genesis 27:6-13; 25: 21-23; Genesis 27:41-45; Numbers 20:14-21; Ezekiel 25:12-14; Ezekiel 35:1-5; Amos 1:11.

Rahab's actions were based on what she knew of God's plan and the prophecy concerning Israel and the land of Canaan. She later said, **"I know that the LORD hath given you the land"** (Joshua 2:9). With that knowledge, she must have felt that anything done to assist God achieve His goal would be permissible! No. God is righteous and holy; His ways are perfect; His power is irresistible; He fulfils His predictions and prophecies through holy and righteous means. He can fulfil all His plans concerning anything and anyone without our sinful methods.

Rebekah, Isaac's wife, the mother of Esau and Jacob thought and acted in the same way. Before the birth of Esau and Jacob, God had revealed to her that **"the elder shall serve the younger"**, that is, Jacob the

younger will inherit the blessing of Abraham. When it appeared that the blessing would go to Esau, contrary to the prophecy and plan of God, she felt she had to help God to fulfil prophecy! She did but she suffered severely for it. Jacob also suffered for a long time. **“And Jacob said, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been”** (Genesis 47:9). And there was perpetual hatred and enmity between the descendants of Esau and the Israelites.

Are you trying to help God to fulfil prophecy? It is not necessary; it does not pay. Are you doing evil that good may come? Can it be right to help Christian students and change marks to make them **“the head and not the tail”**? Is it acceptable to practise injustice to favour a believer so as to fulfil his dream? Can you compromise and sin so as to promote a beloved member of your church? Will God approve of your giving bribes on behalf of a Christian who desperately needs a job? Will you cover up the sin of an effective and useful minister so that the prophecy of Church growth and mighty revival through him will not be hindered? No, a thousand times, no! You do not need to do evil that good may come.

## **RECOMPENCE FOR ALL INIQUITY AND SIN**

Jeremiah 16:17, 18; 25:14, 8, 9, 12; Ezekiel 11:21; Obadiah 10-14; John 11:49-53 with Luke 23:28-30; Matthew 26:14-16, 24, 56; Ezekiel 22:31.

Great and unsearchable are the ways of God. The revelations of Scripture are high and deep beyond the thoughts of men! The people of Judah were delivered into the hands of the Babylonians because of their sins. Babylon was used to punish Judah and to accomplish God's purpose, yet that did not justify Babylon in all that they did against Judah in their wickedness. Babylon was punished for her iniquity.

The death of Jesus Christ has brought salvation to millions of people throughout the world. His death was predicted and prophesied in Scripture: It happened **“that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled”** and that He through His death might **“bring many sons to glory”**. Does the ‘good end’ justify Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate and the Jews? No. Evil and sin will never be justified or excused by God whatever **“good”** may be eventually produced. God will always judge sin, and that severely. Let those who know God fear Him.

*If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we'd like to hear from you.  
You can email the [pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk](mailto:pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk) with your comments.*