

Rahab's Roof

There once was a woman named Rahab. Rahab lived in a place called Jericho. Jericho was a city in the land of Canaan. It was surrounded by tall walls to protect the people who lived in the city. Rahab's house was built on the outside wall. She even had a window on the wall so she could see outside of Jericho. Rahab's house was like a hotel. Strangers and travelers often stayed with her. Sometimes she would let the men who stayed with her pretend to be her husband and kiss her the way that God said was just for married people. Sometimes she would even kiss people who had their own wives at their house and for that reason many people thought Rahab was a bad person.

One day two very special men came to Rahab's house, but they weren't there for kissing. These two men were spies on a very special mission. These men didn't live in Jericho. They didn't live anywhere. They were Israelites and they had been traveling looking for their home for 40 years. The Israelite people had once lived in Egypt, but they were all slaves to the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh had treated them very badly just because they were Israelites. God helped the Israelites escape from the mean Pharaoh and then he led His people to their new home, Canaan. When the Israelites finally got to Canaan, there were other people living there and they were going to have to fight the people to get the land that God had promised to them. Joshua, the leader of the Israelites, picked these two men to sneak into Jericho to find out secret things about the city and the people before they attacked. They were staying with Rahab while they were checking things out.

Someone in Jericho noticed these two strangers and told the king. The king instantly sent his men to Rahab's house to capture the spies because he knew travelers stayed with her. When the king's men showed up at Rahab's house, Rahab told the spies to climb up on her roof and hide in the flax stalks. Flax stalks were plants that were laid on the roof to dry after they had been picked from the field. The men did just as Rahab told them to do. When the king's men knocked on the door, Rahab told them the spies had already left going toward the water. The king's men left going the way Rahab told them to go.

When the king's men left, Rahab went and uncovered the spies. She told them to climb out her window down a rope and then to go hide in the mountains for 3 days. After 3 days the king's men would stop looking for them and they would be safe. Rahab helped the spies in a great big way because she knew God was on their side. Rahab had heard lots of stories of all the amazing things God had done for the Israelites and all the horrible things that happened to people who were mean to the Israelites. Rahab knew she didn't want to do anything that would hurt the Israelites. She wanted to do everything she could to help them.

Just before the spies climbed out her window, Rahab said, "Since I was nice to you and helped you, please show kindness to me and my family when you return to attack the city." The spies told her she would not be harmed in the attack. They told her to put a scarlet red cloth in her window and gather all her family inside. Everyone inside her house would be safe. Then the two men escaped out her window and went and hid in the mountains for 3 days just as Rahab had told them to do.