THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

**CHILDREN’S MEETING LESSON**

**DATE:** May 7, 2017

**SUBJECT: GOD’S CALLING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: God Called Rahab**

**SCRIPTURE:** Joshua 2:1-24; 6:1-25; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25; Matthew 1:5

**AIM:** To see God’s salvation is full and free to all who would respond to His calling. If we cooperate with God and choose to join ourselves to His people, God will save us and our household and we can also be useful for His purpose.

**MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM:** Acts 16:31 (And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.); Hebrews 11:31 (By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, since she had received the spies with peace.); 1 Peter 3:8 (And finally be all of the same mind, sympathetic, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, humble-minded;)

**SONG SUGGESTIONS:** 149 (Shamgar Had an Oxgoad); 6103 (Rahab); 200 (Round the Walls of Jericho); 3705 (Jericho); 9540 BSS Vessels Unto Honor #20 (As for me and my house); 9322 BSS Daniel (There’s a Land); 30 (Only Believe); 25 (I Believe God); 20 (All Things are Possible); 1614 (COOPERATION)

**CRAFT IDEAS:** 1) Braided red cord bookmark or keychain 2) Scene of Rahab’s house with mound of flax on the roof, a red string and two spies climbing down. Scene of people marching around the walls of Jericho.

**BACKGROUND:** The children of Israel reached the end of their journey in the wilderness. After Moses died, God charged Joshua to bring His people into the good land which He had promised to their fathers. Joshua sent two men into Canaan to spy out Jericho, the first city which the Lord had given them to conquer in the good land.

**CONTENT:** The two spies were secretly sent out by Joshua to view the land, especially Jericho. They found lodging in a house that was built upon the great wall which surrounded the city. This was the house of Rahab, a harlot (sinful woman). Soon, the king of Jericho was told that there were some men from the children of Israel who had come to search out the land. The king of Jericho sent word to Rahab saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you and who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” Rahab took the two men and hid them! She said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from…when it was time to shut the gate at dark, the men went out; I do not know where the men have gone.” She told the king’s men that if they went quickly after them, they might overtake them. However, Rahab had taken the two spies up to the roof and hidden them among stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. So the king’s men pursued after the two spies and as soon as they left, the gate was shut.

Then Rahab went up to the roof and spoke to the two spies, saying, “I know that Jehovah has given you the land, and that the dread of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt before you. For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites…When we heard, our hearts melted; and there no longer remained any spirit in any man because of you; for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath.” She went on to say, “So now, swear to me by Jehovah, I beg you, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father’s house; and give me some token of trust, That you will preserve my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters and all that they have, and will deliver our lives from death.”

So the two spies said to her, “Our life for yours! If you do not utter anything of this matter concerning us, then when Jehovah gives the land to us, we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.” Then Rahab lowered the two spies down by a rope through a window. Rahab’s house was on the wall of the city and she dwelt on the wall. Rahab told them to go to the mountain and hide there for three days until the pursuers returned to Jericho. Before they left, the spies gave specific instructions to Rahab so that she and her family could be saved when God’s people came back later to take over the city. This is what Rahab had to do: she had to tie a scarlet, red thread in the window—the same window which she had used to let out the spies. She had to gather her father and mother and brothers and all of her father’s house into her house. Whoever was with Rahab in the house would be spared too. Also, Rahab had to keep the spies’ visit a secret. She answered them, saying, “According to your words, so shall it be.” Then she sent them away and she tied the scarlet line in the window, and kept everything a secret.

The pursuers searched the entire way and could not find the spies. After hiding in the mountains for three days, the spies safely returned to Joshua and relayed to him all that had happened. And they said to Joshua, “Jehovah has indeed given all the land into our hand; moreover; all the inhabitants of the land melt before us.”

Now Jericho was shut up so tight because of the children of Israel that no one went out and no one went in. Joshua had been given orders by Jehovah. Armed men, followed by seven priests with trumpets before the Ark of the Covenant, followed by the rearguard, marched around the wall of Jericho once per day for six days. The people kept quiet while they marched around the wall every day, and returned to their camp. On the seventh day, they arose early at dawn. They marched around the city seven times. On the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets. Finally, Joshua told the people, “Shout! For Jehovah has given you the city. And the city shall be devoted to Jehovah for destruction, it and all that is in it; Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her in her house, because she hid the messengers we sent.”

The people shouted and the priests blew the trumpets. When the people heard the trumpets sound, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat. The people went up straight ahead into the city and captured the city. They destroyed all that was in the city and burned the city with fire. They took the silver, gold and the vessels of bronze and iron, and put it into the treasury of the house of Jehovah. However, as promised, Joshua preserved Rahab the harlot and her father’s house and all that belonged to her because she hid the spies. Later, God sovereignly arranged that Rahab be joined to His people through marriage and ultimately, she became an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5). What a wonderful story of salvation!

**SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:** *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover for your group of children. Please do not feel obligated to cover all the suggested applications. Focus on one or two applications.*

* **Be Broad.** Rahab was a sinful woman who dwelt among sinful people, yet she heard about the God of Israel and of His mighty works among His people and believed what she heard. Rahab had a broad attitude because even though she was not an Israelite, she believed in the God of the children of Israel and cooperated with Him. Today, we all can go to God freely just as Rahab did, regardless of whom we are and what our background is. We simply need to have a heart that seeks God and His people. God receives and saves all men. As children, we can be broad to play with different children, or a new student in class or visitor in children’s meeting.
* **Salvation.** The scarlet red rope hanging from Rahab’s window must have appeared like a stream of blood flowing down from the wall to the ground. Do you remember another time when blood was used as a symbol for salvation? (Passover) This is a picture in the Old Testament representing how Jesus Christ would redeem his sinful people and bring them to safety and salvation through faith in Him through His precious sin-cleansing blood. Rahab believed and followed the instructions of the two spies and ultimately Rahab and her family were saved. Today, God’s way of salvation is by the blood of Jesus. One day when we believe and follow God’s way of salvation, we will be saved as well as our household. We can also be useful to God’s purpose.
* **Household Salvation.** God’s unit of salvation is the entire family. Rahab cared not only for her own salvation but also for that of her entire family. We should pray for our family members who have not yet believed in the Lord Jesus. We can tell them about the Lord Jesus and bring them to the meetings where they can hear about Him and also believe in Him.
* **Cooperating with God & Choosing God.** Rahab heard of all that Jehovah did, feared God and cooperated with God’s plan. She was wise in the way she hid the two spies and this entire plan helped save her household. It also afforded the way to conquer Jericho. The two spies cooperated with God and promised protection to Rahab’s family. Rahab stood up for what was right to the authorities in this situation of extreme danger. She knew who she was and had strong faith which governed her cooperation with God. Rahab choose God over her own people. (Hebrews 11:31 By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, since she had received the spies with peace.) God gave Rahab the wisdom in this situation. Do you remember another recent story about a young girl and women cooperating with God’s plan? (two midwives Shiphrah & Puah, Moses’ mother Jochebed, and sister, Miriam.) Rahab cooperated with God and choose God and this resulted in Rahab being mentioned in the book of Matthew in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. We should cooperate with our parents, teachers, and authorities over us and choose what is right.
* **Being Kind and Helpful.** Rahab allowed the two spies into her home and took care of them. She dealt kindly with them and received them with peace. She determined to help and protect the two spies because she had heard how He led the children of Israel and believed God. When we receive visitors into our home, we are showing our broad attitude and kindness can be helpful to the people around us.

Adapted from the Church in New York City’s Children’s Meeting lessons: 5/29/94; 4/16/00; 5/28/06; 5/27/12