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Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you were tempted to be afraid or to not accept a difficult challenge? Courage has been defined as the attitude or response of facing and dealing with anything recognized as dangerous, difficult, or painful, instead of withdrawing from it. The Word of God has many examples of people who lived courageously for God, such as the Canaanite woman named Rahab. Despite worldly circumstances, we can live courageously for God as Rahab did by doing God's will and trusting Him, expecting success.

Rahab was courageous when she did God's will though she was in a dire situation. Let's consider the circumstances she faced. Joshua sent two men, spies, on a secret reconnaissance mission of the land that God had promised to the Israelites but that was currently inhabited by the unbelieving Canaanites. The spies were instructed to specifically observe Jericho, which was one of the strongest fortresses in the land. This is where Rahab lived as an innkeeper, which is our best understanding of the term "harlot" as used in Joshua 2:1.

Her home and the inn were built into the wall that surrounded the city. This wall provided protection for the inhabitants. Anyone wanting to enter or exit the city had to go through gates, which were closed in the evenings. Sometime after the spies entered the city through one of these gates, they lodged at the inn near the gate, and it was reported to the king. The king ordered Rahab to bring the spies to him (Joshua 2:2,3); however, she hid them rather than obey the king, which put her in a dangerous situation.

Joshua 2:4,5:

And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist [knew] not whence they were:

And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot [know] not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

Rahab also exemplified courage by trusting God and expecting success. She did not allow fear or apprehension to deter her. When she hid the spies, she told them that she knew that the Lord, God, had given the land to the Israelites (Joshua 2:9). She informed them that the inhabitants of Jericho were terrified because they had heard how God had parted the Red Sea and how the Israelites “utterly destroyed” two other cities (Joshua 2:10). She also acknowledged that their God was the God in heaven, showing her trust in Him. We can read what Rahab told the spies in verse 11.

Joshua 2:11:

And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

She hid the spies and developed a plan to help them escape. She was so confident that her escape plan would work that she asked that her kindness be repaid to her by her life being spared and that of her family’s too. She loved her family and wanted them to be saved from the destruction that she knew would come. The men agreed as long as she did not tell anybody what they were doing (Joshua 2:14).

Because Rahab lived on the city wall, she was able to let the spies down through a window of her home with a cord so that they would not have to go through the gate. She instructed them to hide in the mountains for three days to give the king’s soldiers time to stop their pursuit and return back to Jericho (Joshua 2:16). The spies told Rahab to bind the cord—the one that was used to let them down—in the window they escaped through. This would allow God’s people to know where they would find her and her family so their lives would be spared when they came back to take the city. So Rahab took believing action, expecting success, “...and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window” (Joshua 2:21).

She continued to trust God, not allowing fear to dissuade her from the agreement she had made with the spies, and kept the information to herself. She had to keep this confidence for more than three days as the men hid in the mountains before they returned to Joshua with their report (Joshua 2:22-24). When the city of Jericho was conquered, Joshua honored the agreement that the spies made with Rahab.

Joshua 6:25:

And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot [innkeeper] alive, and her father’s household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

We can live courageously as Rahab did when we face anything dangerous, difficult, or painful. By trusting God and doing His will, expecting success and not allowing anything to deter us, we can receive the desired results of God's deliverance.

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