

Amazing Grace

Session 2 • Joshua 2:4-21



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outlines of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) on a focal wall.

INTRODUCE: Direct a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 21. Encourage adults to suggest other imperfect Bible characters used by God to fulfill His plans.

ASK: Why does God so often use unlikely, imperfect people to accomplish His purposes? (p. 21)

REVIEW: Direct attention to “Preparation for Possessing the Land” on **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outlines of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*). Share that this week’s session examines a step Joshua took to get the people ready to cross the Jordan River. Summarize this content from **Understand the Context** (p. 21):

- “Joshua sent two spies to scout the area so they could bring him a report on what his troops should expect when they went up against it. . . . [Jericho’s] location was important because several routes that led west into the central hill country of Canaan emanated from the city. Therefore, it was a key junction for those

traveling east. . . . Rahab and her family were citizens of Jericho . . . [and] her house was part of the outer fortifications located on the city wall.”

TRANSITION: *Rahab was a prostitute. But like other imperfect people—including each of us—God was able to move in her life and use her to make a difference for His kingdom.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: As a volunteer reads **Joshua 2:4-7**, instruct the group to listen for evidence of Rahab’s bravery.

DISCUSS: Direct attention to **Pack Item 3** (*Poster: Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and review the description of Rahab. Discuss ways Rahab demonstrated courage in these verses.

ASK: What is the relationship between boldness and faith? (p. 23)

SAY: *The spies were not immoral for visiting Rahab’s house. Her home would have been similar to a tavern or inn, a place where people of the town would gather. As result, it was a place where the spies could learn a lot about Jericho and its vulnerabilities.*

SHARE: Highlight Rahab’s actions and why the roof was an effective hiding place:

- **(2:6)** *In Old Testament times, people used flax fibers to make linen. When flax matured at the end of the rainy season, it was dried in the sun, its fibers separated, then spun. The flat roofs on houses in ancient Canaan enabled people to expose things to the sun—like fruit that needed to ripen and wet grain and laundry that needed drying. The flat roofs also allowed people to sleep on them when it was too hot indoors and offered additional storage space.*

PRAY: Affirm that Rahab stepped out of her comfort zone to help the Israelite spies. Allow volunteers to share where they need prayer related to stepping out of their comfort zone in faith. Take a moment to pray for boldness to follow God’s leading.

TRANSITION: *Scripture does not justify Rahab’s lying any more than it justifies her life as a prostitute. However, in His omnipotence, the Lord could save the spies any way He chose. As we will see, what is commended in Scripture is Rahab’s faith in God.*

READ: Call for a volunteer to read Joshua 2:8-13 as the group identifies how God’s works affected the people of Jericho and influenced Rahab.

EXPLAIN: Highlight Rahab’s confession of God in these verses. Share that she knew about the way God had parted the Red Sea decades earlier. And she knew about Israel’s more recent victories over Sihon and Og. As a result, she embraced Israel’s God as the one, true God. Highlight also the meaning of “lost heart”:

- **(2:11)** *The Hebrews associated the heart with the emotions, thought, and human will, and the phrase “we lost heart” can mean “our hearts melted.” Losing heart means the weakening of morale.*
- **(2:11)** *The pinnacle of verse 11 is Rahab’s confession of faith: “The Lord your God is God in heaven above and on earth below.” This statement on the lips of a pagan worshiper is extraordinary because she affirmed God’s reign over all creation and that the idols her people worshiped were not true gods.*

EXPLAIN: Point out that Rahab’s request for kindness was rooted in her demonstration of kindness. Note that this was her attempt to live out her faith in a meaningful way.

ASK: How should our beliefs about God impact the way we treat others? (p. 23)

READ: Call for the group to read Joshua 2:14-16 silently and to look for the offer made to Rahab by the two spies.

DISCUSS: Encourage adults to share any words, phrases, or ideas that stuck out to them as they read verses 14-16. Encourage them to summarize the spies’ promise to Rahab. Lead a brief discussion on why they would pledge their own lives. Note that their response included language similar to Rahab’s request.

RECAP: To provide more context, summarize this information related to Rahab’s house:

- **(2:15)** *Rahab’s home was probably built along a casemate wall. A casemate wall was made of two parallel rock walls with a*

gap of a meter or two in between. In times of warfare that gap could be filled with rock rubble so that the enemies' battering ram, even if it broke through the outer wall, would lose momentum as it hit the softer rubble between the outer and inner walls. Rahab's home shared a common wall with the city wall itself.

ASK: How does faith in God require obedient action? (p. 23)

TRANSITION: *Rahab and the spies had come to trust one another. What's more, they trusted God and committed to protect one another in a way that would honor Him.*

READ: Call for a volunteer to read Joshua 2:17-21 as the group considers the conditions the spies placed on Rahab.

- **(2:18-20)** First, the spies told Rahab to tie a scarlet cord to the window through which they were escaping. This was to show the Israelites what household's inhabitants they were to spare in their assault. It is reminiscent of the blood that was placed on the doorframes of the Israelites and the spared lives of the Israelite firstborn in Egypt during the tenth plague. Second, she needed to bring her family into the house and make sure they stayed there. Third, if she should betray the spies by reporting their mission to the authorities, they would be released from the oath they made.

ASK: If you were Rahab, how would you feel about the spies' conditions? Why? (p. 23)

DISCUSS: What are some signs that remind us of God's grace in our lives? (p. 23)

SHARE: Emphasize that believers can trust God to work in their lives as they walk in faith before Him. Note that God used Rahab, an imperfect person, to accomplish His plans for His people. Affirm that He still uses imperfect people today.

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week's Bible passage:

- Following God often requires leaving one's comfort zone and stepping out in faith.
- We can be encouraged that God's acts will always demonstrate His character.
- Relying on God's grace leads to security, even in difficult times.
- We can be assured of God's work in our lives by regularly reflecting on what He has done in the past.

DISCUSS: Guide the group to discuss the **Apply the Text** questions on page 23.

PRAY: Close in prayer, thanking God for His faithfulness to work in and through us. Thank Him especially for the grace received because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

AFTER THE SESSION

During the week, text Hebrews 11:31 to the group. Challenge them to consider how they are stepping out in faith or displaying faith in God this week.