

**6.19.11/Joshua 2 and 7**

The ability of God to save the outsider and the danger of an insider falling away

Materials:

White paper cut into the shape of a heart.

Give an Overview of Joshua 2 – Rahab the Outsider

God was giving the Israelites, His chosen people, a lot of land, but there was a problem . . . some other people already lived there. So God told the Israelites to go and live there anyway because He was sending them there. One of places they were supposed to live was called Jericho, and there was a woman there named Rahab. When two men were sent by God to explore Jericho before the Israelites moved in, Rahab helped them, even though she was NOT an Israelite. She did this because she had heard stories of how God was loving and providing for the Israelites.

She says, "I know that the Lord has given you the land . . ." She also says, "For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea . . ." She even says, ". . . our hearts melted . . . for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath." She was humble before the Lord, and she believed that He was the one true God! Even though she was an outsider, not one of God's people, the Lord saw her faith and showed her mercy. He used the men He sent to Jericho to save Rahab and all of her family when the Israelites moved into Jericho.

Question 1

Why do you think Rahab helped the men God sent to Jericho?

She knows that God sent these men and that He has given the Israelites the land. She also knows that He is the one true God.

Question 2

Why did the spies help Rahab?

Rahab showed her love and fear of God by helping the spies. So God showed her mercy and used the spies save Rahab and her family.

Give an Overview of Joshua 7 – Achan the Insider who trusted himself more than God

The Lord promised His people that if they obeyed Him and trusted Him, He would give them victory as they moved into the land that He was giving them. God told the Israelites to destroy all the things in the towns they moved into. He didn't want His people to fall in love with anything or anyone other than Him. He knew that if they fell in love with silver, gold, or treasures in these new towns, they would turn away from Him, and this would be very bad and dangerous for them. He didn't want to see this happen, because He loved them. But one time, a man named Achan didn't listen to God. When they moved into a city, he kept silver, gold, and treasures for himself and hid them, even though God had told him not to do that. His name was Achan. Achan did this because he loved treasures more than he loved God, and he trusted himself more than he trusted God. Even though he was one of God's chosen people, he was punished because he loved himself more than he loved God. God loves us and knows that this it's not good for us to love anything or anyone more than we love God.

Question 1

Why did Achan keep the things he was supposed to destroy?

He loved treasures more than he loved God, and he trusted himself more than he trusted God.

Question 2

Why did God need to punish Achan?



To show him and others that when we love ourselves more than we love God, it's very dangerous for us and for others. It will lead us and others away from God. This is very sad.

Conclusions

Before we are saved by Jesus, we are all outsiders, just like Rahab. This is because without Jesus, we love ourselves more than we love God, and we trust ourselves more than we trust God, just like Achan did. But when we see how amazing God is, how He is all powerful, how He cares for His people, we see that it's better to trust HIM than to trust OURSELVES! When we see this, we can confess our sin to God, and He shows us mercy and forgives us, just like He did with Rahab!

James 4:6 in the Bible says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." When we are proud, loving and trusting ourselves instead of God, God disciplines us because He loves us and wants us to see that He is the only One to be worshiped, not us. When we are humble before God and recognize that He is the one true God, not us or anyone or anything else, then He gives us His precious mercy and grace.

God gives us His mercy and grace through His Son, Jesus. Jesus lived the perfect life that we could never live. Jesus was always humble, always obedient, and always perfectly in love with God the Father. He trusted Him perfectly and followed Him perfectly because Jesus knew how important it is to love God more than anything. Jesus knows this because He IS God! Jesus loves us so much that He died in our place to destroy our sin that was separating us from God. Then He came back to life, and if we trust Him to make us good and right, instead of trusting ourselves and doing things our way, we are saved, and we receive God's mercy and grace!

Passage Activity

Give each child a blank heart shaped paper. Explain to them that the heart represents God's love for his people. Have them fold the paper in half. On one half have the children illustrate the story of Rahab helping the men because she trusted God. On the other half have the children illustrate the story of Achan loving himself more than God, which was not good for him.

Wrap Up and Prayer

The story of Rahab shows us that God loves to show His mercy to those who are humble before Him and who trust and love Him instead of themselves. We also know that Jesus is the way He shows us His mercy, by destroying our sin and bringing us back to Himself if we believe in Jesus! Thank God for His mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, and if anyone would like to know more about following Jesus, encourage them to ask their parents about it.