

Revive Our Hearts™

RAHAB

TRACING THE THREAD
OF REDEMPTION

A Bible study based
on the teaching of

NANCY DEMOSS
WOLGEMUTH



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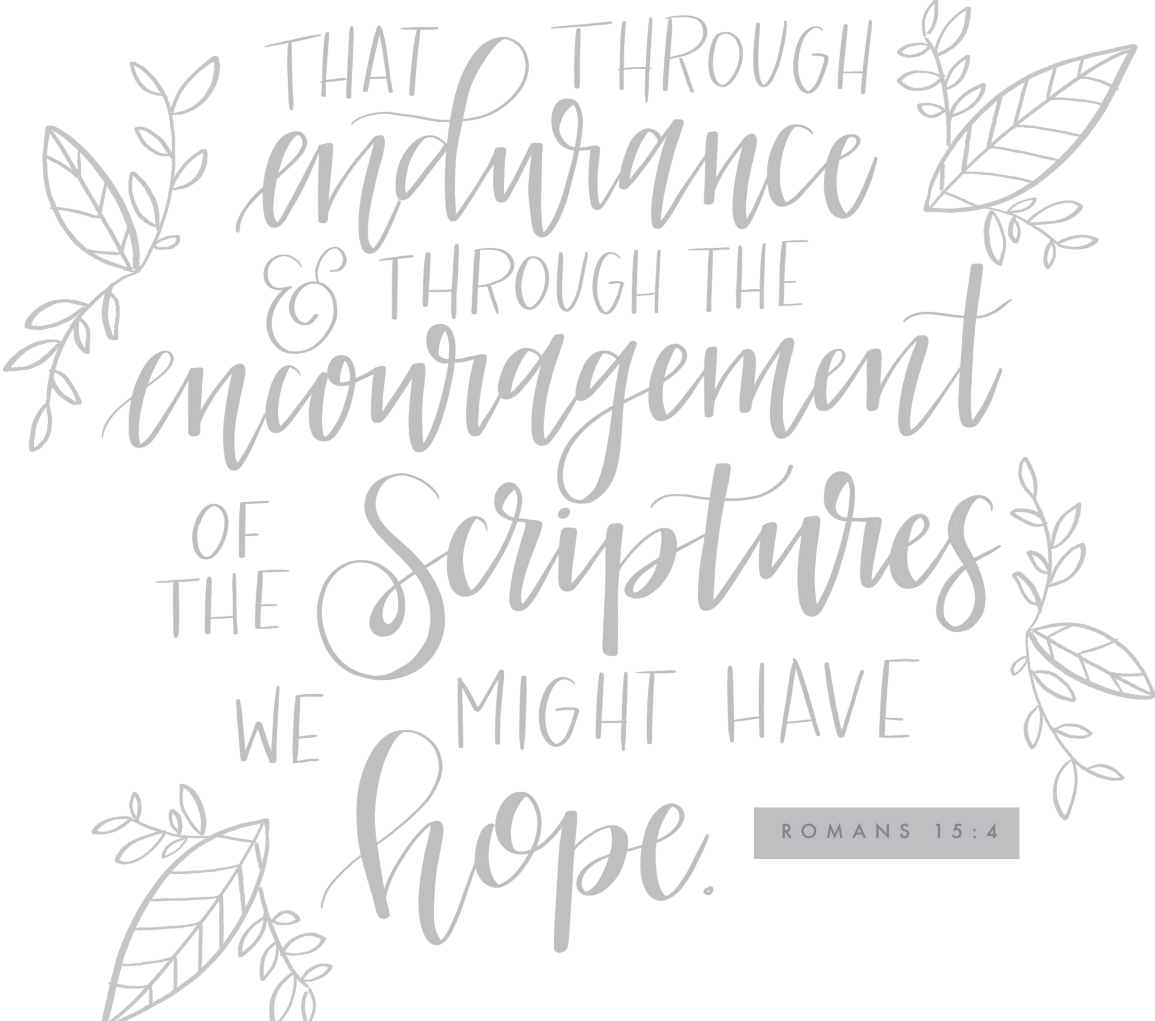
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As you work through this study, use this space to doodle, color, and meditate on God's Word and consider how the story of Rahab gives you true hope.

FOR WHATEVER WAS WRITTEN IN FORMER DAYS
WAS WRITTEN FOR OUR INSTRUCTION

THAT THROUGH
endurance
& THROUGH THE
encouragement
OF THE *Scriptures*
WE MIGHT HAVE
hope.

The text is surrounded by several decorative illustrations of leaves and branches. There are four main clusters: one on the left side, one on the right side, one at the bottom left, and one at the bottom right. Each cluster consists of a stem with several leaves of varying sizes and orientations, some pointing upwards and some downwards.

ROMANS 15:4



Rahab's story

AS FOUND IN JOSHUA 2

RAHAB HIDES THE SPIES

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. ² And it was told to the king of Jericho, “Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land.” ³ Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” ⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, “True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. ⁵ And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof ⁹ and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all

the inhabitants of the land melt away before you.¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD 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 who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”¹⁴ And the men said to her, “Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall.¹⁶ And she said to them, “Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way.”¹⁷ The men said to her, “We

will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear.¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household.¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head.²⁰ But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear.”²¹ And she said, “According to your words, so be it.” Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²² They departed and went into the hills and remained there three days until the pursuers returned, and the pursuers searched all along the way and found nothing.²³ Then the two men returned. They came down from the hills and passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they told him all that had happened to them.²⁴ And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us.”

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Picture your favorite sweater, the one that makes you feel great every time you wear it. Now imagine that sweater has a stray thread. If you start to pull or tug on it, the whole shirt could be ruined. That single thread is woven through the whole garment.

Open your Bible to the table of contents. If you go down the list of funny-sounding names and count them, you'll see sixty-six different books listed. How do they connect? Deuteronomy has Jewish laws, the Psalms are poetry, the Gospels talk about Jesus' life, and Acts tells us stories of Paul's missionary journeys. What could these possibly have in common?

The Bible is one grand story from beginning to end. The common thread of redemption is woven through every page. What is redemption? That is what this study is all about.

In this study, we'll introduce you to a woman named Rahab. Rahab's life points us to God's redemption.

TIPS FOR USING THIS STUDY

As you use this study, ask yourself:

- What does this passage teach me about the heart, ways, and character of God?
- How does this passage point to Jesus and the gospel?
- Is there an example to follow or avoid? If so, how should I seek to change in response?

Each week of study is divided into five suggested daily lessons, but feel free to work at your own pace. Do what works for you!

You may also find it beneficial to listen to the audio series *Rahab and the Thread of Redemption* at ReviveOurHearts.com/Rahab.

The Holy Spirit helps us understand God’s Word. He is a gift and a “Helper” who is able to “teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I [Jesus] have said to you” (John 14:26).

Secondary tools that can help you better understand the Word of God (but aren’t necessary to complete this study) include:

- An English dictionary to look up the basic meaning of words
- Various translations of the Bible (a good online tool is BibleGateway.com)
- A concordance
- A Bible dictionary
- Commentaries
- A study Bible
- Colored pens or pencils to write in your Bible.

We’ve included group discussion questions at the end of this book. We’d love you to join the discussion about Rahab with the *Women of the Bible* podcast created to accompany this study. Find it at ReviveOurHearts.com.

OUR HOPE FOR YOU

During the next six weeks, may you learn that God is near and ready to rescue you through His Son, Jesus. This is true, no matter what you’ve done or what happened in your past. He can transform your story.

Each week of our study ends with a **Red Thread Verse** to take into your weekend that talks about the good news of God’s redemption. We’ve placed each of the Red Thread Verses in a special section at the end of each chapter for you to come back to over and over.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Spend time meditating on and memorizing the following verse this week:

HAVE I NOT
COMMANDED YOU?
BE STRONG
& COURAGEOUS.
DO NOT BE
FRIGHTENED,
AND DO NOT BE
DISMAYED,
FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD
is with you
WHEREVER YOU GO.

JOSHUA 1:9

Week 1

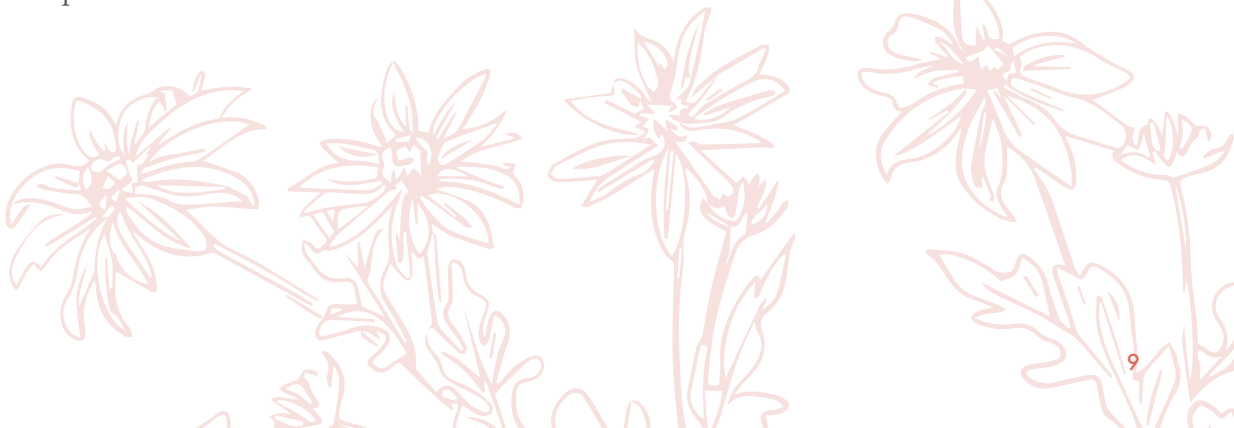
WRITTEN INTO GOD'S SCRIPT

Big Idea: GOD IS WRITING THE SCRIPT FOR OUR LIVES.

Did you ever watch a movie and think, *I would have chosen someone different for that part?* Maybe the actor didn't fit your image of what the hero should look like, or you thought the actress was too short for the part. But (unless you're a Hollywood casting agent!), we don't get to choose. Instead we buy our tickets, grab our popcorn, and settle back to watch the characters play out the story, according to the creators' design.

Life imitates art. If we got to choose, history would likely have unfolded differently. Awkward Abraham Lincoln wouldn't have been the ideal choice to be President of the United States. We may not have chosen middle-aged Corrie ten Boom to lead an underground network that helped protect hundreds of Jews in Nazi-occupied Holland. From our limited human perspective, there would have been others who would have been better candidates for these jobs.

We're not casting agents for a movie, and we're not God. He sees all things, knows all things, and is working behind the scenes for our good. He often chooses people we wouldn't to fulfill His redemptive purposes in the world—including *Rahab*. If God hadn't written Rahab into the script of history, we wouldn't know anything about her. Yet she offers us a powerful picture of the redemption Christ offers us.



Day 1: *Be Strong and Courageous*

Read Numbers 13:1–3, 17–19.

The children of Israel spent 400 years as slaves in Egypt. The book of Exodus tells how God delivered them from captivity and the Egyptian army by miraculously parting the Red Sea. You would think that they would trust their Deliverer to lead them safely to the Promised Land. But Scripture records that their faith was weak.

According to Numbers 13:31–33, what did the spies report about the Promised Land?

What do you think they believed about God?

In Numbers 14:6–9, we see Caleb and Joshua’s response to the people of Israel.

Paraphrase their reply in your own words.

In response, God forbade those who had seen Him part the Red Sea from entering the Promised Land. They spent forty years wandering in the wilderness. As we open to Joshua 1, we find that God’s people are finally preparing to enter the Promised Land.

As you read through Scripture, it’s helpful to consider the context. You can use the 5 Ws and an H method: considering who, what, when, where, why, and how in what you’re reading. Read verses 1–2 and apply this study method using the prompts below.

Who...

- Is speaking?
 - Is being talked to?
-
-

What...

- Significant event just happened?
 - Instructions is God giving to Joshua?
-
-

When...

- Is this taking place?
-
-

Where...

- Is Joshua when God is giving this message?
-
-

Why...

- Is God speaking to Joshua?
-
-
-

How...

- Does God want Joshua to respond?
-
-
-



In Joshua 1:3–5, what promises did God make to Joshua? List your answers in the chart below.

God's Promises to Joshua

REMINDERS OF
PAST PROMISES

NEW
PROMISES

Read the verses below. Circle repeated words or phrases.

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (JOSH. 1:6–7, 9)

The Hebrew word in the Old Testament translated “courage” is often tied to the concept of strength.¹ If someone faces a challenge and loses courage, she’s going to feel weak and

inadequate. But if a person has courage, she will be strengthened and tackle whatever is before her with confidence.

Imagine you are Joshua, tasked with leading millions of people into a foreign land. What might you be feeling? How would it help you to have reminders that God is with you?

God had called Joshua to a task that was bigger than Joshua could handle in his own strength. There were many battles ahead, and Joshua would need to overcome fierce enemies in the Promised Land. Likely Joshua was prone to discouragement and fear in the face of challenges.

What situation are you facing right now where your natural response is to be frightened or dismayed?

How does Joshua 1:6–9 encourage you?

It's likely that Joshua felt unequipped to cross the Jordan River with twelve tribes of people, take over Canaan, and tackle Jericho. This was a tough assignment! Yet he chose to step out in faith.

Many times, we would not choose the tasks that God assigns to us. But God asks us to trust Him. **He can help us be strong and courageous.**

In what areas of life is God stretching you?

How can you intentionally remind yourself to be strong and courageous this week as you trust in the Lord?

Day 2: *A Pagan Culture; a Patient God*

Read Joshua 2:1.

Rahab is the first person we're introduced to in the Promised Land.

What does Joshua 2:1 tell us about her?

We can find clues about Rahab's background scattered throughout Scripture.

Jericho, where Rahab lived, was an important city in Canaan.

Look up the following passages. Draw a line to what each one tells us about the Canaanite culture. When necessary, draw lines from one Scripture to multiple behaviors.

Exodus 23:23–24

homosexuality

incest

Leviticus 18:3–23

child sacrifice

adultery

Deuteronomy 18:10–11

idol worship

occultism

bestiality

In the verses below, circle the practices of the Canaanites that the Lord specifically told His people *not* to engage in. Underline what God told Abraham He would do to the Canaanites.

“When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God, for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do this.” (DEUT. 18:9–14)

The Canaanites worshiped many gods. They had shrines, temples, and idols across the land of Canaan, and their religious practices included things like ritual prostitution and child sacrifice. Rahab was part of that culture. **Yet God chose to write her into His story.**

Consider the Ninevites that God called the prophet Jonah to preach to. What does Jonah 1:2 and 4:11 reveal about the Ninevite culture?

How are the Ninevites and the Canaanites similar?

How is your own culture similar to these two ancient cultures?

What message did God call Jonah to deliver to the inhabitants of Nineveh (Jonah 3:1–4)?

How did the Ninevites respond (v. 5)?

When God pronounces judgment, repentance, not the judgment itself, is the goal. How can we know? Write out 2 Peter 3:9 below.

Rahab and the Ninevites reveal the pattern of God. Even when an entire culture has gone off the spiritual deep end, even when their wickedness is exceeding, God desires for those who are separated from Him by sin to repent and return to Him.

How does this give you hope?

During the 400 years while the Israelites were in slavery, God was giving the Canaanites an opportunity to repent. He extended grace and mercy to this pagan culture while His people were suffering in Egypt.

How did God show patience toward you before you became a Christian?

Write out a prayer, thanking God for His patience toward you and for the free gift of salvation He provides through His Son. Write the names of loved ones and friends who need to know Jesus, and then pray for them, too.

Jericho

Jericho is located about five miles west of the Jordan River.² It is considered the oldest city in the world. Archaeologists discovered remains in its location that date back to 8000 B.C.—long before Abraham.³

Located near a mountain pass to the north of the Dead Sea, Jericho was a natural place for the Israelites to enter the Promised Land. It was also at a crossroads of a major trade route to the west and east and an oasis in a hot climate.⁴ Its location made it an ideal place for the spies to gather information from travelers who would stop at Jericho and bring news of what was happening in other parts of Canaan.

