

## **A Grace for the people of Israel (Joshua 2:1, 22-24):**

### **❖ Second chance.**

- When Moses sent spies to inspect Canaan, the people refused to enter. Forty years later, new spies were sent, with a different outcome:
  - (1) Spies are sent: Publicly (12 spies) / Secretly (2 spies)
  - (2) Spies' performance: 40 days inspecting / 3 days in hiding
  - (3) The spies' report: They discourage the people / They encourage Joshua
- Although the new generation had failed miserably in the face of Balaam's temptation, God gave them a second chance (Num. 25:1-3, 31:16; Josh. 2:1).
- This time there were no bunches of grapes, no fruits of the land. Only a story of faith (that of Rahab), which encouraged Israel to possess the Promised Land.

## **B Grace for Rahab (Joshua 2:2-21):**

### **❖ The faith of a mustard seed.**

- On what was Rahab's faith based (Josh. 2:9-11)? Notice that Rahab speaks of events that everyone knew, such as the crossing of the Red Sea. But while the others feared the God of the Hebrews, she chose to take refuge under his wings (Josh. 2:12-13).
- If she believed in God, why did she use a lie to help the spies? Her fledgling faith didn't imply a complete knowledge of God's will. She acted as best she could to help the spies and save her life and that of his family. Knowledge would come later.
- The Bible commends her for the decision she made; for her understanding of God's way of acting; and for the way she backed up her words with concrete actions (James 2:25).
- Rahab is an example of what would have happened to any Jericho resident who had surrendered to God.

### **❖ The covenant extended to Rahab.**

- Rahab's logic was indisputable: I have acted kindly [*hesed*] and saved you; now act kindly and save me and my relatives (Josh. 2:12-13).
- Although she was not aware of it, Rahab was asking Israel to act toward her as God Himself had acted toward Israel, that is, with kindness [*hesed*] (Dt. 7:12).
- The spies asked Rahab to fulfill the same conditions they had fulfilled to escape death in Egypt. In this way, she was included in God's covenant with Israel.
  - (1) Israel at Passover:
    - (a) They had to anoint its lintel with blood (Ex. 12:7)
    - (b) If they left home, they died (Ex. 12:13)
  - (2) Rahab in Jericho;
    - (a) He had to put a red cord in his window (Josh. 2:18)
    - (b) If she left the house, she died (Josh. 2:19)

## **C Grace for the Gibeonites (Joshua 9):**

### **❖ Deceptive ambassadors.**

- Rahab lied spontaneously to free the spies. However, the Gibeonites lied deliberately, intending to deceive, using cunning (see Genesis 3:1a).
- As a result, Rahab acquired full Israelite citizenship, but the Gibeonites remained servants of Israel forever.
- On the other hand, Israel's leaders failed by not consulting God (Josh. 9:14).

### **❖ Blessing and curse.**

- Sparing the Gibeonites' lives would have disobeyed a direct command from God (Deut. 7:1-2). Breaking an oath like the one sworn to them was also considered a sin (Josh. 9:19; Ps. 15:4b). How was the dilemma resolved?
- Their lives were spared, but they were placed under a curse (Josh. 9:20-23). The curse was to be servants from generation to generation. This placed them in close relationship with God's people, from whom they were never separated (Neh. 7:6, 25).
- Furthermore, being water carriers and woodcutters for God's house put them in constant contact with God. By God's grace, the curse was turned into a blessing.