

Rahab and the Gibeonites

First performed at South Brisbane Ecclesia Sunday School 2009

Song: When Israel was in Egypt's Land (PTL 292)

Scene 1

Joshua on stage by himself.

Narrator: After the death of Moses, the Lord put Joshua in command of the children of Israel. God said to Joshua,

God: Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.

Narrator: So Joshua ordered the officers of the people;

Joshua: Officers *(Joshua is standing in front of the stage, Officers and Israelite 1 & 2, Salmon and Ephraim run up to him,)*

Go through the camp and tell the people, "Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own".

Officers: We will do whatever you command us. *(Officers bow and leave).*

Narrator: Then Joshua secretly sent two spies to go and spy out the land

Joshua: *(calls out)* Salmon, Ephraim

Salmon and Ephraim come back

Go look over the land, especially Jericho. Be strong and courageous, for the LORD our God is with you wherever you go.

S & E: We will do as you command *(S & E exit).*

Scene 2

Narrator: So the spies went and looked over the land. And they entered the house of a woman named Rahab and stayed there.

Salmon and Ephraim knock on door, and Rahab invites them in.

Rahab: Please, come in. I have been watching you as you entered the city, and I'm glad that you have come here. Your God must have led you to my house.

Salmon: Er, We beg your pardon, what are you talking about.

Rahab: You are obviously Israelite spies ! Your disguises are not very good, and you've been studying the city walls and battlements.... I saw you from my window. Living on the city wall, I get a good view of travelers coming in to Jericho.

(Salmon pulls off wig, and Ephraim pulls off glasses)

Now, I've got to hide you !

Salmon: Why ?

Rahab: The soldier at the city gate knows who you are. I saw him watching you, and he sent a messenger off as soon as you passed through the gate.

Quick, come up here, to the roof. (mimick climbing up ladder to roof)

Ephraim: What's your name?

Rahab: Rahab – please hurry, we haven't got time to talk. Now, lie down over here, and I'll cover you with these stalks of flax. *(men lie down and are covered with flax)* Please lie still. I'll go downstairs now. *(Rahab mimicks climbing down ladder)*

Narrator: Now, the king of Jericho was told that some of the Israelites had come to spy out the land. So the king of Jericho sent a message to Rahab.

Messenger 1: *(Bangs on door)* Open up in the name of the king

Rahab: *(Opens the door)* Good evening soldier.

Messenger 1: The king has heard that there are Israelites spying in our city tonight. We know they came to your house.

Messenger 2: Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land.

Rahab: Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them. *(messengers leave. Rahab closes the door, and sighs in relief. She gathers a jug of water, bread and fruit in a basket to take to the spies and then goes back up to the roof)*

Narrator: So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut. Rahab went up to the roof and spoke with the spies.

Rahab: It's alright, you can get up now. I've sent the king's men off to look for you out of the city. Here is some food and drink for you.

Salmon: Thankyou for saving us. But, why did you do this for us?

Rahab: I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. When we heard of it, our hearts sank and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death.

Salmon: Our lives for your lives. If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land.

Rahab: Thankyou.

Ephraim: How did you come by your faith in our God?

Rahab: I've heard stories about Him since I was a girl

Ephraim: Hasn't everyone in Jericho though?

Rahab: I can't explain why I believe, and no-one else has.

Salmon: Ephraim, I think it's time for us to leave.

Rahab: You can't just walk through the gates, they're shut. The guards will get you! Look, I can let you down with this rope through the window. Lucky I live in the city wall. When you get down, go to the hills so that the kings men will not find you. Hide yourselves there for three days until they return, and then go on your way.

Salmon: This oath you made us swear to protect you will not be binding on us unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down. Also, you must have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house.

Ephraim: If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him. But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear.

Rahab: Agreed. Let it be as you say. *(Rahab ties end of rope to pole, and hangs on to it, as the men lower themselves over the windowsill and down the wall).*

Narrator: So Rahab sent the spies away. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window. *(Rahab ties scarlet cord in window – curtains close)*

The two spies went to the hills and stayed there three days, and then they started back. They forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them.

(Ephraim and Manasseh walk up to Joshua, standing in front of the stage, he greets them warmly, they roleplay conversation..)

Salmon: Hello Joshua ! Good news - The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us. *(Joshua puts an arm around both spies and welcomes them back).*

Song: Joshua fought the battle of Jericho (Ptl 206)

Scene 3

Narrator: Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard how Jericho and Ai had been destroyed, they gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and Israel. However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai they thought of a plan to make a treaty with them.

(Two Gibeonite men stand with mugs in their hands talking together).

Shamoth: You know Jashobeam, the God of Israel is the God of heaven and earth. There is no point fighting with the Israelites, we will be wiped off the face of the earth, just like Jericho and Ai.

Jashobeam: Well Shamoth, we have to do something, sitting here and not fighting will just get us killed too. We've been told how the LORD their God has told them that He give them this whole land. They are going to wipe out all of us - whether we fight or not. At least fighting we will die with some honour.

(Both men sigh and look depressed)

Ahiam: *(enters excitedly)* Shamoth, Jashobeam ! My wife is brilliant. She has just had the best idea. Listen to this!

Ahiam's wife: Let's pretend we have come from a distant far away country and make a treaty of peace with the Israelites !

Shamoth: uh hu ! *(sarcastically)* I think they will be able to work out that we are actually their next door neighbours

Ahiam's wife: No, we will trick them. We'll use worn out sandals, and put patches on them. We'll wear dusty, dirty clothes. We'll use dry and mouldy bread. We'll have worn out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended.

Jashobeam: Do you know, I think that is a pretty good idea. In fact, Ahiam, I'll cast my vote on it if you bring it to the council of the elders.

Ahiam: It's better than being wiped out .

Shamoth: I guess so.

Scene 4

Narrator: And so the Gibeonites used a ruse. They dressed as if they had come from a distant country and went to Joshua.

Joshua: Greetings

Ahiam: Greetings

Ahiam: My name is Ahiam, and these are my countrymen. We have come from a distant country, far, far away. Please, make a treaty with us.

Israelite 1: But perhaps you live near us. How then can we make a treaty with you.

Ahiam: We are your servants

Jashobeam: Yes, we are your servants.

Joshua: Who are you and where do you come from? (*speaking gently*)

Ahiam: Your servants have come from a veerry distant country because of the fame of the LORD your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites.

Shamoth: Our elders and all those living in our country said to us "Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them "We are your servants; make a treaty with us"". "

Jashobeam: See, this bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now, see how dry and mouldy it is. And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are.

Shamoth: Yes, and see our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey

Joshua and men of Israel gather round and sample provisions

Narrator: Now the men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not enquire of the LORD. Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

Joshua and Ahiam shake hands, and give each other their sandal to ratify the oath. All the other men shake hands as well. They all exit stage together.

Now three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbours, living near them. So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities. But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel.

Joshua and Israelites enter stage

Israelite2: Look you made a treaty with the enemy... you can't stick with that treaty, God told us we had to wipe all these people out of the land.

Israelite 1: We have given them our oath by the LORD, the God of Israel and we cannot touch them now. This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that wrath will not fall on us for breaking the oath we swore to them. We will let them live, but let them be woodcutters and water carriers for the entire community.

Narrator: Then Joshua summoned the Gibeonites, and said... *(Gibeonites enter)*

Joshua: Why did you deceive us by saying, "We live a long way from you", while actually you live near us? You are now under a curse: You will never cease to serve as woodcutters and water-carriers for the house of my God.

Ahiam: *(Bows)* Your servants were clearly told how the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from before you. So we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this. We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you. *(Bows again)*.

Narrator: So Joshua saved them from the Israelites and they did not kill them. That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD at the place the LORD would choose.

For us, living here in 2009, It is inspiring to learn of the faith of Rahab, and the faith of the Gibeonites. These are people who God grafted into Israel, and they became children of God. We too are children of God, grafted in through faith in His son Jesus. As we travel through the wilderness of this life, may we be guided by God's loving hand, and brought into the Promised Land.

Song: We remember Israel (PTL 119)

Characters

Narrator:

God:

Joshua:

Officers of Israel:

Ephraim:

Salmon:

Rahab:

Messenger 1:

Messenger 2:

Shamoth:

Jashobeam: I

Ahiam:

Ahiam's wife:

Israelite 1:

Israelite 2: