

Sabbath School Lessons.

September 13th, 1863.

RAHAB.—Joshua 2. 1-16.

Connection.—Israel lay encamped to the east of Jordan, nearly opposite Jericho.—The Valley of Shittim must have been there.

1. Rahab hides the Spies, ver. 1-7.

Joshua sent two spies. It was nearly forty years since Israel had sent out the twelve spies to traverse the land. Many changes might have taken place; and Joshua sent these two, not to see what kind of land it was, but to report to him if their way was clear; only two were faithful formerly. *Jericho* could not be above twenty or twenty-five miles off. *An harlot's house, named Rahab.*—Doubtless Rahab repented of her former sinful life. God's hand guided the spies to her.

The message from the king to deliver up the spies shows how narrowly Israel was watched. Rahab's lie, told to secure the safety of the men, seems unjustifiable. *The roof of her house.* The roofs were flat; and flax, from which linen is made, exposed there would be soon dried by the heat of the sun.

II. Rahab assists the Spies to escape, v. 8. 16.

Before they were laid down among the flax, she tells—

1. *What they had heard—the Red Sea had been dried up—Sihon and Og had been destroyed—near neighbours to Jericho.

2. What she knew about God—that He was the true God of heaven and earth, ver. 11—that He had given the land to Israel.

3. What state they were in—their *hearts* did melt, and they had no courage to fight.

4. She solicits a promise of safety, when they would be conquerors, for herself and her father's house.

5. They promise, and she let them down outside the wall, using some scarlet cord—probably belonging to some curtain hangings—to assist their descent; this she was to bind

in the window, when she saw Jericho besieged by Israel's armies. Her faith is shown in speaking and acting with the perfect conviction that what God said would come to pass.

APPLICATION.

1. *Faith teaches us to sacrifice the present to the future.* Rahab did so at the risk of her life, ver. 3, 4. The young care only for the present. If their parents did not provide for to-morrow, how sadly they would suffer.—All the great and good care for the future more than the present. Abraham, Heb. xi. 8; Moses, Heb. xi. 24; Daniel, Dan. i. 8. Work now and you will rest then. Suffer now and you will rejoice afterwards. So spend time as to gain eternity, Luke xvi. 9. Evils of improvidence—Savings Banks—The ant—The Bees.

2. *Faith makes the future secure.*—Rahab was safe amid death. Noah in the flood. Joseph in famine. Every Christian in death.

3. *Faith makes us act.* True faith always works. Rahab's did so, James ii. 25, 26. If it had not it would not have saved her; nor will such faith save any. As she showed the *scarlet cord*, we must show our *works* in the day of judgment, Matt. xxv.—What does your faith make you do? "A child is known by his doings."

4. *Think and act for yourself.* Rahab was the only one in Jericho who did so; her neighbours feared, yet did nothing. Some think, but never act; some act, but never think; *do both*, Psal. cxix. 59. You must answer for yourself alone.

5. *The hearts of God's enemies will melt*—some time; either under the love of Christ or under the fear of God's wrath, Rev. xvi. 16. So ver. 12. Has your heart been softened?

6. *Seek to save those dear to you.* Rahab did so, ver. 13. Pray for your parents or friends. So Abraham prayed for Sodom.—So Lot sought to save his married daughters.

7. *God never bids any one to tell a lie.*—He does not require lies to help his cause.—See the effect of David's lie to Abimelech.