The name Rahab appears in Scripture with two distinct meanings:

1. As a historical woman—a Canaanite prostitute who played a key role in Israel's conquest of Jericho.

2. As a symbolic name—used poetically to describe the nation of Egypt, often portraying it as a proud, chaotic, and defeated force against God.

This dual usage is common in biblical literature. Like how the word *"destroyer"* (Hebrew: *mashchit*) can refer to both an angel of judgment (Exodus 12:23) and a human army (Isaiah 16:4), "Rahab" too can represent both a person and a nation.

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1. Rahab the Prostitute – A Woman of Faith

Rahab's story is found in Joshua chapters 2 and 6. She lived in Jericho and worked as a prostitute. Despite her background, Rahab became a central figure in Israel's history by protecting two Israelite spies who were surveying the city before its conquest.

> *Joshua 2:1–*
> *“Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, ‘Go, view the land, especially Jericho.’ So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.”*

When the king of Jericho heard about the spies, he ordered Rahab to surrender them:

> *Joshua 2:3-4–*
> *“So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, ‘Bring out the men who have come to you…’ Then the woman took the two men and hid them…”*

Rahab’s actions were driven by faith. She had heard of God’s mighty works—like the Red Sea crossing—and believed in His sovereignty.

> *Joshua 2:11 –*
> *“...for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.”*

Rahab is a striking example of justification by faith (Romans 5:1) and salvation by grace. Though a Gentile and a sinner, her faith led her to act courageously, making her an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5). Her story reminds us that God redeems those who turn to Him in faith, regardless of their past.

> *Hebrews 11:31–*
> *“By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.”*

> *James 2:25-26 –*
> *“Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers...? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*

2. Rahab as a Symbol for Egypt

In prophetic and poetic books, “Rahab” is used figuratively to represent Egypt—depicted as a proud, chaotic sea monster that resists God’s will but is ultimately defeated.

> *Isaiah 30:7 –*
> *“For the Egyptians shall help in vain and to no purpose. Therefore I have called her Rahab-Hem-Shebeth (Rahab Who Sits Still).”*

> *Isaiah 51:9-10–*
> *“...Are You not the One who cut Rahab apart, and wounded the serpent? Are You not the One who dried up the sea...?”*

> *Psalm 89:10–*
> *“You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one who is slain; You have scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.”*

> *Job 26:12–*
> *“He stirs up the sea with His power, and by His understanding He breaks up the storm. By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.”*

This symbolic use emphasizes God’s supremacy over proud nations and chaotic forces (Psalm 46:10). Egypt, though mighty, could not stand against Yahweh. It’s a reminder that human strength, when opposed to God, is ultimately fragile.

Key Lesson from Rahab: Faith That Saves

Rahab’s life teaches us that true faith is not passive—it moves us to action. Despite her past, Rahab trusted the God of Israel, aligned herself with His people, and was saved. Her story is a powerful testimony of redemptive grace, foreshadowing how Christ welcomes sinners who believe.

> *Ephesians 2:8-9–*
> *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that*

> *not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works…”*

> *Romans 3:22–*
> *“Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.”*

Rahab, once a prostitute in a pagan city, became a woman of great faith and is honored in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Her transformation demonstrates the power of faith, repentance, and God’s mercy. Whether used to describe a woman redeemed or a nation judged, the name “Rahab” reminds us of God’s justice—and His grace.

The Lord is Coming!

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