



DORDT COLLEGE

Digital Collections @ Dordt

---

Faculty Work: Comprehensive List

---

10-16-2015

## Bible Stories No One Talks About

Mark Verbruggen

Dordt College, [mark.verbruggen@dordt.edu](mailto:mark.verbruggen@dordt.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty\\_work](http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Christianity Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Verbruggen, Mark, "Bible Stories No One Talks About" (2015). *Faculty Work: Comprehensive List*. Paper 342.  
[http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty\\_work/342](http://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work/342)

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Collections @ Dordt. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Work: Comprehensive List by an authorized administrator of Digital Collections @ Dordt. For more information, please contact [ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu](mailto:ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu).

---

# Bible Stories No One Talks About

## **Abstract**

"These are real people, messed up and sinful people, and yet they are the ones used by God to advance his Kingdom of grace and truth in Jesus Christ."

Posting about dealing with the unpleasant narratives in the Bible from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/bible-stories-no-one-talks-about/>

## **Keywords**

In All Things, Bible, sin, metaphor, ethics

## **Disciplines**

Biblical Studies | Christianity

## **Comments**

*In All Things* is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

# Bible Stories No One Talks About

---

 [all in allthings.org/bible-stories-no-one-talks-about/](http://allthings.org/bible-stories-no-one-talks-about/)

Mark Verbruggen

Daddy, what's a whore?" This was the question asked by a child to her father one Sunday in church. I had been preaching through the book of Joshua and the text for the day was the story of Rahab, the prostitute, who hid the Israelite spies. Joshua 2 is a wonderful story in the Bible that shows the life of Israel in the Promised Land beginning with a visit to the whore house (Joshua 2:1). Life in the land does not begin with a glorious battle but with the profession of faith of a Canaanite whore who says, "The LORD your God is indeed God in heaven and on earth below."

The story of Rahab and the spies is not a neglected story in the Bible, it's usually sanitized so that the scandalous bits are spun over. In my preaching and teaching I find a particular enjoyment in pointing out the "earthy" nature of the Bible. These are real people, messed up and sinful people, and yet they are the ones used by God to advance his Kingdom of grace and truth in Jesus Christ. The Bible is not a story book of moral heroes who espouse so called "Family Values." Biblical characters are often messed up! So what did I say to the father whose child asked, "Daddy, what's a whore?" I told him to tell her, "A whore (or prostitute or harlot) is someone you pay to be your friend." A young child does not need to understand the details of ancient or modern prostitution, but a child will understand that someone who is paid to be your friend is not a real friend.

The Bible has many stories or texts that might make us wonder how it can be part of God's Word. These are the Bible stories no one talks about. I'll reference just a few of them and I'm sure you as readers could add many more.

Genesis 19. This whole chapter would receive an NC-17 rating if it were a movie. Two angels come to the city of Sodom and enter the home of Abraham's nephew Lot. The men of the city demand Lot to send them out "so that we may know them" (Genesis 19:5). The New International Version is far more explicit saying, "so that we can have sex with them." This story serves as a prequel to an even lustier tale of sex and incest in verses 30-38 where the daughters of Lot, convinced that they will never have husbands to give them children, get their father drunk and bear sons by him known as Moab and Ammon. How would "Veggie Tales" tell this story?

Illicit sex is a recurring theme in the biblical narrative. In Genesis 38, Judah has sex with his daughter-in-law whom he mistakes for a prostitute. However, from this son of Jacob and his affair will come our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). In Judges 19-21, there is a long story that begins with a Levite and his concubine who is later taken by the men of Gibeah who rape her all night long and leave her for dead at the door of the house. What follows is a civil war between the tribes of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin (from whom the men of Gibeah come) that leads to another strange story of how new wives would be found for the Benjamites. The story and the book of Judges ends by saying, "In those days there was no king in Israel; all people did what was right in their own eyes." (Judges 21:25). Prostitution, sex, lust, and the like are sometimes used as a metaphor by the Lord himself to describe the unfaithfulness of his people towards him. The most graphic example of this is found in Ezekiel 23. This prophetic text holds nothing back as it speaks of the daughter who lusted after her lovers "whose members were like those of donkeys, and whose emission was like that of stallions." (Ezekiel 23:20).

However, it's not only stories involving sex that we might like to avoid in the Bible. There is also mysterious encounter between the Lord and Moses in Exodus 4:24-26 where he intends to kill him. A flick of the knife,

leading to the circumcision of Moses' son, saves his life and the life of his family. Leviticus 15 might be labeled "TMI" with its instructions concerning the cleanliness of a man or a woman following a certain biological happening. Violence against enemies (The book of Joshua), long tedious instructions (Exodus 25-30, Leviticus 1-27, Ezekiel 40-43), and names that seem impossible to pronounce (Genesis 5, 36) – these also might tempt us to skip over the biblical text.

I don't have space to take this subject into the New Testament where there are teachings from Jesus and the apostles that might be hard to understand. Suffice to say, the Bible is not just a story book for children featuring good, moral examples, nor are its teachings always easy to understand. This is the Word of the Lord that must cut its way into the messiness of human life in this world that has fallen into sin. But we are not left with a mess in the end. If we read the Bible carefully we will see grace overpower the messiness of sin. That's the good news even in the stories no one wants to talk about. The God who is revealed in the Scriptures is not remote, aloof, or disengaged from this broken world. Even in the stories we might not want to talk about, God sees and hears and acts on behalf of his people. In Jesus Christ, God has done it. For this reason we say, "This is the Word of the Lord!" and all can say with joy and conviction, "Thanks be to God!"