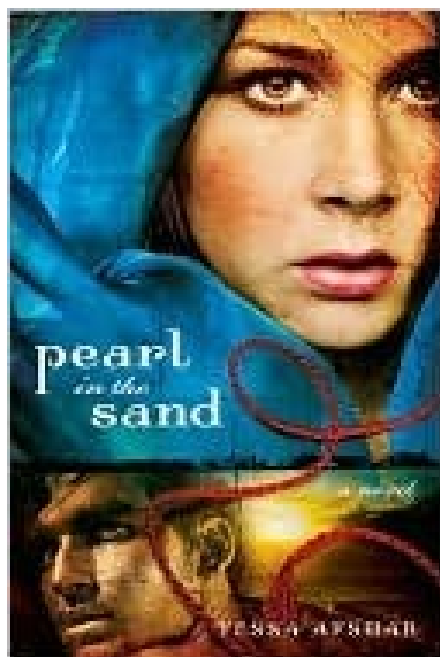




Pearl In The Sand

Tessa Afshar

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Can a Canaanite harlot who has made her livelihood by looking desirable to men make a fitting wife for one of the leaders of Israel? Shockingly, the Bible's answer is yes.

Pearl in the Sand tells Rahab's untold story. Rahab lives in a wall; her house is built into the defensive walls of the City of Jericho. Other walls surround her as well—walls of fear, rejection, unworthiness.

A woman with a wrecked past; a man of success, of faith ... of pride; a marriage only God would conceive! Through the heartaches of a stormy relationship, Rahab and Salmone learn the true source of one another's worth and find healing in God.

Pearl In The Sand Details

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Author : Tessa Afshar

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Genre : Christian Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Christian, Biblical Fiction, Fiction, Romance

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From Reader Review Pearl In The Sand for online ebook

Loraine says

This book looks at Rahab from a totally different perspective. Most novels have focused on Rahab's part in Israel's battle for Jericho. Instead Afshar's novel focuses on Rahab's life after Jericho: her adoption in to the tribes of Israel, the attitude of some of the Israelites towards her, and her sense of unworthiness to be forgiven by the one true God. It is a tale of Rahab's journey from rejection and fear to forgiveness and strength. It is the journey of one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ.

This is well done, believable, historical Biblical fiction. It is filled with the history of the period: the hardships, the battles, the intricacies and problems of living within a nomadic civilization that is now trying to find their place on earth. The characters are superbly developed especially Rahab, Salmone, and Miriam; and each of them plays a special role in the others' lives.

Salmone's explanation of the pearl in the sand and how it compares to Rahab was particularly moving. This book is filled with numerous wisdom gems that will stay in the reader's mind for a long time. Hope to see more Biblical fiction from Tessa Afshar.

FAVORITE QUOTES: "All they had was God. And wrapped up in faith, this seemed more than enough."

"He believes the past remains the past. It becomes God's domain...Our job is to rescue the present from its rotting carcass."

"She didn't need to point out her neighbors' hypocrisy and unkindness as a means of making herself feel better. She wouldn't have to put them down in order to raise herself up. God would take care of them."

"Son, a woman needs to feel safe in love. She needs to know her husband accepts everything about her and still loves her. To be known through and through, including the failures of her past, the shortcomings of her character, and still be loved, that's the Promised Land of a woman's heart."

Emily says

Pearl in the Sand is a wonderful book. Afshar tells the story of Rahab, the harlot from Jericho, who hid the two Israeli spies and in return they spared her life. It's a story of a broken young woman who has lost hope and faith in love until God opens her heart to Him. I enjoyed the journey of being taken back into the days of Joshua and the Promised Land. I had never really given much thought to what daily life would be like in the camp of the Israelis. Afshar did a great job putting me back in those times. This book captivated me with it's mix of biblical fact and the love story that blossoms between Rahab and Solmone. Rahab the harlot, became the mother of Boaz who was King David's grandfather and the lineage of Christ.

Erin says

Son, a woman needs to feel safe in love. She needs to know her husband accepts everything about her and still loves her. To be known through and through, including the shortcomings of her character, and still be loved, that's the Promised Land of a woman's heart. That's where she finds rest.

Well, just a few short hours ago, I reviewed " The Weight of Feathers " and declared romance was essentially not my cup of tea. But it would appear that Tessa Afshar managed to warm my Grinch like heart. Because I fell in love with Rahab and Salmone(parents of the biblical Boaz). I know that some people (like my Grandma and church going aunties) pooh-pooh biblical Christian fiction and cite that it's blasphemous that contemporary authors are using biblical personages to make money. Now as much as I dearly love my Grandma and my aunties, I am going to have to respectfully disagree and just get all gushy about this story.

First, the book wasn't preachy in its message, but faith is obviously a part of the story. It really circles around how two people can move forward together and create a lasting partnership. Secondly, I loved the main and secondary characters and was thoroughly engaged in the story from beginning to end.. I just couldn't put the book down and stayed glued to the couch. Lastly, it wasn't an insta- love type of storyline, a rare commodity in this day and age in most books.

Highly recommended!

Hannah says

The book in general kept me entertained. However, it seemed a bit unbelievable at sometimes. The most unbelievable part was probably Rahab's instant conversion to Judaism. It didn't make sense that she would so easily believe in another God when her society's gods failed everyone. It'd make more sense if she was skeptical of God. She has Christian ideals before Christianity even exists. I know I'm supposed to believe that her prostitution is bad, but I don't believe the book gives enough evidence since details aren't given and she's very choosy about who she does things with. She has freedom that other women in her time period don't have. If her career choice is ripping her apart on the inside, she doesn't show it much except towards the end. It's quite unbelievable that her culture would look at zonahs as bad people since prostitutes are in the temple, too. In fact, it feels like the book endorses friends with benefit relationships when Rahab takes in Debir and looks back fondly on their friendship. The book doesn't show the gruesomeness of her profession.

The writing isn't very descriptive when it comes to deep feelings, and a lot of cliché figures of speech are used. A bunch of figures of speech are too modern for the time period of the setting. I felt like the ending was a bit anti-climatic and expected something more.

The book was cliché just like the writing. It was like a romance novel except with intercourse after marriage instead of before. The Salmone's love at first seemed unbelievable, but later it was convincing. Personally, the love scenes sort of filled me with warmth, but at the same time the cheesiness made me laugh. It's a very good light read, but I'd only recommend it if you're Christian. I may be wrong, but unless someone has a background of Christianity, I don't think they'd understand the values and ideals in the story.

Tito says

So. Good.

This book was amazing and I'm incredibly glad I decided to buy a physical copy. Ms. Afshar made Rahab, her family, and Salmone so realistic and relatable in many ways. I can say I thoroughly enjoyed it and had a huge grin on my face the entire novel. I can't really say much about the book except to demand that you guys read it. Completely worth the time.

4.5 stars

Charlene says

I loved it! I loved it! I lllloovvveeedd it!!

Being the first book I have read in the genre "biblical fiction" and also the first time reading a novel by this author I was a little sceptical. My main concern was "will it not confuse true biblical context". However I am happy and excited to say that Tessa Afshar has proven me completely wrong.

The story of Salmone and Rehab was brought to life beyond the information we are provided in the Bible. Tessa Afshar lead me on a beautiful flourishing fictional journey. It's very clear that Tessa Afshar has a strong foundation of biblical knowledge and definitely has done her research.

The things I loved about this novel:

??How Gods heart, hand and power was portrayed.

??How each character was brought to life with such heart, passion and strength.

??How difficult topics were written with grace and elegance.

??The novel invites you to imagine beyond the information we are given in the bible for e.g the worship of Israel, what did their weddings entail and details of the wars and battles Israel experienced. (For e.g were people injured etc)

??The author goes beyond the HEA and gets into the nitty gritty of relationships of the broken and rejected. (this was my favourite part).

Pearl in the sand is a beautiful story of salvation and restoration for those who hunger for the living God regardless of there circumstances.

Recommended to all those who like biblical fiction or even considering trying biblical fiction. You will not regret it! :)

Beth says

Pearl in the Sand is the very emotional, touching story of Rahab, the famous "innkeeper" from Jericho who is spared, along with her family, for saving the life of two Israelite spies.

I really enjoyed this story. It definitely was more introspective and character driven than plot-driven. I really like how she didn't make the story all the battle of Jericho and then have the marriage between Rahab and Salmone wrap up in a bow and that's the end. It chronicles how she adjusted to her new life.

I did think that it could have been a bit "grittier," and by that I don't mean descriptively. I mean that, as the reader, I didn't really feel Rahab's despair and hurt over her profession until later in the story. I supposed she may have been repressing her feelings, but I think in the beginning, her feelings could have come across as deeply as they did later in the story.

As for the writing, there were occasions that I felt were a bit on the nose and somewhat preachy. I'm the type of reader that doesn't want to be told everything, but rather shown. The moments of introspection didn't always feel entirely genuine.

The healing that takes place within Rahab was very heartfelt, and I was so glad that it wasn't just sugar-coated and glossed over. I'd never really given thought to how her profession from her former life in Jericho would hold sway in her new life with her husband. It was a powerful reminder that sometimes the things that held us down in the past must be dealt with and given over to God again and again.

I will definitely pick up Afshar's next novel when it comes out.

Donna says

This is biblical fiction. Last week I read my first book by this author, and just couldn't wait to get my hands on another one. I liked this one, just not as much as the one I read last week. This is the story of Rahab, who was a prostitute in Jericho during the time when the Israelites were finally taking over to start their new lives.

The author writes beautifully and puts life into these biblical figures. They are endearing and she captures them in a light that seems authentic and true to the time period. At times though, some of the dialogue sounded a little too contemporary. But for the most part, I agreed with her take on this particular story.

Also I think she nailed the trials of Rahab's marriage, but oh my, the baggage was really drawn out a little too much for my liking. It started sounding long. But I have to say, the messages of faith and worship were well done. I felt inspired by reading this.

Katie says

Pearl in the Sand not only retells the story of Rahab in a wonderful, vibrant way, but also has many wonderful lessons that are sure to speak to each reader. When I first began this book, I thought the story would ended after the battle of Jericho with the marriage of Solmone and Rahab...but that was only the beginning!

The bible doesn't tell us about Rahab's adjustment into the Israelite camp after they destroyed Jericho, or how she ended up marrying Solmone. Tessa Afshar, using her amazing creativity, has crafted together a plausible, meaningful, and wholly believable story of what might've happened for this woman of Faith to end up being the mother of Boaz. The plot was amazing, with surprises along the way that kept me interested and glued to the pages, eager to find out what would happen next.

Both Rahab and Solmone were well defined characters that were deep, meaningful, and each struggling with different issues. I loved how the story really took off after their marriage. That was something I wasn't expecting, but totally loved! The writing style did a bit more telling of the characters thoughts and feelings than I usually like, but it wasn't that noticeable. Maybe I'm just picky.

As should be obvious (this being the story of Rahab the harlot) there is quite a bit of adult content in Pearl in the Sand. But I was amazed at how the author handled it. Leaving out sensual descriptions, she kept it very factual and clean. In fact, one of my favorite scenes was when Salmone helped Rahab get past old scars and memories of her past life so that she could find joy in their marriage bed. Very sweet, touching, and so true.

With her gift of retelling biblical stories with vibrancy and creativity, I can't wait to see what Tessa publishes next! Pearl in the Sand, while dealing with some serious issues of how Rahab healed from her former life, had so many small lessons that will speak to each readers heart. The event behind where the book got its

name was amazingly beautiful and my respect for Solmone's everlasting love for Rahab only grew. Pearl in the Sand is one book that biblical fans will not want to miss!

Staci says

My favorite thing about reading historical fiction is learning something new. In Pearl in the Sand, the author did a nice job of differentiating between a temple prostitute and a zonah. It was interesting to have an account of Rahab's life both before and after she assisted in the fall of Jericho.

I also love that the title has a direct correlation to the story.

Angie Lippard says

I am sure I have rewritten this book review 10 times in 2 days....I am having a hard time knowing what to say without coming across as not liking the book...because I did like the book...but I didn't like the book either. Not completely. See my dilemma?

It's clear that I didn't feel the same way about the book as others have, including my best friend at Oh Vey blog, who has claimed this as her new favorite book of the year. I on the other hand, had such a hard time reading it that I actually put it down within the first 100+ pages. I picked it back up later but skipped forward another 100 pages to see if the end could hold my attention any better than the beginning - which it did surprisingly! So I have decided to write the review in two parts - the first 150 pages and the last 150 pages. (Just to be fair, I did go back to those skipped pages and read them so I could write a honest review.)

First 150 pages - I picked this book because I loved the cover. Absolutely breathtaking! But I was expecting something so much deeper and poignant in the beginning and I just wasn't feeling it so I put the book down. I proceeded to read other books and then decided to pick this back up again but to skip forward a couple hundred pages to see if the ending was any better. I'm glad I picked the book back up because I loved the second half of the book. Here are my problems with the first half: I didn't feel the fight or fear in Rahab when she was being convinced into prostitution. It seemed to me that she just accepted it as her lot in life. I didn't feel any strong emotions or disgust from her family - none of them stood up for her or made much of a fuss about the whole situation? Really? Not the sister or brothers? No one? Maybe they were supposed to be emotionally disconnected but it didn't feel genuine to me.

I also wanted to feel the horror and panic of Rahab's first "experience" with a man. Take a minute to imagine what that must have felt like. Her heart beating out of her chest, the revulsion, the thoughts....and then just dismiss all that and leave it out of the book, or worse, wrap up the whole experience in one paragraph as the author chose to do. Such a disappointment and missed opportunity. I wanted to watch her progression from inexperienced girl to professional woman of the night. I wanted to see more of what Rahab talked about in the second half of the book lived out in the first half of the book. Not in gory detail, mind you, but more than what I got. Tessa Afshar could have included so much more.

Now you might be saying to yourself "what kind of sick puppy wants to write about the inside feelings and emotions of a prostitute laid bare for all the world to see, good or bad?" Two words for you - Francine Rivers. "Redeeming Love" by Francine Rivers is based on the story of Hosea taking a prostitute for a wife and is the book by which I judge ALL other Christian Fiction. She is the standard and the Queen, in my opinion. (If you haven't read "Redeeming Love" where have you been? Go buy it now. I'm serious. Don't

waste another minute reading this blog until you've ordered Redeeming Love then you can come back and finish this post. Did you do it? Okay, now you can continue reading...) Francine Rivers shows a full range of emotions from Angel (Gomer) and takes us along for a roller coaster ride of emotions where as Rahab's seem non-existent until the end of the book. The only thing I can think of is that the author and/or publisher is not comfortable with the raw, edgy emotions of "Redeeming Love" that could have been presented here in "Pearl in the Sand."

Second part of the book - I really enjoyed the second half of the book. What the two lovers have to learn about each other to make their relationship work could be echoed by a thousand modern women today. Statistics show very few women have gone through life without facing trauma that leaves them feeling guilty, bound up and wounded. Accordingly, very few men are equipped with helping their spouses overcome these issues and live the life God has intended for them. Beautiful lines like this made me fall in love with Salmone and the second half of the book:

"As he had been a warrior for God against the walls of Jericho, so he would be a warrior for God against the walls that trapped his precious wife. He would demonstrate the same obedience, the same patience and persistence, the same unyielding resolve to win over his wife that he had shown in battle against Canaan's cities. The soldier in him smiled."

This part of the book seemed more realistic to me. It reminded me of counseling sessions I have participated in. I think this book would help women see how much it has to hurt in order to heal and how to help a marriage recover where both parties are restored fully to God together in the end. And then there was the parable of the pearl. Such a wonderful, beautiful example of God's love for us but that's all I can say about that. You have to read the book.

I don't know why the beginning couldn't have been more like the gritty reality of the ending. Bottom line for me is the book missed a huge opportunity. With more emotion and depth in the beginning, it could have risen closer to the likes of "Redeeming Love" and maybe even bordered on a Christian classic. Maybe it's not fair to compare the two books but I couldn't help it due to the similar subject matter. "The Pearl in the Sand" is no "Redeeming Love" but I would recommend reading it anyway.

Jerry says

Rahab is not one of my favorite Biblical people; I just don't find her story as inspiring as many of the other good examples in the Word. So, this book was a bit difficult for me to get through; it had its moments, but, overall, didn't do very much for me. Even when it comes to fictional accounts of women from the Good Book, I've read better.

eyes.2c says

A woman of all Ages for all ages

Set against the biblical background of the Battle of Jericho, Rahab the Canaanite's story is written with grace, understanding and compassion. Rahab walks strongly across the pages of the book, and in doing so deepened my understanding of the biblical story. To take a well known tale as old as time, and to give a new and compelling vision to it is indeed a gift and Tessa Afshar is without doubt a gifted writer.

Rahab as a young girl is sold into prostitution by her beloved father, yet rather than being annihilated by such a betrayal she demonstrates a vitality of spirit, an awesome strength and intrinsically honorable heart. Rahab hears the voice of God and responds.

The tale of Rahab's trials, her challenges and very human responses are given a new impetus in this retelling and places her squarely in the forefront of great women of the Bible. This is no woman of the past, of insubstantial being, but rather the story of one who represents the many faces of women throughout time, including today. Her story speaks for ordinary women who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances. Her response is that of heartbreaking courage. Rahab is a woman of all ages for all ages. Afshar has given us a very accessible person in her portrayal of Rahab—a portrayal that has the ability to reach out, draw us in and touch us profoundly. An unforgettable story, superbly written, and well worth more than one read. A great seasonal gift! Pass it forward.

A NetGalley ARC

Sarita says

I've read the Bible, and Rahab's story numerous times but I fell in the trap of thinking of these people as just characters in a bible story. Tessa Afshar brought these characters to life in such a beautiful way.

Not only is the biblical events portrayed in this story accurate, but the author helped me to go further and think of how life was for these people.

Rahab's journey to find her true self in how God sees her and Salmone's journey to overcome his pride and follow God's will was beautifully portrayed.

I loved this story and will definitely read more from this author.

Roseanna White says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book! I listened to the audio version, and the narrator did a fabulous job too. I loved the historical understanding Tessa Afshar shed on the familiar events of Joshua and the wall of Jericho, taking me deep into the heart of Rahab. Beautifully done.
