

Joshua 6:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

Analysis

Jericho was straitly shut up (סָגַר וְמִסְגַּר, sogeret u-mesugeret)—The Hebrew doubling emphasizes absolute closure: 'shut up and being shut up,' a hendiadys expressing Jericho's desperate lockdown. Archaeological evidence confirms Jericho's massive double walls (outer wall 6 feet thick, inner wall 12 feet thick) made it seemingly impregnable.

Because of the children of Israel—Terror had paralyzed Jericho. They chose passive defense over negotiation or attack, fulfilling God's promise to send fear before Israel (Exodus 23:27). Yet their fear was not saving faith like Rahab's. The city's closure illustrates humanity's futile attempts to wall out God's purposes—a vivid picture of hardened hearts resisting divine grace.

Historical Context

Jericho was ancient Canaan's gateway city, controlling access to the central hill country. Its spring made it a valuable oasis. The city's closure occurred circa 1406 BC after the Jordan crossing. Excavations at Tell es-Sultan reveal destruction layers consistent with Joshua's conquest, though dating remains debated among archaeologists.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do people today 'shut themselves up' against God's word, choosing defensive isolation over repentant faith?
2. What 'impossible fortresses' in your life seem impregnable until God intervenes sovereignly?

Interlinear Text

א ינ	ישראָל	בָּנִים	מִפְנִים	וּמִסְגָּרָת	וּמִסְגָּרָת	יריחו
Now Jericho	shut up	shut up	because	of the children	of Israel	H369
H3405	H5462	H5462	H6440	H1121	H3478	
אַיִלְלָה	בָּאָן	בָּאָן				

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 2:24 (Parallel theme): And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

Psalms 127:1 (Parallel theme): Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

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