

Joshua 6:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

Analysis

The ark of the LORD compassing the city once completes the first day's obedient procession. The verb *sabab* (סָבַב—to go around, compass) is repeated, emphasizing the deliberate, complete encirclement. They returned to camp, demonstrating patient faith—no immediate results, yet obedience continues. This single circuit on day one establishes the pattern to be repeated for six days before the climactic seventh day. The patience required is spiritually significant: God often tests faith through delayed fulfillment. The ark's presence meant Yahweh Himself was laying siege to Jericho. Each circuit was a prophetic declaration of ownership—God claiming what was His by right. The daily return to camp showed confidence in God's plan despite apparent inaction. This pattern teaches that spiritual victories often require sustained, repeated obedience without immediate visible results.

Historical Context

Ancient sieges typically lasted months or years—Jericho's siege was technically already underway (6:1). The daily processions for six days would have seemed absurdly brief by siege warfare standards. Yet God's timetable differs from human expectations. The number seven (days) carries covenantal significance throughout Scripture—creation week, sabbath rest, covenant completeness. The daily return to camp rather than maintaining siege positions demonstrated unusual confidence. Most armies would fear that breaking siege allowed resupply or escape. Israel's willingness to withdraw daily showed they trusted God's containment of the city.

This also provided rest and renewal, preventing battle fatigue—a practical provision within the miraculous plan.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does God test and develop your faith through delayed answers to prayer or promises not immediately fulfilled?
2. What does returning to camp daily (rest between acts of obedience) teach about Sabbath rest even during spiritual warfare?
3. In what situations are you called to sustained, repetitive obedience without seeing immediate results?

Interlinear Text

וְסָב	אֶרֶן	יְהוָה	אֶת	הָעִיר	הֵקֵי	פַּעַם
compassed	So the ark	of the LORD	H853	the city	going about	it once
H5437	H727	H3068		H5892	H5362	H6471
אֶתָּה	וַיָּבֹאוּ	בַּמַּחֲנֶה:	וַלֵּילוּ	בַּמַּחֲנֶה:		
H259	and they came	in the camp	and lodged	in the camp		
	H935	H4264	H3885	H4264		

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