

Joshua 6:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her.

Analysis

The spies remained in the mountains three days until their pursuers returned—demonstrating wise caution after Rahab's counsel (verse 16). The number three appears frequently in Scripture associated with divine timing and resurrection (Jonah 1:17, Matthew 12:40). Their waiting tested patience but ensured safety. They trusted Rahab's local knowledge rather than presuming on God's protection through recklessness. This balance between faith and wisdom is crucial: God's providence often works through natural means and prudent decisions. After three days, they passed over (עָבַר—abar, to cross) and came to Joshua—the same verb used for crossing the Jordan. Their successful return confirmed God's providential protection and Rahab's reliable intelligence. They reported that 'truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land'—drawing the correct theological conclusion. Unlike the fearful spies of Numbers 13-14 who saw obstacles, these spies saw God's sovereign control. Their report focused not on Canaanite strength but on Canaanite fear: 'all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.' Rahab's testimony (verse 11) proved representative of broader Canaanite despair.

Historical Context

The mountains west of Jericho provided numerous caves and rough terrain ideal for hiding. Archaeological surveys confirm the area's suitability for concealment. The three-day wait allowed Jericho's search parties to exhaust their pursuit—ancient tracking methods couldn't sustain searches indefinitely. The king of

Jericho's response (verse 3) shows city-states took Israelite spies seriously as existential threats. The spies' successful mission provided both practical intelligence (Canaanite demoralization) and spiritual encouragement (God's promise confirmed). Their report to Joshua contrasts sharply with the earlier generation's fearful assessment forty years prior. Where the ten spies saw giants and themselves as grasshoppers (Numbers 13:33), these two spies saw a sovereign God who had already given victory. This difference illustrates how faith transforms perception—same enemies, different lens. The spies' faith proved contagious, strengthening Israel's corporate faith for the conquest.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the spies' combination of faith (trusting God's promise) and wisdom (hiding three days) inform your decision-making?
2. What causes the difference between these faithful spies and the fearful spies of Numbers 13—same God, same enemies?
3. How does focusing on God's sovereignty rather than circumstances change your assessment of challenges?

Interlinear Text

אם ר בא רצ את מרגל ים ולשן ים
unto the two men that had spied out H853 the country had said
H8147 H582 H7270 H853 H776 H559

והוץ יאו בזון ה באתה ב או יהושע
But Joshua Go house thence the woman into the harlot's and bring out
H3091 H935 H1004 H802 H2181 H3318

באתה מושם את מושם באתה כל ואת אשר כל ה את ר
H8033 H853 thence the woman H853 H3605 H834 H0 H834

לה: נשבעת מ
and all that she hath as ye swear H0
H7650

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:31 (Parallel theme): By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Joshua 6:17 (Parallel theme): And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.