

Joshua 6:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.

Analysis

The spies' return and report to Joshua provides closure to chapter 2's narrative. They told him 'all things that befell them'—complete, honest reporting including both dangers faced and deliverance experienced. Transparency in reporting to leadership shows accountability and trust. The conclusion 'truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land' demonstrates faith interpreting circumstances theologically. They don't merely report facts ('Canaanites are afraid'); they draw the correct spiritual conclusion (God has given victory). The Hebrew **אִמְנָם** (omnam—truly, surely, indeed) expresses certainty and conviction. This isn't hopeful speculation but confident assertion based on God's revealed promise and confirmed by circumstances. The phrase 'into our hands' acknowledges God's gift requires human reception—God gives, we receive and steward. Their focus on Canaanite fear rather than Canaanite fortifications shows mature faith that sees spiritual reality behind physical appearances. Fear indicates broken morale; broken morale precedes military collapse. The spies recognized that psychological defeat is more decisive than architectural strength.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern intelligence gathering, spies would observe defensive installations, troop strength, supply lines, and morale. These two spies focused on

morale—the intangible but crucial factor. Rahab's testimony provided invaluable intelligence: Canaanites had heard of the Red Sea crossing (40 years prior) and Amorite defeats (recent), and their hearts melted. This intelligence proved accurate—subsequent conquests came rapidly as demoralized Canaanites couldn't mount unified resistance. The spies' report fulfilled Moses's original intent for reconnaissance: 'see the land, what it is, and the people that dwell therein' (Numbers 13:18). But where earlier spies saw obstacles, these saw opportunities. Their report energized Israel for immediate conquest. Joshua, having been one of the two faithful spies forty years earlier (Numbers 14:6-9), would have been deeply gratified by this report—the new generation showed the faith the previous generation lacked.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you report on ministry or life challenges—emphasizing obstacles or God's faithfulness?
2. What does it mean to interpret circumstances theologically rather than merely describing them factually?
3. How can you cultivate the spies' ability to see God's sovereignty working behind visible circumstances?

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Acts 10:28 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Ephesians 2:12 (References Israel): That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

1 Corinthians 5:12 (Parallel theme): For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

Genesis 18:24 (Parallel theme): Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

Genesis 12:2 (Parallel theme): And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Numbers 31:19 (Parallel theme): And do ye abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.