

Numbers 33:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

Analysis

King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel—This verse references the conflict recorded in 21:1-3, where the Canaanite king attacked Israel and was utterly destroyed. The parenthetical notice here shows that Israel's approach did not go unnoticed by Canaan's inhabitants.

The verb **heard** (שָׁמָע, shāma') carries ominous overtones—what Arad heard provoked military action. Yet Israel's victory over Arad (21:3) was an earnest of coming conquest. Just as Rahab 'heard' of Israel's approach and believed (Joshua 2:10-11), so Canaanite kings 'heard' and hardened their hearts. The same gospel message elicits faith or rebellion.

Historical Context

Arad was a Canaanite city-state in the Negev, south of Hebron. Archaeological excavations at Tel Arad have revealed extensive fortifications from this period, confirming the biblical account of a militarily significant settlement guarding Canaan's southern approaches.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. Why does the itinerary pause to note what king Arad 'heard'—what theological point does this anticipate?
2. How does the Canaanites' response to hearing of Israel's approach contrast with Rahab's response in Joshua 2?

Interlinear Text

וּשְׁמָ ע	הַכְּנַעֲנִי	מֶלֶךְ	עָרָד	וְהוּא	יָשָׁב	בֶּן־גִּב
heard	the Canaanite	And king	Arad	H1931	which dwelt	in the south
H8085	H3669	H4428	H6166		H3427	H5045
בְּאֶרֶץ	כְּנָעַן	בָּבֹא	בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל:		
in the land	of Canaan	of the coming	of the children	of Israel		
H776	H3667	H935	H1121	H3478		

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