

Yehoshua Chapter 2 - Transcript

Shiur Overview

Summary: Yehoshua Chapter 2 — The Spies and Rachav

Setting the Chapter in Context

Yehoshua chapter 2 belongs to the opening narratives of Sefer Yehoshua — stories that precede the actual conquest. These chapters describe the final journey from Arvot Moav into the land, toward Gilgal and Yericho. This can be understood as the last leg of the desert travels (masa'ot), with Arvot Moav being the final station in the midbar, and the crossing into the land being the next step. Yericho is the first target because it is the first city directly across from where Bnei Yisrael are encamped.

The Meraglim as Tikkun for Parshat Shlach

Every reader recognizes this story as a rectification of the sin of the meraglim in the desert. Several key differences emerge:

Secrecy vs. publicity: Moshe sent spies publicly — the people requested it, everyone knew, and the spies reported (וישיבו אתם דבר ואת כל העדה). Yehoshua sends them *cheresh* — silently, secretly. He sends them himself and they report back only to him. This secrecy operates on two levels: secret from the enemy (standard for spies), and secret from their own people (because leaks could tip off the other side, and they are now much closer to the target).

Minimal instructions: Moshe gave detailed instructions about what to observe. Yehoshua simply says "Go, see the land and Yericho." The spies are trusted to understand their mission. This economy of words is part of the overall discretion.

The Ramban's view of spying: The Ramban argues in Parshat Shlach that meraglim are properly just scouts — (like) finding entry points, weak spots, tactical information. The original spies failed because they went beyond this mandate and gave a morale-destroying assessment. These new spies may have done practical reconnaissance, but what the text records is the opposite message from what the earlier spies delivered.

The counter-message: The earlier spies said the inhabitants are strong and unconquerable. These spies bring back the explicit opposite: the people are terrified, their hearts have melted. Crucially, this isn't just a current assessment — it reaches back to Kriat Yam Suf, echoing the language of Shirat HaYam about nations melting in fear. The message directly contradicts the earlier spies not on whether the land is good (both agreed it was), but on the critical question of whether conquest is possible.

The Narrative Structure

Pasuk 1 — The Spies Arrive at Rachav's House

They go to the house of an *isha zona*. The meforshim debate whether *zona* means prostitute or innkeeper/food-provider (from *mezonot*). The Ibn Ezra strongly insists *zona* always means prostitute, which is the more reasonable reading. Her name, Rachav, is given here — notably the first and last time she is named in the story (afterward she is simply "ha'isha").

Similarly, the spies are called *meraglim* only here; afterward they are just *anashim*. No one else in the story — not the spies, not the king — receives a name.

Pesukim 2–3 — Discovery and the King's Demand

The spies are somehow discovered (the text doesn't explain how). The king of Yericho (unnamed) is told that men from Bnei Yisrael have come *lachpor et ha'aretz* — to "dig into" or undermine the land, meaning to find its weaknesses. The king sends messengers to Rachav demanding she produce the men. The language echoes the demand in the Sodom story — a guest under someone's protection being demanded for surrender.

Pesukim 4–7 — Rachav's Deception

Rachav does not comply. The king's men apparently respect the boundary of her house — they don't force entry but wait for her to bring the men out (like requiring a warrant rather than a no-knock entry). She stalls, hides the spies, then tells the messengers a carefully crafted lie: "Yes, men came to me, but I didn't know where they were from." She claims ignorance of their Israelite identity — had she known, she would have been obligated to report them. She then says the men left before the city gate closed at dark, and urges the messengers to chase after them, sending them toward the Jordan River — the opposite direction from where the spies actually are.

Pasuk 6 — The Hiding Place

The text backtracks to explain *how* she hid them: on the flat roof under stalks of flax (*pishteit ha'etz*) laid out in rows to dry, used for making linen. The text notes she had arranged these for herself — perhaps simply indicating it was her own flax being processed. Meanwhile, the king's men chase toward the Jordan crossings, and the city gate is closed behind them.

Pesukim 9–11 — Rachav's Declaration of Faith

Before the spies go to sleep, Rachav goes up to the roof and delivers what is the central speech of the entire chapter — the reason the whole story exists. She declares:

- **"I know that Hashem has given you the land"** — using God's proper name (the Tetragrammaton)

- **The inhabitants are terrified** — "all the inhabitants of the land have melted (*namogu*) before you"

- **Two reasons for this fear:** (1) They heard how God dried up the *Yam Suf* at the Exodus, and (2) they heard about Israel's destruction of the two Amorite kings, Sichon and Og, in Arvot Moav

- **"No man's spirit stands anymore before you"** — *lo kama od ruach b'ish*

- **Her theological declaration:** "Your God is the God in heaven above and on earth below" (*ki Hashem Elokeichem hu Elokim bashamayim mima'al v'al ha'aretz mitachat*) — an extraordinary statement of faith in the Jewish God, echoing themes from Shirat HaYam

This speech is the core content the spies bring back, and it directly reverses the narrative of the original meraglim.

The Deal and the Oath (2:12–14)

Rachav's logic is essentially: "I know you're going to win — I don't want to be among the losers." She asks the spies to:

- Swear by Hashem's name
- Show **chesed** (kindness) to her and her **beis avi** (her father's household — a nuclear or extended family unit, one level below **mishpacha**)
- Give her an **os emes** — a true sign/guarantee of their promise
- Save her parents, brothers, and sisters

Notably, she appears to be a single woman without her own household, still part of her parents' family unit.

The spies swear: "**Nafshenu tachteichem lamut**" — "Our lives for yours unto death" — conditional on her not revealing them or the deal. They don't explicitly swear in God's name as she requested, but they pledge their own lives.

The Escape and the Sign of the Red Thread (2:15–21)

Rachav's house is built into the city wall (**choma**), a feature of some ancient cities. Her window faces outward, so she lowers the spies by rope directly outside the city. She instructs them to flee toward the mountain (westward — opposite the direction she sent the pursuers toward the Jordan) and hide for three days until the search party returns.

The additional conditions: After the spies are already outside and on the ground below the window, they add stipulations to the oath. This placement is significant — they felt uncomfortable adding conditions while still inside her house and fully dependent on her protection. Now that they're outside the city with an escape plan, they have slightly more leverage, though she could still betray their direction.

Their conditions:

- She must tie a **red thread** (**tikvas chut hashani**) in the very window through which she lowered them — creating a

poetic symmetry

- She must gather her entire family inside her house
- Anyone who leaves the house — "**damo b'rosho**" (his blood is on his own head)
- Anyone inside the house who is harmed — the responsibility falls on the spies
- The sign must remain **secret** — if she tells anyone, the oath is void, since otherwise everyone would hang red threads and the signal would be meaningless

Rachav agrees. The text notes she ties the thread in the window (possibly proleptic — the narrative anticipating what she will do). The spies follow her plan exactly: mountain, three days, then return.

The Spies' Report to Yehoshua (2:23–24)

They report to Yehoshua with the crucial conclusion: "**Hashem has given the whole land into our hands.**"

Their evidence: the inhabitants are terrified. They may also have been encouraged by how easily they found a collaborator.

This report carries a powerful ironic reversal: the very Israelites who had been the ones melting away in fear of the land's inhabitants are now being told that the people of the land are melting away before **them**. The inhabitants have no power and no courage left.

Notably, the text does not describe what Yehoshua does with this message. Perhaps he passes it along to the rest of the people, which would make sense given his role. More importantly, as established in the previous chapter, Yehoshua himself likely needed **chizuk** (encouragement) — a boost to his morale confirming that he wasn't embarking on a reckless mission and that it would be safe. This message from the spies, rooted in Rachav's testimony, provides exactly that reassurance. With this, the story continues forward.

Full Transcript

Yehoshua Chapter 2: The Spies and Rachav — A Rectification of the Sin of the Meraglim

Setting the Chapter in Context: The Final Journey into the Land

Today we're reading Yehoshua chapter 2. As we've discussed, this chapter is one more part in the beginning stories — the stories even before the conquest of the land. It's the stories of arriving at the land, or stories of the travel, we could call it. In some sense, as we'll see in the next chapter, it can be seen almost as a continuation of the travels in the desert, which are always defined by going through different steps of *masa'ot* [journeys], different travels, right? They travel from here to there, from there to here.

This is the last travel, or like last travel, the last step, the last station where they were in the Midbar [desert] is Arvot Moav [the plains of Moab]. And now, all of these first few chapters of Sefer Yehoshua are about the next travel, which is from Arvot Moav into the land, into Gilgal and into Yericho, which would be the next story — the first war that Yehoshua fights.

The Mission of the Two Spies

Now before that, in order to prepare — they know they're going to go into the land and into Yericho specifically, this was

the first city they're going to conquer because it's the first city across from where they were sitting in Arvot Moav — so we have the story of two *meraglim* [spies] that Yehoshua sends from Shittim. Shittim is again Arvot Moav, the same place where they are. And he sends them to check out Yericho, to check out the land.

A Tikkun for the Sin of the Meraglim

Obviously, everyone that reads the story of the *meraglim* recognizes that this is some sense of *tikkun* [rectification], some kind of rectification for what happened with the *meraglim* in Midbar. And we could note many differences between this story and the story in Parashat Shelach, where Yehoshua was one of the two *meraglim*, as we discussed, that didn't make the thing worse. They didn't come back with bad news. They didn't make people scared and break their morale, so that that's why they weren't in the Midbar for 40 years.

And here they're having *meraglim* in some sense for practical purposes in order to find out about the city. That's what the Ramban claims in Parashat Shelach. He claims that the *meraglim* were not — as it seems from the problem, from the sin that they did, from the things that they said — they were not there to check if the land was really as good as they were promised. That's not what *meraglim* are really about.

Meraglim are just scouts there to find out: Where do you go? Where's the door of the city? How do you — again, what's going to be the best place to break in? And so on. But they didn't actually answer that.

But in reality, also these meraglim don't — at least not from what we read, not in the pasuk [verse]. Like, they might have done such things. They might have done some reconnaissance and find out where the weak points are, like Yosef said, right? [lir'ot et ervat] לראות את ערות הארץ Meraglim are literally just so that [ha'aretz — to see the nakedness/weakness of the land you're finding the weak points of the land where it's going to .be conquered, things like that

The Counter-Message: Terror Has Fallen on the Inhabitants

But we actually see these meraglim coming back with the precise opposite message that the earlier meraglim came back with. And it's, I think, even explicitly said here to be a counter to that, because it's not only saying that currently the people of the land are afraid — of course, they didn't go to the same place; they went to Yericho, then the meraglim went to Hebron, maybe that's the difference. But it's saying that they are scared of us, and they're scared of us and of our God since the times of the Creation [meaning since the Exodus]. It's really very much echoing, as we'll see, echoing the language and the style that it says in Shirat HaYam [the Song at the Sea] ,[namogu — melted] נמוגו about how all the people around are they're afraid, they're scared, they lose their entire hope, their .entire strength, their moral strength. They're lost

So it's very much explicitly anti — it's not only like at this stage there were already meraglim that told us good tidings, good messages. It's already contradicting what Moshe's meraglim said. So I think that although we could read it as being more simple, more practical, while at least from the result of the first meraglim we think that those meraglim were not just practical — they gave a report that said that originally it was a bad idea to go to this land — I think a better reading would be to think that these meraglim are explicitly contradicting what those other meraglim said. Not about if the land is good or bad — that's not the question. But about the more important thing, which the meraglim also agreed that the land is good. That's not really what they complained about. What they complained about was that the people there are strong and that they're not going to be able to conquer them.

And these meraglim explicitly claim, come back and bring back the message, that the people are afraid and it will be easy to conquer them. They're given in our hand. Okay, so that's the general story.

But also, I think this story is very interesting and there's a lot that makes us think about it.

The Structure of the Story

Yehoshua Sends the Spies in Secret

Let's go through the structure of the story. So Yehoshua sends I [cheresh] חרש from Shittim two people, meraglim, and says think cheresh means silently, hiddenly. So I think that this also is a big difference between what Yehoshua did and what Moshe did. Moshe sent meraglim publicly, as he more or less explicitly says in Sefer Devarim — people asked for it. Everyone knew about it. Everyone was following what's going on. Where are they? When are they coming back? And when they came back, it explicitly said that וישבו אתם דבר ואת כל העדה they returned them]

they gave the answer to — [word and to all the congregation .everyone

And these meraglim very explicitly were not. They were sent by Yehoshua himself and they reported back to him himself. And this is probably something useful. Of course, we need some spies, but we don't need everyone to know everything all the time. The whole point of spies is to be a secret. And here it was a secret not only — apparently, I don't have a clear 100% proof, but not only is it a secret, right? Spies are secret relative to the people they're spying on, but it was also secret relative to the people they're spying for. Spies also nowadays act usually because if people will find out, it will tip off the other side. And here they're closer already, so probably that's another simple reason why it had to be done secretly, quietly.

And Yehoshua tells them, gives them the command, gives them the instruction to go see the land. And again, it doesn't say exactly — not like Moshe that gave detailed instructions and so [amtzot — strengths] אמצות what they should see, the on. He just told them "see," and we assume that they understand themselves what to see. And this is part of the silence, part of the less words being, less public words given here than in the story of Moshe, because they're doing things .with more discretion this time

The Spies Arrive at Rachav's House

And they do, and they actually do with more discretion, unlike the previous men that went and it seems that made some kind of ruckus. They went and they took some fruit and maybe people noticed, and they explicitly discussed how the Anakim [giants] that they met there seemed to have noticed them and at least said something about them or related to them. And here, they're very explicitly trying to, you know, go undercover and find a silent way to find out what's going on.

ishah zonah — אשה זונה] So they go and they find a house of an There's a conflict in meforshim .[prostitute woman [commentators] — to read this literally as a prostitute, or maybe it means something like miscellaneous, like some owner of a tavern or like a place where people eat or like a hotel, something like that. I don't think there's such a big difference in these two things if you think about it. But I think the Ibn Ezra very strongly claims that zonah always means a .prostitute. I think that's the more reasonable reading here

And it gives her name: Rachav. This is the first time and the last time it says her name here. Later it says her name again, but in this story, this is the first and last time that she has a name. Nobody else in the story has a name. It's a very interesting thing to note when you read Tanakh — people have names and don't have names. Here it doesn't say the name of anashim meraglim — men,] אנשים מרגלים the meraglim. It says and alongside the rest, it's also the last time they're ,[spies called meraglim. In the rest of the story it just says anashim — .people, men

And the same thing with the woman. The woman has a name ushma Rachav — and her name was] ושמחה רחב ,first here and we'll hear her name later. But in the rest of the ,[Rachav the woman, the ,[ha'isha — the woman] האשה story she's just .woman

vayishkevu shamah — and they lay down] וישכבו שמה] And They go to sleep there. This was probably their attempt .[there to be undercover, to like — this is their cover story. They're just travelers staying at this woman's place, and they were

probably assuming to somehow find out from the people there, somehow get some news, find out what's going on

The Spies Are Discovered

Now what happens? Somehow the people of Jericho discovered — they were discovered. It doesn't say how they were discovered. It's an interesting question: How were they discovered? **ויאמר למלך יריחו** discovered? But they were discovered **vayeamer lemelech Yericho** — and it was said to the king of [Jericho] it was told, it was said to the king of Jericho. — [Jericho Again, no name. We don't know his name. The king of Jericho was told about these people. It says they were — and they were **אנשים באו הנה הלילה מבני ישראל להכפר את הארץ** .told also who they were **anashim ba'u henah halilah mibnei Yisrael lachpor et ha'aretz** — men have come here tonight from Bnei Yisrael to **Lachpor** [to dig] doesn't mean literally to [dig into the land dig; it means exactly this — to undermine, right? To find the weaknesses of the land. That's the job of meraglim

So it's a mystery who told, who told the king of Jericho.

The King's Demand and Rachav's Deception

And the king of Jericho — it's told he sends messengers, sends to Rachav. Oh yeah, sorry, he has her name, but later that's the last time. He sends to Rachav and says, "Take out, bring out the people that have come to you, because they've come to destroy the land, they've come to undermine the whole land." **הוציאו אלינו ונדעם** This reminds us of the language of like **hotzi'u eleinu venede'em** — bring them out to us that we may] right? When someone is a guest at someone's, it's [know them like he's under his protection, and then sometimes there's the demand: give him out, produce the person, don't leave him under your protection, and give him over to us

Now the woman does not do that. So it doesn't explain in this stage of the story why she doesn't do that. What she does is — and it doesn't say in the story, but we have to assume that she somehow stalls for time. She doesn't let the king's men come in. In other words, apparently — and this is I think the simple meaning — apparently they're respecting her house. It's her house. Like, they have a demand for her to give over the people, to release them from her custody, that they shouldn't be under her, they shouldn't be under her protection. But as long as they're under her protection, this is like — they're asking, it wasn't like a no-knock warrant. They didn't walk into her house. They're standing outside and waiting for her to bring them out.

And she goes in as if she's going to go bring them or something. And instead of bringing them out, she takes — she hides them. And it doesn't explain how she hides them or where she hides them. That we'll find out after we hear what she told the king's messengers.

But she hid them, and she told the king's messengers: "Yes, they've come to me, and I don't know — I didn't know from where." So she claims ignorance, and maybe she was ignorant. She doesn't know that they are from Bnei Yisrael. If she would, she would have had to give them over. She would have to report them right away. So she didn't know.

And then she says they were closing the door, the the door of the city, in the darkness, and the men left. **שער** And she doesn't know where they went. She says, "Go chase them! Maybe you'll find them, you'll catch them. Go chase them."

So this is also part of her strategy. She distracts the king's messengers. She says, "Oh, I know where they went," and she

Rachav's Strategic Deception

And she goes in as if she's going to go bring them or something, and instead of bringing them out, she hides them. It doesn't explain how she hides them or where she hides them — that we'll find out after we hear what she told the king's messengers. But she hid them, and she told the king's messengers: yes, they've come to me, and I don't know, I didn't know from where. So she claims ignorance, and maybe she was ignorant — she doesn't know that they were from the Israelites. If she would, she would have had to give them over, she would have had to report them right away, so she didn't know.

And then she says: they were closing the door, the **sha'ar** [gate], the door of the city, in the darkness, and the men left, and she doesn't know where they went. She says, well go chase them, maybe you'll find them, or you'll catch them, go chase them.

Sending the Pursuers in the Wrong Direction

So this is also part of her strategy. She distracts the king's messengers. She says, oh, I know where they went, and she assumes, as we'll see later, she assumes probably there was one direction in which to run. So when she says they went through the gate of the city, they know exactly where to go chase them. So she's sending them in the opposite direction from where the men are, and that's how she got them off her back, she got them off the people to save them.

How She Hid Them

And here the text goes back and tells us exactly how she hid them. So she had them on the roof, hid them in some flax that was still from the stocks — stocks of flax that were there, apparently. That's what people used to dry out on the roof, some flax to make linen and so on. So she hid them amongst that.

And meanwhile, the men, the king's men, are chasing them all the way back to the river, back to the **Yarden** [Jordan], where the **ma'abarot** [crossings] — the places where they crossed the Yarden. They closed the gate after them, and so the gate is closed. So now she knows that the people, the king's messengers, are not chasing them in the city — they're all out, they're chasing them on some kind of wild goose chase outside of the city.

Rachav's Declaration of Faith

Now, before the two men, the two **meraglim** [spies], go to sleep, she goes up to the roof, to the hiding place, and she speaks to them. And this is the most important — the whole story is here for this discussion, for this dialogue, which she tells them. And we should probably understand that this is also why she's hiding them, why she's saving them.

"I Know That Hashem Has Given You the Land"

She says this: she says, I know that Hashem — and now she says Hashem's name, **yitein lachem et ha'aretz** [has given you the land] — and your fear has fallen upon us. We're all scared of you, and all the people that live in the land, all the inhabitants of the land, are **namogu** [melting] before you — they're melting, or something like that. They're all scared of you.

So now, and why are they scared? What caused us this fear? What caused us to think that your God has given you the land, and we should be scared of you? Because we've heard what he did to the waters of the **Yam Suf** [Reed Sea] — he dried up the Yam Suf when you went out of Egypt. And we heard what you did to the two kings of the **Emori** [Amorites], which are on the other side of the Yarden, which you destroyed.

So these are the two main, two big victories that the people had: over the Egyptians in the Yam Suf, and over Sichon and Og later in **Arvot Moav** [the Plains of Moab], the **malchei ha'Emori** [kings of the Amorites]. And we've heard this, and our heart has melted. Nobody has power, the spirit of any man is not standing anymore before you.

The Theological Declaration

And this is all because we recognize, we realize — and this is also very important for the text to say, as we said in **Shirat HaYam** [the Song at the Sea] — we recognize that your God is the God in heaven and earth. This is Rachav's extreme declaration of faith in the Jewish God. And because she's heard that he gives the people victory over all their enemies, therefore she's saying: so basically I know that you're going to win, but I don't want to be one of the losers.

The Oath and the Deal

So she asks them to swear to her. She asks them: swear to me in the name of Hashem, in the name of this God, this strongest God, and do goodness with me, do **chesed** [kindness], and be kind with me, with me and my family — with me and my **beit avi** [father's house]. As you've seen many times, it's a unit of family, it's like one unit below **mishpacha** [extended family]. So the lowest level of family I think, what we call a nuclear family, or maybe an extended family, but something like that — not more extended, not like a tribe or a clan.

And give me a sign, give me an **ot emet** [true sign] that you will save me, and make sure that me, my parents, my brothers and sisters are still alive. So she might have been a single woman — she doesn't seem to have her own household yet. She's a single woman, that's what we should assume from this story. But she does have parents, and she does have siblings, and she's asking them all to be saved.

The Spies' Response

And the people [the spies], since they're under her protection, if they don't agree with her, they don't really have a choice. But they agree, and they swear. And I think this is how they swear: they say, our soul, our life is going to be instead of yours — **nafshenu tachatechem lamut** [our lives in place of yours unto death]. You deserve death, if — as long as you give a condition, as long as you don't reveal us, you don't tell this thing. So you don't reveal the deal we just had, or you don't reveal us now to the city, because that's their big fear, that she's going to tell on them and they're going to be killed. And also, but maybe even later, as we see later, if she comes around and tells people, oh there was this deal, then, you know, people will have ways to make intrigues and so on, and destroy the plan to conquer the city.

So they promise her, they swear on their life. Right, they don't swear on the name of Hashem, as she asked, or at least it doesn't say explicitly, but they swear on their life. They promise their life instead of hers, as long as she fulfills her condition. And they say, yes, when God will give us the land, when Hashem will give us the land, we will do with you

chesed ve'emet [kindness and truth] — we'll do kindness, we'll do truth, we'll be honest to your deal, and we will save you and your family.

The Escape Plan

So now that she had this promise, now she has a way — she needs to help them escape the city, because otherwise they're going to be stuck there.

Lowering Them from the Wall

So she helps them escape. What does she do? She gives them a rope, she drops them through a window of her house. Now her house is in the wall of the city. The city has a wall, as we'll see figure prominently in the next story — not the next story, but the story of the conquest of Jericho. But her house was in the wall. And this is how in some ancient cities there were houses built within the walls of the city. So her window, the window of her house, is sort of going out of the city. So if you climb with a rope out of the window, you're outside of the city.

Instructions to Hide in the Mountains

And she tells them the way to escape, which she already set up before, right? She says: you go to the mountains on the other way, you hide for three days until the chasers, the people chasing you, will come back. And then you can go wherever you want, because she sent them to chase them towards the other direction. Then she said go the other direction, go towards the mountain, which is to the west, and then you'll stay there for three days, and then you'll go back. And while the people that are looking for you will have already given up and come back to the city, and go back.

The Conditions: The Sign of the Red Thread

And that's what they do, they go — I mean, one second, before they do that. So now they say, okay, but now they — it's really, I don't know, I don't have a clearly good explanation for why they split like this, but after this, they add conditions to their promise. In other words, in some sense maybe this is the fulfillment of something she asked, because she asked for a sign that they will not destroy her family, and they give her this sign.

Why the Conditions Come Now

So they tell her like this: we've sworn to you to save your family, but we absolve ourselves of this oath if — like this, we're going to come back in this land, right, when our people are coming to conquer it, you're going to take this red string, red thread, a **tikvat chut hashani** [line of crimson thread], a line of thread or something. You will tie it in this window, which you've dropped us out.

So it seems like they're having this discussion with them already down on the ground, outside the window, and they're talking to her. Although I think that's how we have to read it. And I think, although it seems not nice, it seems like this is why they're adding this condition here — because they were afraid of speaking at length, of adding conditions, while they were in her house, and they really needed her protection. Now they're slightly, they're slightly less [dependent], because they're already out of the city, they already have a plan to escape. So of course, she could still tell on them, she could still cause the people to go find them where they are, because she knows the direction that they're going. But they're somewhat safer, so they feel comfortable to sort of give their conditions of the deal that they made.

The Specific Terms

And their condition is: you will hang this string, this thread, in this window, this precise window. So there's some nice symmetry here — in this window, which you're saving us through, you will hang this red string. And what you will do is, you will gather together your family, your brothers, your sisters, your parents, into your house. And now, like this: anyone goes out of your house, we're not responsible for him. **Damo b'roshe** [his blood is on his head]. But anyone who will stay in the house, it's his blood on us if he is harmed.

So they're saying, we're going to take responsibility for saving you, but you have to give us a sign. And probably there's like a practical reason for this, right? Because how else are they going to remember where, or they're going to have to also communicate this to the other warriors, as we'll see later. They have to communicate this to make sure that her family isn't destroyed. So you're going to have this sign, and this is a secret sign, of course. She's not allowed to say this.

The Secrecy Requirement

And they make an additional condition: if you tell anyone this, again, we're free of our oath. Because then everyone will put a red thread and the sign won't be worth anything, right? She has to make sure it's a secret between — it's a secret sign, a secret signal. And this secret signal will cause her and her family to be saved, and they take responsibility for that.

And she agrees with that. She says yes, that's how it is. And they go, and she actually puts this thread in the window — maybe not now, but this is the story pre-empting us what she will do.

The Spies' Return and Report

And they follow her plan. They go to the mountain, after three days they go back, and they come back to Yehoshua bin Nun.

They tell him the whole story, and the most important thing is, this is the end of the story: they tell Yehoshua, Hashem has given our hands the whole land — **natan Hashem b'yadeinu et kol ha'aretz** [Hashem has given into our hands the whole land]. Hashem has given the whole land in our hands, right?

Because they see — how do they know this? Because they see that everyone is so scared. And maybe also because they got even, already it was so easy to get a collaborator. Maybe they say it might be easy to get even more, I don't know. And these are the two things. So we know that Hashem gave us the land, because the inhabitants of the land are afraid from us, they're all scared of us. And therefore, this is the opposite—

The Contrast with the Original Spies

This is the precise opposite of what the Meraglim [spies] of Moshe said. They were the ones that melted away, that were scared from the people of the land. Now they're saying the people of the land are scared of us, they're all melted, they have no power, they have no courage. And this is their message.

Joshua's Response and the Unstated Continuation

It doesn't say what Yeshua [Joshua] does with this message. Maybe Yeshua then passes along the message to the rest of the people, which seems to be something he should be doing. Because remember, Yeshua probably himself—or Yeshua himself, like we saw earlier in the previous chapter—Yeshua himself might have needed *chizuk* [encouragement], might have needed this boost for himself to know that he's not doing a crazy thing, to know that it will be safe.

So he has this message, and with this the story can continue.