

Numbers 13:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli.

Analysis

Dan's spy was 'Ammiel the son of Gemalli.' The name 'Ammiel' means 'God is my kinsman' or 'people of God,' claiming covenantal relationship. Yet claiming kinship with God while refusing to trust Him exposes the claim as false. Dan's blessing warned they'd be 'a serpent by the way' (Gen 49:17) - potentially dangerous and prone to idolatry (Judg 18:30-31). Ammiel fulfilled this negative potential, his fearful report striking like a serpent at Israel's faith. This teaches that verbal profession means nothing without lived faith. Jesus warned about those claiming 'Lord, Lord' whom He never knew (Matt 7:21-23). Relationship with God requires obedient trust, not mere words.

Historical Context

Dan, despite being numerous (Num 1:39), received small coastal territory, later migrating north to conquer Laish/Leshem (Josh 19:47, Judg 18). This demonstrated inability to fully possess their allotted inheritance - fulfilling their tribe's problematic blessing. Dan's idolatry became infamous, with one of Jeroboam's golden calves placed there (1 Kings 12:29). Dan's omission from Revelation's tribal list (Rev 7:4-8) suggests judgment on persistent apostasy. Ammiel never saw even the failed inheritance his tribe eventually received. His death in wilderness exemplifies forfeiting blessing through unbelief. The tribe that claimed God as kinsman repeatedly proved unfaithful.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Does your life demonstrate genuine relationship with God, or merely verbal claims without corresponding obedience?
2. How does Ammiel's false claim of divine kinship warn you to examine whether your profession matches your practice?

Interlinear Text

לְמִטָּה	בְּ	אֲמִיֵּל	בֶּן	גִּמְלִי
Of the tribe	of Dan	Ammiel	the son	of Gemalli
H4294	H1835	H5988	H1121	H1582

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