

Numbers 13:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi.

Analysis

Naphtali's representative was 'Nahbi the son of Vophsi.' The name 'Nahbi' means 'hidden' or 'secretive,' and tragically, he hid his faith (if any) behind the majority's unbelief. Naphtali's blessing described the tribe as 'a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words' (Gen 49:21) - eloquence and grace. Yet Nahbi's words were anything but goodly, spreading fearful discouragement. This illustrates that eloquence without truth is dangerous. Many persuasive speakers lead people astray (Col 2:4, 2 Pet 2:1-3). What matters isn't rhetorical skill but faithful proclamation of God's truth. One Caleb speaking faith outweighs ten eloquent voices promoting unbelief.

Historical Context

Naphtali would later receive territory in Galilee, the region where Jesus conducted much of His ministry (Matt 4:13-16 quotes Isa 9:1-2 about 'Galilee of the nations'). This northern tribe's land became crucial for gospel spread. Yet Nahbi never saw this inheritance, dying in wilderness for unbelief. The contrast is striking - his descendant's territory hosted the Light of the World, while he died in darkness of unbelief. This demonstrates God's sovereign purposes proceed despite individual failures. His plans for Naphtali's territory weren't thwarted by Nahbi's sin; God simply used the next generation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Are you hiding your faith behind majority opinion, or boldly declaring truth even when outnumbered?
2. How can you ensure your words give life and build faith rather than spreading discouragement and doubt?

Interlinear Text

לְמִטֵּה	נַפְתָּלִי	נַחֲבִי	בֶן	וּפְזִי
Of the tribe	of Naphtali	Nahbi	the son	of Vophsi
H4294	H5321	H5147	H1121	H2058

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