

Numbers 13:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

Analysis

The ten spies brought an 'evil report' (Hebrew 'dibbah', meaning slander or whispering). They slandered the land God called good, claiming 'it is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.' This contradicted their earlier testimony of its abundance, showing how fear distorts truth. Their words constituted rebellion against God Himself, not mere military timidity.

Historical Context

The phrase 'eateth up inhabitants' may refer to the constant warfare between Canaanite city-states, or possibly to difficult agricultural conditions in some regions. Regardless, their negative spin contradicted God's promise.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does fear cause you to misrepresent or exaggerate difficulties?
2. In what ways might your negative reports about God's calling discourage others from faith?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבִיאוּ	דִּבַּר	אֶרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר	לְתוֹר	אֶתְּה	אֶל
And they brought up	an evil report	The land	H834	to search	H853	H413
H3318	H1681	H776		H8446		
בְּנֵי יִ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	לֵאמֹר	אֶרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר		
unto the children	of Israel	saying	The land	H834		
H1121	H3478	H559	H776			
עַבְדֵּי רַבּוֹ	בָּה	לְתוֹר	אֶתְּה	אֶרֶץ	אֲכָלָה	
through which we have gone	H0	to search	H853	The land	that eateth up	
H5674		H8446		H776	H398	
וְשֹׁכְבֵי יָדָה	וְכָל הָאָדָם	וְאֲשֶׁר	כִּי רָאִינוּ			
the inhabitants	H1931	H3605	thereof and all the people	H834	that we saw	
H3427		H5971			H7200	
בְּתוֹכָהּ	אֲנִשִּׁי	מִדּוֹת:				
in it	H376	of a great stature				
H8432		H4060				

Additional Cross-References

Amos 2:9 (Parallel theme): Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

Matthew 23:13 (Parallel theme): But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

