

Numbers 32:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

Analysis

They went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land (עַדְיָנָחַל אֶשְׁכּוֹל וַיֵּרְאוּ)—Eshcol means 'cluster,' named for the enormous grape cluster the spies carried back (Numbers 13:23), visual proof of Canaan's richness. Yet seeing God's provision led to opposite conclusions: Joshua/Caleb saw divine bounty; the ten spies saw unconquerable danger. **They discouraged the heart of the children of Israel** (וַיִּנְיְאוּ אֶת־לֵב בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל, vayeni'u)—the verb means 'to dishearten/frustrate,' causing corporate despair.

Moses' accusation cuts deep: Gad and Reuben's request will produce the same result—**that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them**. Individual choice becomes corporate catastrophe. Their cattle-focused pragmatism could infect the entire nation with doubt about conquering Canaan. This reveals how personal decisions in God's people always carry communal consequences. Selfish choices discourage the faithful.

Historical Context

The Eshcol valley lay near Hebron in Judah's hill country (Numbers 13:22-23). The ten spies' evil report (Numbers 13:32) led to national rebellion and divine

judgment: that entire generation died in the wilderness except Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 14:29-30).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do your life choices—especially decisions to settle for less than God's best—affect others' faith?
2. What's the difference between legitimate caution and discouraging unbelief?
3. When have you been an 'Eshcol spy'—seeing God's blessing yet spreading despair rather than faith?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּצְאוּ	וַעַד	בְּחַלְמֵי	אֶשְׁכּוֹל	וַיַּרְאוּ	אֶת	
For when they went up	H5704	unto the valley	of Eshcol	and saw	H853	
H5927		H5158	H812	H7200		
הָאָרֶץ	וַיִּדְּאוּ	אֶת	לֵב	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל		
into the land	they discouraged	H853	the heart	of the children	of Israel	
H776	H5106		H3820	H1121	H3478	
לְבַלְתִּי	בֹא	אֶל	הָאָרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר	נָתַן	לָהֶם
H1115	that they should not go	H413	into the land	H834	had given	H0
	H935		H776		H5414	
יְהוָה:						
which the LORD						
H3068						

