

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO NUMBERS 13

In this chapter an order is given by the Lord, to send twelve men into the land of Canaan, to search and spy it, and which was accordingly executed, (^{<04E3E>}Numbers 13:1-3); and the names of the twelve persons are given, (^{<04E3E>}Numbers 13:4-16); the instructions they received from Moses, what part of the land they should enter into first, and what observations they should make on it, (^{<04E37>}Numbers 13:17-20); which they attended to, and on their return brought some of the fruit of the land with them, (^{<04E32>}Numbers 13:21-26); and gave an account of it, that it was a very fruitful land, but the inhabitants mighty, and their cities walled, (^{<04E37>}Numbers 13:27-29); which threw the people into confusion, but that they were stilled by Caleb, one of the spies, who encouraged them, (^{<04E3D>}Numbers 13:30); but all the rest, excepting Joshua, brought an ill report of it, as not to be subdued and conquered by them, (^{<04E3E>}Numbers 13:31-33).

Ver. 1. *And the Lord Spake unto Moses*, etc.] When in the wilderness of Paran, either at Rithmah or Kadesh; this was on the twenty ninth day of the month Sivan, on which day, the Jews say ^{f153}, the spies were sent to search the land, which was a scheme of the Israelites' own devising, and which they first proposed to Moses, who approved of it as prudential and political, at least he gave his assent unto it to please the people, and carried the affair to the Lord, and consulted him about it; who, rather permitting than approving, gave the following order; for the motion carried in it a good deal of unbelief, calling in question whether the land was so good as had been represented unto them, fearing it was not accessible, and that it would be difficult to get into it, and were desirous of knowing the best way of getting into it before they proceeded any further; all which were unnecessary, if they would have fully trusted in the Lord, in his word, promise, power, providence, and guidance; who had told them it was a land flowing with milk and honey; that he would show them the way to it, by going before them in a pillar of cloud and fire; that he would assuredly bring them into it, having espied it for them, and promised it unto them; so

that there was no need on any account for them to send spies before them; however, to gratify them in this point, he assented to it:

saying; as follows.

Ver. 2. *Send thou men*, etc.] Which is rather a permission than a command; so Jarchi interprets it,

“send men according to thy mind, I do not command thee, but if thou pleasest send;”

this he observed was agreeable to Moses, and to the Israelites, and therefore granted it, or allowed them to take their own way, and which issued badly, as it always does, when men are left to their own counsel:

that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel; called the land of Canaan, though it consisted of seven nations, from the principal of them; this God had given in promise to the children of Israel, and had now brought them to the borders of it; nay, had given them orders to go up and possess it; but they were for searching it first, to know what sort of a land it was, and which was the best way of entering into it, which is here permitted them, (see ^(R12)Deuteronomy 1:21,22);

of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man; excepting the tribe of Levi; the reason of which was because they were to have no inheritance in the land, (^(R10)Deuteronomy 10:9 18:1,2); but then, to make up the number twelve, the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are reckoned as two tribes:

everyone a ruler among them; a prince in his tribe; so were men of honour and credit, of power and authority, of prudence and probity, and who might be trusted with such an affair, and their report believed: they were not indeed princes of the highest rank, not the same that assisted in taking the numbers of the people, who were captains over their several tribes, as in (^(R10)Numbers 1:4-16 2:2-31), etc. but were inferior princes and rulers, perhaps rulers of thousands.

Ver. 3. *And Moses, by the commandment of the Lord*, etc.] By his power, permission, and leave, as Jarchi, that there might be no delay through his means:

sent them from the wilderness of Paran; from Rithmah or Kadeshbarnea, which seem to be one and the same place in that wilderness: this, as before

observed, was on the twenty ninth day of Sivan: (see Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:1”);

all those [were] heads of the children of Israel; were not mean and vulgar men, but persons of rule, who bore some office of magistracy ant government among the people in their respective tribes.

Ver. 4. *And these [were] their names, of the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur.*] From (^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4-15), there is nothing but the names of the said persons, whose sons they were, and of what tribe; and the several tribes are mentioned, not according to the order of the birth of the patriarchs, nor according to the dignity of their mothers that bore them, but, very likely, according to the order in which they were sent, two by two, to search the land; for had they gone all twelve in a body, they would have been liable to suspicion: the signification of their names is of no importance to know, and will give us no light into their characters or the reason of their choice, nor are their parents elsewhere taken notice of, nor any of them but Joshua and Caleb, of whom we shall hear more hereafter.

Ver. 5. *Of the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 6. *Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 7. *Of the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 8. *Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea the son of Nun.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 9. *Of the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 10. *Of the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 11. *Of the tribe of Joseph, [namely], of the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 12. *Of the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli.*] (See Gill on “^{Q1E30}Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 13. *Of the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael.*] (See Gill on ⁽⁻⁰¹³⁰⁾Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 14. *Of the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi.*] (See Gill on ⁽⁻⁰¹³⁰⁾Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 15. *Of the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.*] (See Gill on ⁽⁻⁰¹³⁰⁾Numbers 13:4”).

Ver. 16. *These [are] the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land,* etc.] Which is observed after the catalogue is given of them, (⁽⁻⁰¹³⁰⁾Numbers 13:4-15); and this is repeated that their names may be taken notice of, which stand on record to the disgrace of the greater number of them, and to the honour of two only, Joshua and Caleb; and on the former the following remark is made;

and Moses called Oshea the son of Nun, Jehoshua; whether it was at this time that Moses gave him this name is not certain; if it was, then he is called so before by anticipation, for he is several times called so before this, and even the first time we hear of him, (⁽⁻⁰¹⁷⁰⁾Exodus 17:9); wherefore Chaskuni reads it, Moses had called; but Jarchi thinks it was now given him, and that Moses prayed for him $\text{Æ}[\text{y}\text{ç}\text{w}\text{y}\text{ hy}$, “Jah” or “Jehovah” save thee from the counsel of the spies: the name is the same with Jesus, as appears from (⁽⁻³⁰⁴⁸⁾Hebrews 4:8); and a type he was of Christ the Saviour, whose name is so called, because he saves his people from their sins, (⁽⁻⁴⁰¹²⁾Matthew 1:21); and brings them to heaven, as Joshua was the instrument of saving the Israelites and bringing them into the land of Canaan.

Ver. 17. *And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan,* etc.] He sent them from Kadeshbarnea, as Caleb affirms, (⁽⁻⁰¹⁴⁷⁾Joshua 14:7);

and said unto them, go ye up this [way] southward; pointing as it were with his finger which way they should go, even up such a hill southward; and which, as Aben Ezra observes, was not the south of the camp, but the south of the land of Canaan; and who further observes, that it is well known that Egypt, from whence the Israelites now came, was to the south of the land of Israel, of which this is a demonstration; the latitude of Egypt is less than thirty degrees, and the latitude of Jerusalem is thirty three, and the wilderness of Paran was in the south of the land of Egypt: it should be rendered by “the south”, as in (⁽⁻⁰¹³²⁾Numbers 13:22); or from the “south”

^{f154}, since the Israelites must go northward, as a learned man ^{f155} observes, to enter into the land of Canaan: now this south part of Canaan afterwards belonged to the tribe of Judah, and lying southward, and mountainous, was dry and barren, (^{<0610>}Joshua 15:1,19); and was, as Jarchi says, the dregs of the land of Israel; and here, as he observes, the same method was taken as merchants do, who, when they show their goods, show the worst first, and then the best:

and go up into the mountain; which was inhabited by the Amorites, (^{<0614>}Deuteronomy 1:44); and was afterwards called the mountainous or hill country of Judea, (^{<0619>}Luke 1:39,65).

Ver. 18. *And see the land what it [is], and the people that dwelleth therein*, etc.] The situation and condition of the country, and the nature, temper, disposition, and constitution of the inhabitants, by which it might be judged whether it was a desirable thing to possess it, and whether it was practicable to subdue and take it;

whether they [be] strong or weak, few or many; whether able-bodied men fit for war, and of spirit, strength, and courage, or feeble and pusillanimous, weak and timorous; and whether their number was small or great, by which they would be capable of judging whether they were in a state and condition to defend themselves or not, and whether a conquest of them was easy or not; the last of the two things in the preceding clause is first particularly explained and enlarged upon, as is usual in the Hebrew language.

Ver. 19. *And what the land [is] that they dwell in, whether it [be] good or bad*, etc.] Whether the air is good, the climate temperate, and the earth well watered, and has good convenience of springs, fountains, and rivers, and so wholesome or healthful; or otherwise, which is the first thing they were directed to observe, though here put in the second place:

and what cities [they be] they dwell in, whether in tents or strong holds; whether in tents, as the Israelites now lived, and as the Kedarenes, as Aben Ezra notes, and other Arabians, who encamped in tents, or who dwelt in villages, and unwall'd towns, unfortified cities, according to the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; or whether in fortified cities, towns, and garrisons; by which it would appear whether it would be easy to come at them, and fall upon them, or difficult to subdue and conquer them; for if their cities were fortified, it would not be so easy to take them, and would

require time. Jarchi thinks, that by this it might be known whether they were men of strength and courage, or whether weak and fearful persons; seeing if they dwelt in villages they were strong men, and depended on their own strength, but if they dwelt in fortified cities, they were weak.

Ver. 20. *And what the land [is], whether it be fat or lean,* etc.] That is, what the soil of it is, whether it be rich and fertile, or whether it be poor and barren, which would be seen by the fruits it produced, this being now the fruitful season of the year; and so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and what is the praise of the land, whether its fruits are fat or lean;”

plump and full, rich and juicy, or otherwise, as their grapes, olives, etc. whether it was a land flowing with milk and honey, (⁽²³³⁾Exodus 33:3), abounding with all good things, and those of the best sort, or not:

whether there be wood thereon or not; timber for building, and other manual operations, or wood for fuel, which are great conveniences in a country; though the Targum of Jonathan interprets it of fruit-bearing trees, which bear fruits fit for eating, or not, as apples, pears, figs, pomegranates, etc.

and be ye of good courage; and not be afraid of being taken up for spies, suggesting, that the power and providence of God would protect and preserve them, in which they should put their trust, and be of good heart:

and bring of the fruit of the land; as a sample and specimen of what it brought forth, which would serve to encourage and animate the people in general, to go up and possess it:

now the time [was] the time of the first ripe grapes; when they and the other summer fruits were coming to their perfection; and which was a proper season to see them in, and bring a sample of them; though Chaskuni suggests, that it was a more dangerous time to bring off fruit, because the keepers of the vineyards were then there; and hence they needed strengthening, and are bid to be of good courage; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“the day on which they went was the twenty ninth of the month Sivan, the time of the first ripe grapes;”

and as this month answers to part of our May and part of June, and it being at the latter end of that month, it must be about the middle of June; by which we may observe the forwardness of grapes in the land of Canaan, the time of vintage now drawing nigh.

Ver. 21. *So they went up and searched the land*, etc.] Went up the mountains as they were directed, and passed through the whole land; diligently inquired into everything material belonging to it, according to their instructions, and made their observations on it, and on the inhabitants, and their habitations:

from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath; this wilderness, from whence they went, seems to be the same with the wilderness of Paran, called Zin; perhaps from the multitude of thorns in it; but different from the wilderness of Sin, (^{<0260>}Exodus 16:1), which was nearer Egypt; but this was on the south quarter of the land of Canaan, along by the coast of Edom, (^{<0648>}Numbers 34:3 ^{<0650>}Joshua 15:1); Rehob, they are said to come to first from thence, was in the tribe of Asher in later times, (^{<0628>}Joshua 19:28); and lay to the north or northwest of the land of Canaan. Jerom says ^{f156}, that in his times there was a village called Rooba, four miles from Scythopolis. Hamath was the northern boundary of the land of Israel, and was in the tribe of Naphtali, when it came into the hands of the Israelites, and lay to the northeast, as the former place to the northwest, (^{<0640>}Numbers 34:7,8 ^{<0625>}Joshua 19:35); so that their direction, as they went, was south and north, and west and east: their journey is described by Jarchi thus; they went on the borders of it, length and breadth, in the form of the capital of the letter γ , “gamma”; they went on the south border from the east corner to the west corner, as Moses commanded them: “get you up this [way] southward”, (^{<0437>}Numbers 13:17); the way of the southeast border unto the sea, which is the western border; and from thence they returned, and went on all the western border by the sea shore, until they came to Hamath, which is by Mount Hor, at the northwest corner; but Hamath was on the northeast; nor did they go thither, it was too far off for them, but they went as far as Rehob, which was “as men go to Hamath”, as it should be rendered, that is, it lay in the way to Hamath.

Ver. 22. *And they ascended by the south*, etc.] When they returned, after they had searched the land, then they came into the south country again, which was in their way to Kadesh, where the camp of Israel remained; they are said to ascend, because of the hill country they again came to; for their

coming to Hebron, and carrying a cluster of grapes from that place, not far from thence, was upon their return:

and came unto Hebron; which was in the hill country of Judea, in the tribe of Judah afterwards, which before was called Kirjatharba; in the original text it is, “he came”^{f157}, Caleb, and he only, according to Jarchi and the Rabbins in Abendana; and certain it is that he was there, and he had this place on which his feet trod given him for an inheritance, (~~f149~~) Joshua 14:9,13-15); and it is very probable that the spies did not go together, but perhaps singly, and at most but two together, which seems to be the case here by what follows:

where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, [were]; where Anak, and these his three sons, dwelt, who were giants; and perhaps from thence Hebron before this was called Kirjatharbah, “the city of the four”; or from Arba, the father of Anak:

now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt; or Tanais, as the Targum of Jonathan, whence one of the nomes of Egypt was called the Tanitic nome: it was the metropolis of that country, and may be observed, to abate the pride and vanity of that kingdom, which boasted of its antiquity. Josephus says^{f158}, that the inhabitants of Hebron not only reckoned it more ancient than any of the cities of the land, but than Memphis in Egypt, accounting it (then in his time) 2300 years old; but who it was built by is not certain; Jarchi thinks it is possible that Ham built Hebron for Canaan his younger son, before he built Zoan for Mizraim his eldest son; which does not seem likely.

Ver. 23. *And they came unto the brook of Eshcol*, etc.] Or “valley of Eshcol”^{f159}, which is here so called by anticipation from the following circumstance; and perhaps had not this name given it, until the children of Israel were possessed of the land, and then they called it so, in memory of what was done here at this time; it was not far from Hebron, as may be concluded from thence; and so Jerom, relating the travels of Paula in those parts, says^{f160}, she came from Betzur to Eshcol, where having seen the little cells of Sarah, the cradle of Isaac, and the traces of the oak of Abraham, under which he saw the day of Christ, and was glad, rising up from thence, she went up to Hebron; which shows this Eshcol to be near Hebron, and to lie low, and was a valley; (see ~~f124~~ Deuteronomy 1:24);

and cut down from thence a branch, with one cluster of grapes; in this valley was a vineyard, or at least a vine tree, on which they observed one cluster, which perhaps was of an uncommon size, as it seems by what follows, and they cut down the branch, and that with it:

and they bare it between two upon a staff; it was so big; and which was not done only for the ease of carrying it, but that it might not have any of its grapes squeezed, bruised, and broken off, but that they might carry it entire and whole for the Israelites to behold: these two men were probably Caleb and Joshua; though Jarchi says they carried nothing, which is more than he could say with certainty. Some historians report very surprising things of the size of vines, and the largeness of their clusters, which, when observed, this account will not at all seem incredible. Strabo says ^{f161}, it is reported, that in Hyrcania, a vine produced a firkin of wine, and, the trunk of a vine was so large, that it was as much as two men could grasp with both arms, and bore clusters of two cubits long ^{f162}; the same he says ^{f163} of the size of vines in Mauritania, and of their clusters being a cubit long; and of others in Carmania being two cubits long, as before ^{f164}: it is reported of the Indian fig tree, that it sometimes has an hundred figs more or less on a branch, and all in a cluster like grapes; and some of the clusters are sometimes so large as to be carried by two men on a staff ^{f165}, as here; and some have thought, that it is the fruit here meant; but this is expressly called a cluster of grapes. About half a mile from Eshcol, as Adrichomius ^{f166} says, was the brook or valley of Sorek, which was famous for vines; and it is affirmed by many writers and travellers, that to this day there are vines in that place, which produce clusters of twenty five pounds weight and more; and that in Lebanon, and other parts of Syria, the kernels of grapes are as big as a man's thumb ^{f167}. Leo Africanus speaks ^{f168} of grapes in some parts of Africa somewhat red, which, from their size, are called hens' eggs: and the Talmudists ^{f169} are extravagant, and beyond all belief, in the account they give of the vines in the land of Canaan, and of the clusters of them, and the quantity of wine they had from them; and of this cluster they suppose ^{f170}, that the "two" spoken of are not to be understood of men, but of bars or staves; and that this cluster was carried by eight, four at the four ends of the two staves, and that there were, besides, two staves or bars that went across, at the ends of which were four more men, who carried the cluster hanging in the middle; a figure of which Wagenseil ^{f171} has given us: but Philo the Jew ^{f172} has given a better account of it, and more agreeable to the

Scripture, as that it was put upon a staff, and hung at the middle of it, the ends of which were laid on the shoulders of two young men, who carried it; though he adds, that such was the weight of it, that these were relieved by others in succession:

and [they brought] of the pomegranates, and of the figs; that is, others of them did; which seems to favour the notion that they were in a body, and that there were more than two together at this place; but even these two might be able to bring some of this sort of fruit along with them, as well as bear the cluster of grapes; besides, the text does not oblige us to understand it of the same persons in the same place.

Ver. 24. *The place was called the brook of Eshcol,* etc.] That is, in later times:

because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence; the word “Eshcol” signifying a “cluster”; and this cluster was typical of Christ, who may be compared to this, as he is to a cluster of camphire, (²⁰¹⁴Song of Solomon 1:14); there being in him a “cluster” of all perfections, of all the perfections of deity, the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him; and of all human perfections, he being in all things like unto his people, excepting sin; and there being also a cluster of all the graces and gifts of the Spirit without measure in him, as man; and of all the blessings of grace for his people, as Mediator; and of all the exceeding great and precious promises of the covenant of grace. The “staff”, on which this was carried, may denote the ministration of the Gospel, which may seem mean and despicable in itself, but is the means of carrying the name of Christ, and the things of Christ, about in the world; (see ⁴⁰⁹⁵Acts 9:15); and the “two” men which bore it, may signify the prophets of the Old Testament, and the ministers of the New, who both agree and join together in setting forth the person, offices, and grace of Christ. Moreover, this cluster may be an emblem of the Spirit of God, and his grace, and of the rich experience the people of God have of it in this present life, while travellers in the wilderness, as a taste and earnest of the future glory and happiness in the heavenly Canaan.

Ver. 25. *And they returned from searching the land after forty days.*] The Targum of Jonathan adds, on the eighth day of the month Ab, which answers to part of July and part of August; so that this must be towards the latter end of July: some Jewish writers ^{F173} say it was the ninth of Ab; hence

the tradition, that it was decreed on the ninth of Ab concerning their fathers, that they should not enter into the land ^{f174}.

Ver. 26. *And they went, and came to Moses, and to Aaron,* etc.] They proceeded on their journey from Eshcol, till they came to the camp of Israel; and as soon as they came there, went directly to Moses and to Aaron, before they went into their own tents, as Aben Ezra observes:

and to all the congregation of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; that is, Kadeshbarnea, as appears from (^{¶174B}Joshua 14:7); called for brevity's sake Kadesh; but is by some thought to be different from the Kadesh in (^{¶174C}Numbers 20:1); to which the Israelites came not until thirty eight years after this time: this Kadesh was in the wilderness of Paran, and the same with Rithmah, or was near it, where the Israelites were now encamped, and had remained all the time the spies were gone: the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call this place Rekem, as they do in (^{¶174D}Genesis 16:14);

and brought back word unto them, and to all the congregation: to Moses and Aaron, and the principal heads of the body of the people assembled together: to these they related an account of their tour through the land of Canaan, what they had met with, and what observations they had made, agreeably to the instructions that had been given them when they set out:

and showed them the fruit of the land; which they had brought with them, the bunch of grapes, pomegranates, and figs.

Ver. 27. *And they told him,* etc.] Moses, who was the chief ruler whom they addressed, and to whom they directed their speech:

and said, we came unto the land whither thou sentest us; the land of Canaan, which they were sent by Moses to spy; this was said by ten of them or by one of them as their mouth; for Caleb and Joshua did not join with them in the following account, as appears from (^{¶174E}Numbers 13:30);

and surely it floweth with milk and honey; they own that the land answered to the description which the Lord had given of it when it was promised them by him, (^{¶174F}Exodus 3:8);

and this [is] the fruit of it; pointing to the bunch of grapes, the pomegranates and figs; not that these were a proof of its flowing with milk and honey, at least in a literal sense, but of the goodness and fruitfulness of

the land: though the luxury of Bacchus, the god of wine, is by the poet^{f175} described, not only by a fountain of wine, but by rivers of milk and flows of honey.

Ver. 28. *Nevertheless the people [be] strong that dwell in the land,* etc.] Though so plentiful and fruitful and desirable to enjoy, yet this objection lay against all hopes and even attempts to possess it, as they thought; the strength of the people, its present inhabitants, both in body and mind, being persons of a large, and some of a prodigious stature, and to all appearance men of valour and courage;

and the cities [are] walled and very great; and so inaccessible, and able to hold out a long siege, and repel what force may be brought against them; so that to attack them would be to little purpose:

and moreover we saw the children of Anak there: whom they had heard of before, and so had the congregation of Israel, and many terrible and frightful stories were told of them, and these they now saw with their eyes, and very formidable they appeared to them; this seems to prove that others beside Caleb and Joshua were at Hebron, where the sons of Anak lived, (^{<0132>}Numbers 13:22); and so they might, and yet not be together with them.

Ver. 29. *The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south,* etc.] On the southern side of the land of Canaan: not in it, for they were not Canaanites, but neighbours to them, and lay nearest to the camp of Israel, and at the entrance into the land of Canaan; and as they were enemies of Israel, as appears from an attack upon them quickly after they came from the Red sea, in Rephidim, (^{<0278>}Exodus 17:8); and friends to the Canaanites, they would no doubt oppose their passage into their land, as they did, (^{<0443>}Numbers 14:43,45); this is one difficulty in the way of possessing the land hinted at, others follow:

and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and guard the passes there; so that should they escape the Amalekites, or get the better of them, they would not be able to pass the mountains, being so well inhabited and defended; the Hittites seem to dwell about Mount Lebanon, (^{<0604>}Joshua 1:4); the Jebusites inhabited the mountains about Jerusalem, and that itself, which was called by them Jebus, and from which they were not dispossessed until the times of David, (^{<1304>}1 Chronicles 11:4,5); and the Amorites were possessed of the

mountain which was on the borders of the land, next to the place where Israel now were, (^(R12)Deuteronomy 1:20);

and the Canaanites dwell by the sea; these dwelt both on the east and on the west of the land, (^(R13)Joshua 11:3); so that the western Canaanites dwelt on the shore of the Mediterranean sea, which is often put for the west in Scripture; and the eastern Canaanites dwelt by the Dead sea, or by the sea of Tiberias, called sometimes the lake of Gennesaret, and seems the rather to be meant here by what follows:

and by the coast of Jordan; so that this river was not passable by them; for by all this they would suggest that all avenues and passes were stopped up, so that it was a vain thing to attempt entrance into the land, or to expect ever to possess it.

Ver. 30. *And Caleb stilled the people before Moses*, etc.] In his presence, they standing before him; or “unto Moses”^{f176}, as they were coming to him with open mouth against him; for upon the above report of the spies they began to murmur and mutiny, and to speak against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt into a wilderness, feeding them with vain hopes of a country which they were never likely to enjoy; and in their wrath they might be making up to him, threatening to pull him to pieces, but were restrained by Caleb, who signified he had something to say to them, to which they attended, he being one of the spies, and for their principal tribe, the tribe of Judah, that went foremost; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“Caleb silenced the people, and they attended to Moses;”

or hearkened to him, to what he said, which though not here related, is in (^(R12)Deuteronomy 1:29,30); which yet they did not give credit to, though they heard what he had to say:

and said, let us go up at once and possess it; without any delay, there is nothing more to be done than to enter and take possession; this he said, trusting to the promise of God, who is faithful, and to his power who is able to perform:

for we are well able to overcome it; especially having God on their side, who had promised to bring them into it, and put them in the possession of it; and indeed, humanly speaking, they seemed quite sufficient for such an undertaking, being upwards of six hundred thousand men fit for war, (^(R14)Numbers 1:46), marshalled under their proper standards, with captains

over each tribe, and having such brave, wise, and courageous commanders and generals, Moses and Joshua, who had given signal instances of their prudence and bravery already. What is it such an army, under proper directions, might not undertake? One would think, in all human probability, they were able to conquer a much greater country than the land of Canaan.

Ver. 31. *But the men that went up with him*, etc.] With Caleb, all but Joshua: the other ten

said, we be not able to go up against the people; this they had not said before, though they plainly suggested it, and, to make the people believe this, had represented the inhabitants of the land of Canaan in the light they did; but now, in direct opposition to Caleb, fully expressed it, giving this reason for it:

for they [are] stronger than we; being both of a larger size and more numerous.

Ver. 32. *And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel*, etc.] Before, they gave a good report of the land itself, as a very fruitful one, answering to their expectations and wishes; but now they change their language, and give a different account of it; which shows their want of integrity, and to what length an opposition carried them, to say things contrary to their real sentiments, and to what they themselves had said before:

saying, the land through which we have gone to search it, [is] a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; the meaning seems to be, that it was so barren and unfruitful that it did not produce food sufficient for the inhabitants of it, who were ready to starve, and many did starve through want, and so was the reverse of what they had before said; for which reason, Gussetius^{f177} thinks the sense is, that the land was the food and nourishment of its inhabitants, and that there was such plenty in it that it wanted not any foreign assistance in any respect whatever. Some think that it was continually embroiled in civil wars, in which they destroyed one another; but then this was no argument against, but for their going up against them, since through the divisions among themselves they might reasonably hope the better to succeed; or it ate them up with diseases, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, and so they would represent it, though a fruitful land, yet a very unhealthful one, in which the natives could not live, and much less strangers; and so Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret it of

the badness of the air of the country, as being very unwholesome and pernicious. Jarchi represents them as saying, that wherever they came they saw them burying their dead, as if there was a plague among them; and be it so that there was, which is not unlikely, since the Lord promised to send hornets before them, which some interpret of diseases sent, (^{<0238>}Exodus 23:28); and which was in their favour, since hereby the number of their enemies would be lessened, and they would be weakened, and in a bad condition to oppose them:

and all the people that we saw in it [are] men of a great stature; or men of measures ^{f178}, of a large measure, above the common measure of men; but it may be justly questioned whether they spoke truth; for though they might see some that exceeded in height men in common, yet it is not credible that all they saw were of such a size; since they were not only at Hebron and saw the giants there who were such, but they went through the land, as in the preceding clause, and all they met with cannot be supposed to be of such a measure.

Ver. 33. *And there we saw the giants*, etc.] Not throughout the land, and yet it is so expressed, and in such connection with what goes before, that it might be so understood, and as they might choose it should; that as there were men everywhere of an uncommon size, and were generally so, there were some larger than they in all places, of a prodigious size, of a gigantic stature; and yet this was only in Hebron where they saw them;

the sons of Anak; whose names are given, (^{<0432>}Numbers 13:22); and there were but three of them:

[which came] of the giants; they, were of the race of giants; for not only Anak their father, but Arba their grandfather was one; (^{<0445>}Joshua 14:15) (^{<0453>}Joshua 15:13);

and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers; little diminutive creatures in comparison of them; an hyperbolic exaggeration of the greatness of the giants, and of their own littleness:

and so we were in their sight; but this they could not be so certain of, and could only make conjectures by their neglect or supercilious treatment of them. Jarchi makes them to speak of them more diminutively still, as that they heard those giants saying one to another,

“there are ants in the vineyards like men.”