

statements contradict one another. In this narrative, four contradictions are alleged. First, that one account says that the spies went from Kadesh and returned thither, while the other says that their point of departure and return was the wilderness of Paran. Second, that one account restricts the journey of the spies to the southern district around Hebron, while the other says that the whole land of Canaan was visited. Third, that in one account the unfaithful spies emphasize the strength of the inhabitants, while in the other they say that the land is unproductive and hence not worth trying to conquer. Fourth, that one account says that only Caleb was faithful, while the other mentions both Caleb and Joshua as being faithful. Let us briefly examine these points.

Regarding the first, it should be noted that the text nowhere mentions Kadesh as the starting point of the spies, but only the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh (26). Clearly Kadesh is indicated as a place within the wilderness of Paran. Whether the spies started from Kadesh, or from some other place in the wilderness of Paran, is not stated. There is actually no contradiction.

Regarding the second alleged contradiction, see the discussion of xiii.21-25 below.

The third alleged contradiction depends entirely upon the interpretation of one unusual phrase, a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof (32), which occurs in a context that is emphasizing the strength of the inhabitants (xiii.31-33). Even if the phrase meant that the land was unproductive, it would not prove two contradictory accounts, but would simply show a strange change of front on the part of the frightened spies. For the true meaning of the phrase, see the discussion of these verses below.

The fourth argument is an interesting one. It rests upon the fact that while both Caleb and Joshua are mentioned in xiv.6,30 and 33, only Caleb is mentioned in xiii.30 and xiv.24. However, it is not difficult to see why only Caleb is mentioned in these two instances. When the spies began to give undue prominence to the strength of the Canaanites, it was natural that some man should rise and try to quiet