

1 Chronicles 10:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Saul to his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on Saul's death and divine judgment. The Hebrew term מַא'ל (ma'al) - to act unfaithfully is theologically significant here, pointing to Divine judgment on disobedience. The Chronicler's narrative, while paralleling Samuel-Kings in places, offers a distinct theological perspective emphasizing temple worship, Levitical service, and covenant faithfulness.

Chronicles presents David not primarily as warrior-king but as worship organizer and temple planner. This verse contributes to that portrait by highlighting the spiritual dimensions of Israel's national life. The text demonstrates that true prosperity comes through proper worship and covenant obedience rather than merely military or political success.

Doctrinally, this passage teaches about Divine judgment on disobedience. Cross-references throughout Chronicles connect David's reign to the broader redemptive narrative, showing how God's covenant promises advance through faithful human leadership while ultimately depending on divine grace and power. The messianic implications are profound: Contrast between failed human kingship and Christ's perfect reign.

Historical Context

Historical Background: This section describes events from David's reign (c. 1010-970 BCE) but was written centuries later during the Persian period (c. 450-400 BCE). The Chronicler's selectivity in retelling David's story serves his theological purposes—he omits David's sins (Bathsheba, Absalom's rebellion) while emphasizing David's worship reforms and temple preparations.

The historical setting of Saul's death and divine judgment occurred during Israel's united monarchy, when the nation reached its territorial and political zenith. Archaeological evidence from this period shows significant building projects and administrative development. However, the Chronicler writes for a much smaller, struggling post-exilic community, using David's golden age to inspire hope for restoration.

Ancient Near Eastern parallels show that temple construction and royal sponsorship of worship were common across cultures. However, Israel's understanding of worship centered on covenant relationship with the one true God rather than manipulation of capricious deities. This theological distinctiveness shapes the Chronicler's presentation.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's emphasis on Divine judgment on disobedience challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?
2. What does Contrast between failed human kingship and Christ's perfect reign teach you about Jesus Christ and His redemptive work?
3. In what practical ways can you apply the principles of covenant faithfulness and proper worship demonstrated in this passage?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	שָׁאוּל	אֵל	נָשָׂא	א	כָּל יוֹ	שֵׁל רֶ	הָ רֶב
Then said	Saul	H413	me	But his armourbearer	H3627	Draw	a sword
H559	H7586		H5375			H8025	H2719
וַיִּדְקֶה נִי	פָּן	בָּ ה	יָבֹאוּ	הָעִרְלִים			
and thrust	H0	H6435	come	me through therewith lest these uncircumcised			
H1856			H935	H6189			
וְהִתְעַלְלוּ	אָבָה	וְלֹא	בִּי	נָשָׂא	א	כָּל יוֹ	
H428	and abuse	H0	H3808	would	me But his armourbearer	H3627	
	H5953			H14	H5375		
וַיִּפֹּל ל	הָ רֶב	אֶת שָׁאוּל	וָקַח	מָא ד	יָרֵא	כִּי	
H3588	a sword	H853	took	Saul	H7586	H3372	
	H2719		H3947				
עָלֶיהָ:							
H5921							

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 31:4 (Word): Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.