

1 Chronicles 11:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on David established as king and mighty men. The Hebrew term בְּרִית (berit) - covenant is theologically significant here, pointing to God's sovereign choice of leadership. 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 God's sovereign choice of leadership. 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: David as type of Christ, the Messianic King.

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 David established as king and mighty men 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's emphasis on God's sovereign choice of leadership challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?

2. What does David as type of Christ, the Messianic King 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

וָיָרַד וְ	שְׁלוֹשָׁה	מִן	הַשְּׁלוֹשִׁים	רֹאשֵׁי	עַל	הָרֹקַח	אֶל
went down	Now three	H4480	of the thirty	captains	H5921	to the rock	H413
H3381	H7969		H7970	H7218		H6697	
אֶל יְדֵי	אֶל	מַעְבֵּת	עַדְלָם	וּמַחֲנֵה	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	חָנָה	
to David	H413	into the cave	of Adullam	and the host	of the Philistines	encamped	
H1732		H4631	H5725	H4264	H6430	H2583	
בְּעֵמֶק	רֶפְאִים:						
in the valley	of Rephaim						
H6010	H7497						

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 14:9 (Parallel theme): And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

Isaiah 17:5 (Parallel theme): And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.