

1 Chronicles 19:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on Ammonite war - David's continued conquests. The Hebrew term מילחמה (milchamah) - war/battle is theologically significant here, pointing to God fights for His people. 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 fights for His people. 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: Spiritual warfare and Christ's triumph.

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 Ammonite war - David's continued conquests 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's emphasis on God fighting for His people challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?

- What does Spiritual warfare and Christ's triumph teach you about Jesus Christ and His redemptive work?
- In what practical ways can you apply the principles of covenant faithfulness and proper worship demonstrated in this passage?

Interlinear Text

מְאֹכֶל	מִן	יְהוָה	מִלְפְּגַן	יְהוָה	יְהוָה	גַּם	יִשְׂרָאֵל	מִלְפְּגַן	יְהוָה	גַּם	יְהוָה	מִן	מְאֹכֶל
fled	But the Syrians		before		Israel		slew		and David		But the Syrians		
H5127	H758		H6440		H3478		H2026		H1732		H758		
seven	thousand		men which fought in chariots				and forty		thousand				
H7651	H505		H7393				H705		H505				
footmen		H7273	H853	Shopach	the captain	שָׁרֵךְ	A	פָּצַב	the host	הַמִּיתָּה	and killed		
				H7780		H8269		H6635		H4191			

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 10:18 (References David): And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the men of seven hundred chariots of the Syrians, and forty thousand horsemen, and smote Shobach the captain of their host, who died there.

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