

1 Chronicles 20:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on Final conquests and giant slayers. The Hebrew term רָפָה (rapha) - giant/Rephaim is theologically significant here, pointing to God enables victory over impossible odds. 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 enables victory over impossible odds. 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: Christ defeats spiritual giants (powers and principalities).

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 Final conquests and giant slayers 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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's emphasis on God enables victory over impossible odds challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?

2. What does Christ defeat spiritual giants (powers and principalities) 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

וְאַתָּה	מִן	בָּעֵץ	אֲשֶׁר	בְּהַ	הַוֹּצֵא	וְאֵת	שָׁרֵךְ
H853	and all the people	H834	H0		And he brought out	that were in it and cut	
	H5971				H3318		H7787
וְאַתָּה	מִן	בָּעֵץ	אֲשֶׁר	בְּהַ	הַוֹּצֵא	וְאֵת	שָׁרֵךְ
and with axes	and with harrows	and with axes	and with harrows	of iron	and with axes	Even so dealt	
H4050	H2757	H1270	H4050	H3651	H6213		
וְאַתָּה	מִן	בָּעֵץ	אֲשֶׁר	בְּהַ	הַוֹּצֵא	וְאֵת	שָׁרֵךְ
And David	H3605	with all the cities	of the children	of Ammon	returned		
H1732		H5892	H1121	H5983	H7725		
וְאַתָּה	מִן	בָּעֵץ	אֲשֶׁר	בְּהַ	הַוֹּצֵא	וְאֵת	שָׁרֵךְ
And David	H3605	and all the people	to Jerusalem				
H1732		H5971	H3389				

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org