

1 Chronicles 20:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on Final conquests and giant slayers. The Hebrew term גִּפְּה (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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

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 defeats 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

וַיְהִי	אַחֲרֵיכִי	וַתֵּעַמַּד	הַמִּלְחָמָה	בְּגֵזֶר	עִם
H1961	And it came to pass after this	that there arose	war	at Gezer	H5973
	H310	H5975	H4421	H1507	
פְּלִשְׁתִּים	אֲזַי	הָרָה	סִבְכַּי	הַחֹשֶׁת	אֶת
with the Philistines	at which time	slew	Sibbechai	the Hushathite	H853
H6430	H227	H5221	H5444	H2843	
סִפַּי	מִלִּיד	הָרֶפָא	וַיִּנָּעוּ:		
Sippai	that was of the children	of the giant	and they were subdued		
H5598	H3211	H7497	H3665		

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