

1 Chronicles 21:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on David's census and divine judgment. The Hebrew term חטא (chet) - sin/offense is theologically significant here, pointing to Even godly leaders sin and face consequences. 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 Even godly leaders sin and face consequences. 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 bears judgment for sin on our behalf.

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's census 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

Psalm 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 Even godly leaders sin and face consequences challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?
2. What does Christ bears judgment for sin on our behalf 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

בָּנָה	H8033	וְדָוִיד	H1732	מִזְבֵּחַ	H4196	יְהָוָה	H3068	וַיְעַל	H5927
built		And David		there an altar		unto the LORD		and offered	
H1129		H1732		H4196		H3068		H5927	
בָּעֵלֶת:		וְשְׁלָמִים		וְאֶל		יְהָוָה			
burnt offerings		and peace offerings		and called	H413	unto the LORD			
H5930		H8002		H7121		H3068			
וְאֶל		וְשְׁמַיִם		וְעַל		מִזְבֵּחַ			
and he answered		בְּאֵשׁ		מִן		הַשְׁמָמָה			
H6030		H784		H4480		H8064		H5921	
וְאֶל		מִן		וְעַל		מִזְבֵּחַ			
בְּאֵשׁ		בְּאֵשׁ		וְעַל		וְעַל			
burnt offerings		burnt offerings		the fire		the fire			
H5930				H4480		H4480			

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 9:24 (Sacrifice): And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Judges 6:21 (References Lord): Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

Proverbs 15:8 (Sacrifice): The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

1 Kings 18:38 (Sacrifice): Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

2 Chronicles 7:1 (Sacrifice): Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.

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