

1 Chronicles 21:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on David's census and divine judgment. The Hebrew term חַטָּה (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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

וַיֹּאמֶר	דָּוִד	אֶל	הָאֱלֹהִים יָם	חָטָא אֶתִּי	מְאֹד:
said	And David	H413	unto God	I have sinned	for I have done very
H559	H1732		H430	H2398	H3966
אֲשֶׁר	עָשָׂה יָדִי	אֶת	הַדָּבָר	הַזֶּה	זֶה
H834	because I have done	H853	this thing	H2088	H6258
	H6213		H1697		
הָעֶבֶר	נָא	אֶת	עוֹן	עֲבֹדְךָ	כִּי
but now I beseech thee do away	H4994	H853	the iniquity	of thy servant	H3588
H5674			H5771	H5650	
נָסִיף לִּי	מְאֹד:				
foolishly	for I have done very				
H5528	H3966				

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 12:13 (Sin): And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.