

1 Chronicles 5:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites,
who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents
throughout all the east land of Gilead.

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Trans-Jordanian tribes and their failures section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term מַאֲל (ma'al) - unfaithfulness/treachery is central to understanding this passage's purpose. The Chronicler, writing to post-exilic Israel (c. 450-400 BCE), uses these genealogies not merely as historical records but as theological statements about covenant continuity and divine faithfulness.

The genealogical structure serves multiple purposes:

1. establishing Israel's connection to God's creation plan from Adam
2. legitimizing post-exilic community's claim to covenant promises
3. emphasizing Judah and Levi's special roles in God's redemptive plan,
4. demonstrating that despite exile, God's covenant purposes continue.

The selection and arrangement of names is intentional, highlighting Consequences of covenant unfaithfulness.

Chronicles diverges from Genesis and Samuel-Kings in its genealogical presentation, reflecting the Chronicler's distinct theological agenda. Where earlier texts focus on narrative history, Chronicles emphasizes continuity, legitimacy, and hope for restoration. This verse contributes to the larger argument that the post-exilic community is the rightful heir of God's ancient covenant promises.

Historical Context

Post-Exilic Context: The Chronicler wrote during the Persian period (450-400 BCE) to a community returned from Babylonian exile, struggling with identity and purpose. These genealogies answered crucial questions: Who are we? What is our relationship to ancient Israel? Do God's promises still apply to us?

The historical setting influences the text's emphasis on Trans-Jordanian tribes: Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued genealogies for establishing land rights, royal legitimacy, and tribal identity. Chronicles' genealogies served similar functions while adding theological depth. The inclusion of specific names and details reflects the author's access to temple archives, royal records, and earlier biblical texts.

Archaeological evidence from Persian-period Judah shows a small, struggling community centered around Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple. The genealogies reinforced their connection to the glorious past and provided hope for future restoration through God's covenant faithfulness.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does understanding genealogies as theological statements rather than mere historical records change your reading of Chronicles and other biblical genealogies?
2. What does this verse teach about God's faithfulness across generations, and how does that apply to your own family's spiritual legacy?

3. How does Consequences of covenant unfaithfulness connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

וּבַיָּמֵי י	שָׂא וּל	עָשׂוּ	מִלְחָמָה	עִם	הַהַגָּרִי יִם	
And in the days	of Saul	they made	war	H5973	with the Hagarites	
H3117	H7586	H6213	H4421		H1905	
וּפָלּוּ	בְּיַד ׀	וַיָּשְׁבוּ	בְּאֵת הָלֵיָהּ ׀	עַל	כָּל	כָּל י
who fell	by their hand	and they dwelt	in their tents	H5921	H3605	throughout
H5307	H3027	H3427	H168			H6440
מִזֶּרֶחַ	לְגִלְעָד:					
all the east	land of Gilead					
H4217	H1568					

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org