

2 Chronicles 12:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

Analysis

With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Divine discipline for unfaithfulness, mercy through humility. The Chronicler's theological perspective emphasizes immediate divine retribution—kings who seek God prosper, while those who forsake Him face judgment. This pattern provides instruction for the post-exilic community on the conditions for God's blessing.

The account demonstrates God's covenant faithfulness despite human unfaithfulness. Even in judgment, God preserves a remnant and offers restoration through repentance. The repeated cycle of apostasy, judgment, and restoration reveals both human sinfulness and divine mercy. References to the temple, proper worship, and priestly service emphasize the Chronicler's concern for correct religious observance.

Theologically, these accounts point beyond immediate history to God's ultimate purposes through the Davidic line. Despite repeated failures, God preserves David's dynasty, anticipating the perfect King who will reign in righteousness. The

pattern of judgment for sin and restoration through repentance prefigures the gospel message of salvation through Christ.

Historical Context

This passage occurs during the divided monarchy period when Judah existed separately from northern Israel. The Chronicler writes from a post-exilic perspective, addressing the restored community in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile (539 BCE onward). His emphasis on temple worship, proper religious observance, and God's covenant faithfulness speaks directly to the needs of his audience who had just rebuilt the temple and were reestablishing their identity as God's people.

The historical context demonstrates both God's judgment on persistent sin and His readiness to restore those who genuinely repent. The Chronicler omits most northern kingdom material, focusing on Judah and the Davidic line to emphasize God's faithfulness to His covenant promises. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Lachish, Beersheba, and Jerusalem corroborate the biblical accounts of various kings' reigns and building projects.

Understanding the Chronicler's post-exilic perspective is crucial—he's not merely recording history but applying past lessons to his contemporary audience, showing that the same principles of seeking God, maintaining proper worship, and covenant faithfulness that determined blessing or judgment in the past still apply.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse illustrate the principle of divine retribution (blessing for obedience, judgment for sin)?

2. What specific applications does this passage have for maintaining spiritual faithfulness in contemporary Christian life?
3. How does this account point to God's ultimate purposes through the Davidic line and the coming Messiah?

Interlinear Text

אָ לָף	וּמֵאֵת יָם	כָּבֹב	וּבִשְׁשֵׁי יָם	אָ לָף	פָּרָשֵׁי יָם
thousand	With twelve hundred	chariots	and threescore	thousand	horsemen
H505	H3967	H7393	H8346	H505	H6571
וְאֵין	מִסְפָּר	לְעָם	אֲשֶׁר	בָּאוּ	עִמּוֹ
H369	were without number	and the people	H834	that came	H5973
	H4557	H5971		H935	
מִמִּצְרַיִם	לִבִּי יָם	סֻכִּיִּים	וְכוּשִׁיִּים:		
with him out of Egypt	the Lubims	the Sukkiims	and the Ethiopians		
H4714	H3864	H5525	H3569		

Additional Cross-References

Nahum 3:9 (References Egypt): Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers.

2 Chronicles 16:8 (Parallel theme): Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

Daniel 11:43 (References Egypt): But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.