

2 Chronicles 14:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

Analysis

So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Seeking God wholeheartedly brings peace and blessing. 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is 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

רָאָה	יְהוָה	אֶת	הַכּוֹשִׁים:	לִפְנֵי	אֲסָא	לִפְנֵי
smote	So the LORD	H853	and the Ethiopians	and before	Asa	and before
H5062	H3068		H3569	H6440	H609	H6440
יְהוָה	לִפְנֵי	הַכּוֹשִׁים:	לִפְנֵי	אֲסָא	לִפְנֵי	
Judah	fled		and the Ethiopians			
H3063	H5127		H3569			

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 13:15 (Parallel theme): Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

Psalms 60:12 (Parallel theme): Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Exodus 14:25 (References Lord): And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

1 Corinthians 15:57 (References Lord): But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 9:26 (Parallel theme): I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

Deuteronomy 32:39 (Parallel theme): See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

Deuteronomy 28:7 (References Lord): The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

Joshua 10:10 (References Lord): And the LORD discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

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