

2 Chronicles 14:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

Analysis

And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

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

וַיָּצֵא א	אֵלֵיהֶם	זֶרַח	הַכּוּשִׁי	בָּחַ וְלִ	
And there came out	H413	against them Zerah	the Ethiopian	with an host	
H3318		H2226	H3569	H2428	
אֶלְפֵי יָם	אֶלְפֵי יָם	וּמִרְכָּבֹת	שָׁלֹשׁ	מֵאֹת	וַיָּבֹא א
of a thousand	of a thousand	chariots	and three	hundred	and came
H505	H505	H4818	H7969	H3967	H935
					עַד
					H5704
					מֶרֶשָׁה:
					unto Mareshah
					H4762

Additional Cross-References

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.

Joshua 15:44 (Parallel theme): And Keilah, and Achzib, and Mareshah; nine cities with their villages:

2 Chronicles 11:8 (Parallel theme): And Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph,