

2 Chronicles 16:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

Analysis

And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Human alliances replacing trust in God. 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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

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

אֶת	וַיִּשְׁלַח	אֶסָּא	הַמֶּלֶךְ	אֶל	בְּנֵי דָד	וַיִּשְׁמַע	ע
H853	H7971	H609	H4428	H413	H1130	H0	H8085
	and sent	Asa	unto king		And Benhadad		hearkened
וַיִּשְׁרָא ל	עָרֵי י	אֶל	לּוֹ	אֲשֶׁר	הַחֲיָלִים	שָׂרֵי י	
H3478	H5892	H413	H0	H834	H2428	H8269	
of Israel	against the cities				of his armies	the captains	
מִיָּם	אֶבְיָל	לְ	וְאֵת	דָּן	עֵי וֹן	אֶת	וַיִּכּוּ
H66	H0	H853	H853	H1835	H853	H5859	H5221
and Abelmaim			and Dan		Ijon		and they smote
וְאֵת	כָּל	מִסְכָּנֹתַיִם	עָרֵי י	נַפְתָּלִי:			
H853	H3605	H4543	H5892	H5321			
		and all the store	against the cities	of Naphtali			

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