

2 Chronicles 17:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.

Analysis

And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Teaching God's law brings blessing and security. 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form 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

וַיִּבֶן	לְמַעַלְהָ	עַד	וְגַד־לֵ	הָלָךְ	יְהוֹשָׁפָט	וַיְהִי
H1129	H4605	H5704	H1432	H1980	H3092	H1961
and he built	exceedingly	great	waxed		And Jehoshaphat	
מִסְכְּנוֹת	וְעָרֵי	בִּירְכָנֵי	וְעָרֵי	בִּיהוּדָה		
H4543	H5892	H1003	H3063			
of store	and cities	castles	in Judah			

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 27:4 (Parallel theme): Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.

2 Chronicles 32:5 (Parallel theme): Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

2 Chronicles 18:1 (Parallel theme): Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.