

2 Chronicles 17:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

Analysis

But sought to the LORD God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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

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|-------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|
| כ | לְאֱלֹהִים | אֲבִים | דְּבָרִים | וּבְמִצְוֹת | וְלֹא |
| H3588 | to the LORD God | of his father | But sought | in his commandments | and walked |
| H430 | H1 | H1875 | H4687 | H1980 | |
| | | | וְשְׁרָאֵל: | | |
| וְלֹא | כִּמְעַשׂ | הַ | וְשְׁרָאֵל: | | |
| H3808 | and not after the doings | of Israel | H3478 | | |
| H4639 | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 12:28 (References God): Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 (References God): Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (References God): That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Luke 1:6 (Word): And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Hosea 4:15 (References Lord): Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven, nor swear, The LORD liveth.

2 Kings 17:19 (Word): Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

2 Kings 8:18 (References Lord): And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

