

2 Chronicles 21:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

Analysis

Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Complete apostasy bringing divine judgment. 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

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

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

וַיֵּצֵא ר	וְיַהוָּרָם	עִם	שָׁרֵךְ	וְיָכֹל	עִם	בְּכָבֵד
went forth	Then Jehoram	H5973	and the captains	H3605	and all his chariots	H5973
H5674	H3088		H8269		H7393	
וְיָמַרְתָּ	בְּ	לְ	לִילָּה	אֶת	אֲדֹם	בְּ
H1961	with him and he rose up	H6965	by night	H3915	and smote	H853
				H5221	the Edomites	H123
וְיָמַרְתָּ	בְּ	אֶת	אֶלְיוֹן	שָׁרֵךְ	בְּכָבֵד	
which compassed him in	H413	H853	and the captains	H8269	and all his chariots	H7393
H5437						

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