

2 Chronicles 26:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

Analysis

And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Prosperity leading to pride and presumption. 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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is 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

לִיהְיוֹת	הַ	כָּבֵד	יְמִן	וְעַמְּךָ	כָּבֵד	יְמִן	אֶחָד	יְיַבֵּא	אֶת
went in	after	And Azariah	priests	H5973	priests	of the LORD			
H935	H310	H5838	H3548		H3548	H3068			
שְׁמֹנֶה יָמִים	בְּנֵי		חַיִל:						
him and with him fourscore	men	that were valiant							
H8084	H1121	H2428							

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 6:10 (Parallel theme): And Johanan begat Azariah, (he it is that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem:)

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