

2 Chronicles 29:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

Analysis

But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Comprehensive restoration of worship beginning immediately. 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

וְכָל	וְיָכֹל	וְלֹא	לְמַעַן	כִּי	מִהַכֹּהֲנִים:	כִּי
H7535		H3808		H1961		
	so that they could		were too few		But the priests	
	H3201		H4592		H3548	
	not flay					
	H6584					
הַלְוִיִּם	אֲחֵיהֶם	וַיִּזְדַּק	וְהָעֹלֹת	כָּל	אֶת	
	wherefore their brethren	did help	all the burnt offerings			
	H251	H2388	H5930			
	H3881					
כִּי	מִהַכֹּהֲנִים:	לְהַתְּקִדֵּם	וְעַד	הַמְּלָאכָה	כָּל	וְעַד
	But the priests	had sanctified		them till the work	was ended	
	H3548	H6942	H5704	H4399	H3615	H5704
מִהַכֹּהֲנִים:	לְהַתְּקִדֵּם	שֶׁ	לֵב	יִשְׂרָאֵל	הַלְוִיִּם	
But the priests	had sanctified	in heart	were more upright	the Levites		
H3548	H6942	H3824	H3477	H3881		

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 35:11 (Parallel theme): And they killed the passover, and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them.

2 Chronicles 30:3 (Holy): For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

