

2 Chronicles 3:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward.

Analysis

The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Solomon's reign, specifically focusing on Building according to divine pattern on consecrated ground. The Chronicler presents Solomon's faithfulness in temple building and worship as paradigmatic for post-exilic Israel. Unlike the Kings account which includes Solomon's failures, Chronicles emphasizes his positive example during his faithful years.

Theologically, the passage demonstrates that wholehearted seeking of God results in His manifest blessing and presence. The temple construction and dedication represent the climax of God's dwelling with Israel, foreshadowing the incarnation when God would dwell among humanity in Christ. The elaborate preparations and careful adherence to divine pattern emphasize that worship must occur on God's terms.

Cross-references to the tabernacle (Exodus 25-40), Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7, 1 Chronicles 17), and Messianic prophecies illuminate how Solomon's temple points toward Christ as the true meeting place between God and humanity. The material glory of Solomon's kingdom anticipates the greater glory of the Messianic age.

Historical Context

The reign of Solomon (970-930 BCE) represents Israel's golden age of peace and prosperity. The temple construction began in Solomon's fourth year (966 BCE), exactly 480 years after the Exodus according to 1 Kings 6:1. The Chronicler writes from a post-exilic perspective (450-400 BCE), emphasizing themes relevant to the restored community: temple worship, Levitical service, and covenant faithfulness.

Archaeological evidence confirms Solomon's extensive building projects and international trade relationships. The temple's design incorporated Phoenician architectural elements, evidenced by parallel structures discovered in Syria and Lebanon. Solomon's alliance with Hiram of Tyre provided both materials (Lebanese cedar) and craftsmen for the construction.

The post-exilic audience, having returned from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the temple, needed encouragement that God's presence and blessing could be restored through faithful worship. The Chronicler presents Solomon's reign as paradigmatic—when leaders and people seek God wholeheartedly, He dwells among them and prospers them.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen understanding of God's presence as the source of true blessing and success?
2. What does this passage teach about the importance of following God's prescribed patterns in worship and service?
3. How does Solomon's example in Temple Construction Begins point forward to Christ as the ultimate fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

כְּנָפֵי	הַכְּרוּבִּים	הָאֵלֵּה	פָּרְשׁוּ	אֵת		
The wings	of these cherubims	H428	spread themselves forth	cubits		
H3671	H3742		H6566	H520		
עֶשְׂרִים	וְהֵם	עֹמְדִים	עַל	רַגְלֵיהֶם	וּפְנֵיהֶם	לְבֵית:
twenty	H1992	and they stood	H5921	on their feet	and their faces	were inward
H6242		H5975	H7272	H6440	H1004	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 25:20 (Parallel theme): And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.