

2 Chronicles 31:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

Analysis

Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Thorough removal of idolatry and support for priesthood. 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

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

לכל ה	כל יצא ז את כל	ישרא ל			
Now when all this was finished	H3605	H2063	went out	H3605	all Israel
	H3615			H3318	H3478
במצבות ות לישבר ו יהוד ה					
that were present	H4672	into their own cities	H5892	of Judah	H3063
				and brake	H7665
				the images	H4676
את ב במות את יונת צ ו באשר ים יגזר ו					
and cut down	H1438	the groves	H842	and threw down	H5422
					H853
				the high places	H853
					H1116
ומנש ה באפכ ים ובענמ ים יהוד ה מקל במזבח ות					
and the altars	H4196	of Judah	H3605	and Benjamin	H3063
				in Ephraim	H1144
				also and Manasseh	H669
					H4519
עד	כל שיש וכו	בב י			
Now when all this was finished	H3615	returned	H3605	them all Then all the children	
			H7725	H1121	
לעריקם לאחיזת ז א יש ישרא ל					
all Israel	H3478	every man	H376	to his possession	H272
					H5892

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 18:4 (References Israel): He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

2 Chronicles 32:12 (Sacrifice): Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?

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