

2 Chronicles 32:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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?

Analysis

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?

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing God's deliverance of the faithful; pride's danger even after blessing. 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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

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

הָלֹא	הוּא	יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ	הֵסָר	אֶת	בָּמֹתָיו
H3808	H1931	Hath not the same Hezekiah	taken away	H853	his high places
		H3169	H5493		H1116
וְאֵת	מִזְבְּחֵם	לְאֹמֶר	לְיְהוּדָה	וּלְיִרְשָׁלַם	לְאֹמֶר
H853	altar	and commanded	Judah	and Jerusalem	and commanded
	H4196	H559	H3063	H3389	H559
לִפְנֵי	מִזְבְּחֵם	אֶחָד	תִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	וְעַל	תִּקְטְרוּ:
before	altar	one	Ye shall worship	H5921	and burn incense
H6440	H4196	H259	H7812		H6999

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 31:1 (Sacrifice): 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.

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