

2 Chronicles 32:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

Analysis

Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.

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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

וְכִי	בְּמַלְיָצִי	יָן	שָׂרֵי	לְבָבִי	
Howbeit	in the business of the ambassadors		of the princes	of Babylon	
H3651	H3887		H8269	H894	
הַמְשַׁלְּחִים	עָלָיו	לְדָרֹשׁ	הַמוֹפֵת	אֲשֶׁר	הָיָה
who sent		unto him to enquire	of the wonder		
H7971	H5921	H1875	H4159	H834	H1961
בָּא רֵץ	עָזַב וְ	הָאֱלֹהִים	לִנְסוֹת וְ		
that was done in the land	left	God	him to try		
H776	H5800	H430	H5254		
לֵדַע	כָּל	בְּלִבּוֹ:			
him that he might know		all that was in his heart			
H3045	H3605	H3824			

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 8:2 (References God): And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Proverbs 17:3 (Parallel theme): The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

John 15:5 (Parallel theme): I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Genesis 22:1 (References God): And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

2 Chronicles 32:24 (Parallel theme): In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.

Zechariah 13:9 (References God): And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Deuteronomy 8:16 (Parallel theme): Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

James 1:13 (References God): Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: