

2 Chronicles 35:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

Analysis

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Greatest worship celebration since Samuel's time. 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 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

אַתָּה	וַיַּעֲשֵׂה	יְהוָה	כִּי	רָאָשׁ	זֶה	אַתָּה	כִּי	אַחֲרָךְ	וְ
After	H3605	H2063	H834	had prepared	all this when Josiah	H853			
	H310				H3559	H2977			
בְּכָרְכָמִים	וְשָׁ	לְהַלֵּךְ	מִן	מִצְרַיִם	מִלְּגָדָה	נָכְרָה	עַל	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	בְּבֹבֶל
the temple	came up	Necho	king	of Egypt	to fight	against	Carchemish		
H1004	H5927	H5224	H4428	H4714	H3898		H3751		
עַל	פְּנֵי	אֶת	פְּנֵי	לְקַרְבָּת	וְ	וַיַּעֲשֵׂה			
H5921	by Euphrates	went out		against	all this when Josiah				
	H6578	H3318		H7125	H2977				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 10:9 (Parallel theme): Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?

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