

2 Chronicles 36:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

Analysis

And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

This verse is part of the narrative of Judah's kings, specifically addressing Persistent rebellion bringing covenant curses; hope of restoration. 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

גַּם	בַּמֶּלֶךְ	נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר	מֶלֶךְ ד	אֲשֶׁר		
H1571	against king	Nebuchadnezzar	And he also rebelled	H834		
	H4428	H5019	H4775			
	הַשְׁבִּיעַ וְ	אֱלֹהֵי	וַיִּקָּשׂ	אֶת	עֲרֻפוֹ	וַיַּאֲמֵץ
	who had made him swear	God	but he stiffened	H853	his neck	and hardened
	H7650	H430	H7185		H6203	H553
אֶת	לִבּוֹ	מִשׁ וּב	אֶל	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל:
H853	his heart	from turning	H413	unto the LORD	God	of Israel
	H3824	H7725		H3068	H430	H3478

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 30:8 (References God): Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.