

1 Kings 12:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Analysis

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of kingdom divided: rehoboam and jeroboam, within the book's focus on kingdom division as judgment for Solomon's idolatry.

The Hebrew text reveals nuances important for understanding this passage's contribution to 1 Kings' theological message about kingship, covenant, and faithfulness to Yahweh. This verse demonstrates the consequences when God's people—especially their leaders—either follow or forsake the covenant established at Sinai.

Historical Context

First Kings was written during or after the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), reflecting on the monarchy period (10th-9th centuries BCE) to explain why the kingdoms fell. The kingdom division (c. 930 BCE) created the northern kingdom (Israel, 10 tribes) and southern kingdom (Judah, 2 tribes).

Ancient Near Eastern kingship ideology viewed kings as divine representatives responsible for maintaining cosmic order through right worship. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria confirm the historical reliability of 1 Kings' descriptions of building projects and administrative structures.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How can leaders today avoid Rehoboam's mistakes and lead with wisdom rather than pride?
2. What does the kingdom division teach about the long-term consequences of generational sin and compromise?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּץ	הֵמָּה לֶךְ	וַיַּעַשׂ	שְׁנֵי י	עֲגֵלֵי י	זָהָב	וַיֹּאמֶר
took counsel	Whereupon the king	and made	two	calves	of gold	and said
H3289	H4428	H6213	H8147	H5695	H2091	H559
אֵלֶיהֶם	רַב	לָכֶם	הָעֵל וְ	יְרוּשָׁלַם	הִנֵּה	
H413	unto them It is too much	H0	for you to go up	to Jerusalem	H2009	
	H7227		H5927	H3389		
אֵלֶיהֶם יִבְהַל	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	אֲשֶׁר ר	הָעֵל וְ	מֵאֶרֶץ	מִצְרַיִם:	
behold thy gods	O Israel	H834	for you to go up	out of the land	of Egypt	
H430	H3478		H5927	H776	H4714	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 32:8 (Creation): They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 32:4 (Creation): And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

2 Kings 17:16 (Creation): And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

2 Kings 10:29 (Creation): Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan.

2 Chronicles 11:15 (Creation): And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.