

1 Kings 13:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

Analysis

And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of the man of god from judah, within the book's focus on spiritual decline of both kingdoms under various rulers. The temple represents God's dwelling among His people and foreshadows Christ as Immanuel ('God with us'). The sacrificial system points forward to Christ's ultimate sacrifice, fulfilling all temple offerings (Hebrews 10:1-18).

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. This period (c. 930-850 BCE) saw rapid succession and instability, especially in the northern kingdom.

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does this passage illustrate the importance of complete obedience to God's word without compromise?
2. What does Elijah's ministry reveal about God's character and His commitment to His covenant people?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

מִזְבֵּחַ	אָמֵר	יְהִי	בְּדָבָר	מִזְבֵּחַ	עַל	יְלֹעַג
And he cried	H5921	O altar	in the word	of the LORD	and said	O altar
H7121		H4196	H1697	H3068	H559	H4196
מִזְבֵּחַ	אָמֵר	יְהִי	הַפִּיה	בְּנֵי	נָולֵד	
O altar	H3541	and said	of the LORD	H2009	Behold a child	shall be born
H4196		H559	H3068	H1121		H3205
לְבִית		שְׁמִזְבֵּחַ	וְאֲשֶׁר	בְּנֵי	לְבִתְּךָ	עַל
unto the house	of David	Josiah	by ~	and upon thee shall he offer		H5921
H1004	H1732	H2977	H8034	H2076		
אֶת	בְּנֵי	הַבָּמֹות	בְּמִקְדָּשָׁךְ	וְתַעֲשֵׂם	עַל יְבִיכָּךְ	
H853	the priests	of the high places	that burn incense	H6999	H5921	bones
H3548	H1116				H6106	
אֶת	וְתַעֲשֵׂם	עַל יְבִיכָּךְ				
upon thee and men's	shall be burnt	H5921				
H120	H8313					

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 36:1 (Word): Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD:

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