

1 Kings 13:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

Analysis

And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

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 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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

וַיְנַתֵּן	בַּיּוֹם	וְהַיְלָה	סְמִכָּת	לְאָמֵר	זֶה
And he gave	the same day		This is the sign	saying	
H5414	H3117	H1931	H4159	H559	H2088
This is the sign		הָבָרָא	יְהִי הָ	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	בְּהִנְדִּיכְתָּ
H4159	H834	H1696	H3068	H2009	H4196
נְהַרְעַת	וְנִשְׁפֵּר	בְּקַדְשָׁן	בְּקַדְשָׁן	אֲשֶׁר	עַלְיוֹן
shall be rent	that are upon it shall be poured out	and the ashes			
H7167	H8210	H1880	H834	H5921	

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 1:22 (Parallel theme): For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

John 2:18 (Parallel theme): Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

Judges 6:17 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

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