

1 Kings 16:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

Analysis

And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died,

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of kings of Israel: Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, 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 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

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

כָּרָא וְיָהּ י	זִמְרִי	כִּי	נִלְכְּדָה	הָעִיר
H1961		H3588		
saw	And it came to pass when Zimri	was taken	that the city	
H7200	H2174	H3920	H5892	
וַיֵּבֶ אֶל	אֶרְמֹן	בֵּית	מֶלֶךְ	וַיִּשְׂרֹף
H413				
that he went	into the palace	house	of the king's	and burnt
H935	H759	H1004	H4428	H8313
בֵּית	מֶלֶךְ	בָּא שֵׁ	וַיָּמָת:	
H1004				
house	of the king's	over him with fire	and died	
H1004	H4428	H784	H4191	

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 17:23 (Parallel theme): And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

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