

1 Kings 16:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

Analysis

Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

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 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

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

וַיַּחַזֵּק וַיַּחֲצֵץ אֶת־
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנֵי־
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְ

H227

divided

Then were the people

H5971

בְּנֵי־
יִשְׂרָאֵל

H3478

and half

H2677

and half

H2677

בְּנֵי־
יִשְׂרָאֵל

וְתַּבְנֵי אֶחָד
בְּנֵי־
יִהְוָה

גִּינָּת
בֶּן

Then were the people

H5971

followed

H1961

followed

H310

Tibni

H8402

the son

of Ginath

H1121

H1527

לְמַלְיכָה וְ
עָמָרִי אֶחָד וַיַּחֲצֵץ

to make him king

H4427

and half

H2677

followed

H310

Omri

H6018

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