

1 Kings 16:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

Analysis

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

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. Canaanite fertility religion promised agricultural prosperity through ritual practices honoring Baal (storm god) and Asherah (mother goddess), posing constant temptation to syncretism. 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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

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

בָּחַטְתָּ אֹתָתָךְ בְּ	לְכַתְּתָּ	בְּנֵקְתָּ לְ	בְּנֵי	
H1980	in the sins	H7043	And it came to pass as if it had been a light thing	H1961
אִזְׁבָּל אֶת אִשְׁתָּהָךְ	בְּנֵת נְבָט	לְקַחַת בָּנֵי יְרֵבּוּם	the son of Jeroboam	
H853	H3947	H5028	H1121	H3379
אִזְׁבָּל אֶת יְצָבָאֵל	אִידְנִיָּם	מֶלֶךְ זִדּוֹנִים	king of the Zidonians	
H1980	H6722	H4428	H856	H1323
אֶת יְשָׁבֵד וְאֶת שָׁבֵעַ	לְיְהוָה	אֶת לְבָבָךְ	the daughter of Ethbaal	
H853	H1980	H4428	H856	H1323
לְיְהוָה וְאֶת שְׁתַּתְּחִזְקִיָּהָךְ	בְּעֵל	בְּתָה	Baal	
H5647	H7812	H856	H1168	

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 17:16 (Worship): 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 10:18 (Parallel theme): And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much.

Judges 18:7 (Sin): Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man.

Judges 2:11 (Parallel theme): And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: