

1 Kings 18:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

Analysis

And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, within the book's focus on prophetic ministry of Elijah confronting Baalism. The prophetic office represents God's faithful witness even in apostasy, calling His people back to covenant faithfulness.

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. Elijah's ministry (c. 860-850 BCE) occurred during Ahab's reign, a time of intense spiritual crisis in Israel.

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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form 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

הִפְרַעַת לְכָמֶבֶת וְהַבְּעֵל לְנִבְיאָה וְאֶלְיָהוּ וְאֶתְמָר
said And Elijah unto the prophets of Baal Choose H0 bullock
H559 H452 H5030 H1168 H977 H6499

בְּאַפָּד אַתָּמֶכֶת רְאַשְׁנָה בְּרַבְבָּיִם
you one for yourselves and dress it first H859 for ye are many
H259 H6213 H7223 H7227

מְשִׁימָה לְאֵיאַש בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהִים וְקָרָא
and call on the ~ of your gods no fire but put
H7121 H8034 H430 H784 H3808 H7760

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org