

1 Kings 18:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

Analysis

And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

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 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. 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and 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

וְיָדָה	לְקֹרֶב	אֲשֶׁר	בְּפָר	אֲתָּה	וְיָדָה
And they took	H853	the bullock	H834	which was given	H0
H3947		H6499		H5414	
עֲשָׂה:					
them and they dressed	H6213	it and called	H7121	בְּשָׁם וַיְקַרְא וְ	H8034
		on the ~		בְּשָׁם וַיְקַרְא וְ	
				O Baal	H1168
				the Baal	H1242
				from morning	H5704
עֲשָׂה:					
הַאֲמָר יְמִ		לִאמְרָה		אֵין	
even until noon	H6672	saying	H559	O Baal	H1168
				hear	H6030
עֲשָׂה:				us But there was no	H369
אֲשֶׁר				voice	H6963
אֲשֶׁר					
עֲשָׂה:					
us But there was no	H369	hear	H6030	עַל תִּפְגַּח וְ	H6452
				עַל תִּפְגַּח וְ	
				upon the altar	H4196
					H834
עֲשָׂה:					
them and they dressed	H6213				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 10:5 (Parallel theme): They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.

1 Corinthians 8:4 (Sacrifice): As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

1 Corinthians 12:2 (Parallel theme): Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

Matthew 6:7 (Parallel theme): But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

