

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

וַיִּקְחוּ	אֶת	הַפָּר	אֲשֶׁר	נָתַן	לָהֶם
And they took	H853	the bullock	H834	which was given	H0
H3947		H6499		H5414	
עָשׂוּ:	וַיִּקְרָא	בְּשֵׁם	הַבַּעַל	מִמָּוֶת	וְעַד
them and they dressed	it and called	on the ~	O Baal	from morning	H5704
H6213	H7121	H8034	H1168	H1242	
הַצָּהֳרָיִם	יֹאמַר	הַבַּעַל	עֲנֵה	וְאֵין	קוֹל
even until noon	saying	O Baal	hear	us But there was no	voice
H6672	H559	H1168	H6030	H369	H6963
וְאֵין	עֲנֵה	וַיִּפְסְחוּ	עַל	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	אֲשֶׁר
us But there was no	hear	And they leaped	H5921	upon the altar	H834
H369	H6030	H6452		H4196	
עָשׂוּ:					
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.

