

1 Kings 3:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king.

Analysis

And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Solomon's wisdom and the famous judgment, within the book's focus on Solomon's wisdom, temple building, and tragic apostasy.

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. Solomon's reign (c. 970-930 BCE) represented Israel's golden age of peace and prosperity.

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 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the temple as God's dwelling place help us understand Christ's incarnation and the church as God's temple today?
2. What does Solomon's prayer and dedication teach about approaching God in worship and prayer?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלֶּה	וְהָאֲחֵרָה	לֹא	כִּי	וְיֵשׁוּעַ	הֵם
And this said	woman	And the other	H3808	H3588	is my son	Nay but the living
H559	H802	H312			H1121	H2416
וְיֵשׁוּעַ	הֵם	וְזֶה	אֵלֶּה	לֹא	כִּי	וְיֵשׁוּעַ
is my son	No but the dead	H2063	And this said	H3808	H3588	is my son
H1121	H4191		H559			H1121
הֵם	וְיֵשׁוּעַ	הֵם	וַיֹּדְבֵהֶם	לִפְנֵי	הַמֶּלֶךְ	
No but the dead	is my son	Nay but the living	Thus they spake	before	the king	
H4191	H1121	H2416	H1696	H6440	H4428	