

# 1 Kings 3:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living.

## Analysis

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**Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living.**

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

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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

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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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

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אָמַרְתָּ	הַמֶּלֶךְ	וְזֶה	אָמַרְתָּ	זֶה	וּבֶן	הַחַיִּי:
<b>Then said</b>	<b>the king</b>	<b>The one</b>	<b>Then said</b>	H2088	<b>Nay but thy son</b>	<b>is the living</b>
H559	H4428	H2063	H559		H1121	H2416

וּבֶן	הַמֵּת	וְזֶה	אָמַרְתָּ	לֹא	כִּי	וּבֶן
<b>Nay but thy son</b>	<b>is the dead</b>	<b>The one</b>	<b>Then said</b>	H3808	H3588	<b>Nay but thy son</b>
H1121	H4191	H2063	H559			H1121

הַמֵּת	וּבֶן	הַחַיִּי:
<b>is the dead</b>	<b>Nay but thy son</b>	<b>is the living</b>
H4191	H1121	H2416

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