

1 Kings 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

Analysis

And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

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 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

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

וְעַבְדְּךָ	בֵּית וְ	עַם	אֲשֶׁר	בְּחַרְתָּ		
And thy servant	is in the midst	of thy people	H834	which thou hast chosen		
H5650	H8432	H5971		H977		
עַם	כֵּהָ	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא	יִמְנָה	וְלֹא	יִסָּפֵר
of thy people	a great	H834	H3808	that cannot be numbered	H3808	nor counted
H5971	H7227			H4487		H5608
מְרֹב:						
for multitude						
H7230						

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 15:5 (Parallel theme): And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

1 Chronicles 21:2 (Parallel theme): And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

Genesis 13:16 (Parallel theme): And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Genesis 22:17 (Parallel theme): That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Psalms 78:71 (Parallel theme): From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

1 Samuel 12:22 (Parallel theme): For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.