

1 Kings 4:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.

Analysis

Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Solomon's administration and prosperity, 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 – Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

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

בְּיָם	עַל	אֲשֶׁר	כְּחַזְקָה	כְּבָבָם	וְשָׁרֶבֶת	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	יְהוָה
Judah	and Israel	were many	as the sand	H834	H5921	which is by the sea	
H3063	H3478	H7227	H2344			H3220	

Additional Cross-References

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;

1 Kings 3:8 (Parallel theme): 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.

Genesis 32:12 (Parallel theme): And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

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