

1 Kings 8:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

Analysis

If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of dedication of the temple, within the book's focus on Solomon's wisdom, temple building, and tragic apostasy. The temple represents God's dwelling among His people and foreshadows Christ as Immanuel ('God with us'). 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. 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

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

בָּרוּךְ	וְיִתְשָׁאַר	אֲשֶׁר	רָאַת	אִישׁ	אִישׁ	לְרִעָה	הָוֶה	בָּרוּךְ
H853	H834	trespass	If any man	against his neighbour	be laid		H0	
	H2398		H376		H7453		H5375	
אֶל	הַ	לְפָנָי	אֶל	הַ	וְבָ	אֶל	לְפָנִים	אֶל
and an oath	upon him to cause him to swear	come	and an oath	before				
H423	H422	H935	H423	H6440				
מִזְבֵּחַ	בְּבֵית	בְּבֵית	בְּבֵית					
thine altar	in this house	H2088						
H4196	H1004							

