

1 Kings 8:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

Analysis

When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

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 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

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

כִּי מִתְּרַנְּמָה יְהֹוָה וְלֹא שָׁמַם יְמִינָה בְּהַעֲצָם
is shut up When heaven and there is no rain
H6113 H8064 H3808 H1961 H4306 H3588

בְּמִקְדָּשׁ וְמִן־אֶלְעָזֶר וְלֹא תִּתְפְּלַל
because they have sinned against thee if they pray toward this place
H2398 H6419 H413 H4725

כִּי יִשְׁׁוּב אַתָּה וְמִמְּפֹטָאת מִשְׁמַרְתְּךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְשׁׁוּב
and confess thou ~ from their sin and turn
H2088 H3034 H853 H8034 H2403 H7725 H3588

תַּעֲנִמְךָ:
when thou afflictest
H6031

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 11:17 (Parallel theme): And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

1 Kings 8:33 (Prayer): When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:

Leviticus 26:19 (Parallel theme): And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

Revelation 11:6 (Parallel theme): These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

Luke 4:25 (Parallel theme): But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

2 Samuel 24:13 (Parallel theme): So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

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