

1 Kings 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Analysis

There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

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. God's covenant faithfulness remains steadfast despite human unfaithfulness, ultimately fulfilled in the new covenant through Christ.

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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

אֲשֶׁר בְּאָרוֹן יְהוָה שְׁנַיִם לְחֵות בְּרֵאשִׁית
H369 There was nothing in the ark H727 save H7535 the two H8147 tables H3871 of stone H68 H834

יְהוָה בְּרֵאשִׁית אֲשֶׁר בְּרֵחֶב מֵשֶׁה שְׁמֵם הַבָּבֶן
put H8033 which Moses H4872 there at Horeb H2722 H834 made H3772 when the LORD H3068

מִן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצִאתָם מִן הָאָרֶץ מִן הַבָּבֶן
H5973 a covenant with the children H1121 of Israel H3478 when they came out H3318 of the land H776

מִצְרַיִם:
of Egypt
H4714

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 25:21 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

Hebrews 9:4 (Covenant): Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

Exodus 40:20 (Parallel theme): And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark:

Deuteronomy 4:13 (Covenant): And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

2 Chronicles 5:10 (Salvation): There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

