

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

אֵין	בְּאֵר וֶן	כִּק	שְׁנֵי	לַח וְת	הָאֲבָנִים	אֲשֶׁר	H834
H369	There was nothing in the ark	save	the two	tables	of stone		
	H727	H7535	H8147	H3871	H68		
הָנָה	שָׁם	מֹשֶׁה	בְּחֹרֵב	אֲשֶׁר	כָּרַת	יְהוָה	
put	H8033	which Moses	there at Horeb	H834	made	when the LORD	
H3240		H4872	H2722		H3772	H3068	
עַם	בְּנֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּצֵאתָם	מֵאֶרֶץ			
H5973	a covenant with the children	of Israel	when they came out	of the land			
	H1121	H3478	H3318	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.

