

2 Kings 17:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

Analysis

And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

This verse contributes to the overall theme of chapter 17: Covenant judgment and exile. The divine name emphasizes Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel and His sovereign control over historical events. This passage occurs during the decline toward Israel's exile, demonstrating how persistent covenant unfaithfulness leads to national disaster.

The narrative demonstrates God's justice in judging covenant unfaithfulness while maintaining His ultimate purposes for redemption.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: 2 Kings 17 takes place during the declining years of the northern kingdom, 8th century BCE, culminating in exile in 722 BCE. The chapter's theme (Fall of the Northern Kingdom) reflects the historical reality of the fulfillment of prophetic warnings as the northern kingdom fell to Assyria due to persistent covenant unfaithfulness. Archaeological evidence from this period

includes royal inscriptions, administrative documents, and material culture that corroborate the biblical account while providing additional context for understanding the political and social dynamics at work.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to understanding the theological message of 2 Kings 17 regarding covenant judgment and exile?
2. What does this passage reveal about God's character, particularly His justice, mercy, and faithfulness to covenant promises?
3. In what practical ways should this text shape contemporary Christian thinking about faithfulness, worship, and obedience to God?

Interlinear Text

וַעֲזָבוּ וְ	אֶת	כָּל	מִצְוֹת	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵיהֶם	
And they left	H853	H3605	all the commandments	of the LORD	their God	
H5800			H4687	H3068	H430	
וַעֲשֵׂה וְ	לָהֶם	מִסַּכֵּה	שְׁנֵי יָם	עֲגֻלֵּי יָם	וַעֲשֵׂה וְ	
and made	H0	them molten images	even two	calves	and made	
H6213		H4541	H8147	H5695	H6213	
אֲשִׁירֵה	וַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ	לְכָל	צֶבֶא	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וַעֲבָדוּ וְ	אֶת
a grove	and worshipped	H3605	all the host	of heaven	and served	H853
H842	H7812		H6635	H8064	H5647	
הַבַּעַל:						
Baal						
H1168						

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 14:23 (Parallel theme): For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree.

1 Kings 12:28 (Creation): Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

1 Kings 14:15 (Creation): For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger.

1 Kings 16:31 (Worship): And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

Deuteronomy 4:19 (Worship): And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

1 Kings 22:53 (Worship): For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

1 Kings 16:33 (Creation): And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

1 Kings 15:13 (Creation): And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.

2 Kings 21:3 (Creation): For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

2 Kings 11:18 (References Lord): And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces

thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.

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