

2 Kings 21:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

This verse contributes to the overall theme of chapter 21: Unprecedented wickedness brings irreversible judgment. The reference to kingship reminds readers that all human authority is subordinate to God's ultimate kingship. In Judah's later history, we see both genuine reforms and deep-rooted corruption, revealing that external religious activity cannot substitute for heart transformation.

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

Historical Context

Historical Setting: 2 Kings 21 takes place during the final century of Judah's existence, 7th century BCE, including Manasseh and Josiah's reigns. The chapter's theme (Manasseh and Amon's Evil Reigns) reflects the historical reality of the worst apostasy under Manasseh followed by the most thorough reforms under

Josiah, demonstrating that external righteousness cannot reverse God's determined judgment. 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to understanding the theological message of 2 Kings 21 regarding unprecedented wickedness brings irreversible judgment?
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

וַיִּשָׁב	וַיִּבֶן	אֶת	הַבָּמֹת	אֲשֶׁר	אֲבָד
again	For he built up	H853	the high places	H834	had destroyed
H7725	H1129		H1116		H6
חִזְקִיָּהוּ	אָבִיו	וַיִּקַּם	מִזְבְּחֹת	לְבַעַל	עָשָׂה
which Hezekiah	his father	and he reared up	altars	for Baal	and made
H2396	H1	H6965	H4196	H1168	H6213
אֲשֶׁרָה	כָּאֲשֶׁר	עָשָׂה	אַחָאב	מֶלֶךְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל
a grove	H834	and made	Ahab	king	of Israel
H842		H6213	H256	H4428	H3478
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	לְכָל	אֶת־	וַיַּעֲבֹד	הַשָּׁמַיִם	צָבָא
	H3605				
	all the host	of heaven	and served		
	H6635	H8064	H5647	H853	

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 18:4 (Creation): He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

2 Kings 17:16 (Creation): 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.

Deuteronomy 17:3 (Worship): And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

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.

