

2 Kings 23:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

Analysis

And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.

This verse contributes to the overall theme of chapter 23: Comprehensive reformation cannot avert certain judgment. The divine name emphasizes Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel and His sovereign control over historical events. 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 23 takes place during the final century of Judah's existence, 7th century BCE, including Manasseh and Josiah's reigns. The chapter's theme (Josiah's Thorough Reforms) 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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to understanding the theological message of 2 Kings 23 regarding comprehensive reformation cannot avert certain 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

וְאַתָּה	עַל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּמִזְבְּחוֹת	בַּגְּגָה	עַלְיִת
H853	H834	H5921		H1406	H5944
And the altars			that were on the top	of the upper chamber	
H4196					
אֲשֶׁר	בְּמִזְבְּחוֹת	וְאַתָּה	בַּגְּגָה	עַלְיִת	
of Ahaz	H834	had made	did the king	of Judah	H834
H271	H6213	H4428	H3063		H4196
had made	which Manasseh	in the two	courts	of the house	of the LORD
H6213	H4519	H8147	H2691	H1004	H3068
בְּמִזְבְּחוֹת	וְאַתָּה	בַּגְּגָה	עַלְיִת		
beat down	did the king	and brake them down			
H5422	H4428	H7323			
מִשְׁמָרָה	מִשְׁמָרָה	מִשְׁמָרָה			
from thence and cast					
H7993					
קִדְרוֹן					
the dust	H413	of them into the brook	Kidron		
H6083	H5158		H6939		
עַפְרָה	בְּמִלְחָמָה				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 19:13 (Kingdom): And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

2 Kings 21:5 (Sacrifice): And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

Zephaniah 1:5 (References Lord): And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;

2 Chronicles 33:5 (Sacrifice): And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

