

2 Kings 23:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

Analysis

And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

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. 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is 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

וַיִּפֹּן	וַיֵּאָשִׁי הוּא	וַיִּרְא	אֶת	הַקְּבֹרִים	אֲשֶׁר	שָׁם
turned	And as Josiah	himself he spied	H853	out of the sepulchres	H834	H8033
H6437	H2977	H7200		H6913		
בָּהֶן	וַשְׁלַח	וַתֵּקַח	אֶת	הָעֲצָמוֹת	מִן	
that were there in the mount	and sent	and took	H853	the bones	H4480	
H2022	H7971	H3947		H6106		
הַקְּבֹרִים	וַיִּשְׂרֹף	עַל	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	וַיִּטְמָא	הוּא	
out of the sepulchres	and burned	H5921	them upon the altar	and polluted		
H6913	H8313		H4196	H2930		
הַדְּבָרִים	יְהוָה	אָשַׁר	קָרָא	אִישׁ		
it according to the word	of the LORD	H834	proclaimed	which the man		
H1697	H3068		H7121	H376		
הָאֱלֹהִים	אָשַׁר	קָרָא	אֶת	הַדְּבָרִים	הָאֱלֹהִים:	
of God	H834	proclaimed	H853	it according to the word	H428	
H430		H7121		H1697		

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 24:35 (Word): Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

John 10:35 (Word): If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

1 Kings 13:32 (Word): For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.