

2 Kings 3:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

Analysis

Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

This verse contributes to the overall theme of chapter 3: God's faithfulness despite human unfaithfulness. The prophetic ministry served as God's primary means of covenant enforcement, calling both kings and people to faithfulness. During this period, Israel and Judah struggled with persistent idolatry, particularly Baal worship introduced under Ahab and Jezebel.

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

Historical Context

Historical Setting: 2 Kings 3 takes place during the Elisha prophetic ministry, approximately 850-800 BCE. The chapter's theme (Moabite Rebellion and God's Deliverance) reflects the historical reality of God's compassionate provision through prophetic miracles while both kingdoms struggled with persistent idolatry.

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 3 regarding god's faithfulness despite human unfaithfulness?
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

וַיִּקַּח	אֶת	בְּנוֹ	הַבְּכֹר	אֲשֶׁר	יָמַלְךָ	תִּחְתֶּיךָ
Then he took	H853	son	his eldest	H834	that should have reigned	H8478
H3947		H1121	H1060		H4427	
וַעֲלֵהוּ		עָלָה		עַל	הַחֹמָה	וְהָיָה
in his stead and offered		him for a burnt offering		H5921	upon the wall	H1961
H5927		H5930			H2346	
קִצְף		גָּדוֹל	עַל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַסֵּעוּ	מִמָּעַל
indignation	And there was great	H5921	against Israel	and they departed		H5921
H7110	H1419		H3478	H5265		
וַיָּשָׁב		לְאֶרֶץ:				
from him and returned		to their own land				
H7725		H776				

Additional Cross-References

Micah 6:7 (Parallel theme): Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Deuteronomy 12:31 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

Judges 11:31 (Sacrifice): Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD'S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

Amos 2:1 (Kingdom): Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime:

Ezekiel 16:20 (Sacrifice): Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter,

Genesis 22:13 (Sacrifice): And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

Genesis 22:2 (Sacrifice): And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Judges 11:39 (References Israel): And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel,