

1 Kings 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

Analysis

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Solomon's accession and Adonijah's rebellion, within the book's focus on succession narrative and establishment of Solomon's reign.

The Hebrew text reveals nuances important for understanding this passage's contribution to 1 Kings' theological message about kingship, covenant, and faithfulness to Yahweh. This verse demonstrates the consequences when God's people—especially their leaders—either follow or forsake the covenant established at Sinai.

Historical Context

First Kings was written during or after the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), reflecting on the monarchy period (10th-9th centuries BCE) to explain why the kingdoms fell. This passage describes events around 970 BCE during the transition from David to Solomon.

Ancient Near Eastern kingship ideology viewed kings as divine representatives

responsible for maintaining cosmic order through right worship. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria confirm the historical reliability of 1 Kings' descriptions of building projects and administrative structures.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does this passage illustrate the importance of clear succession planning and communication in leadership transitions?
2. What does Solomon's consolidation of power reveal about the relationship between justice, mercy, and political necessity?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

אָנָּה אָנָּה לְאָמֵן רַּמְתָּנֵשׁ אָמֵן חַגְיַת בְּנֵי אָדָנֵי הָנֵה
Then Adonijah the son of Haggith H5375 himself saying H589

אָמַל גַּם יְמִינֵי עַשׂ לְבָבִי יְמִינֵי וְשָׁמֵן אָמַל גַּם
I will be king and he prepared H4427 H6213 H0 him chariots and horsemen H6571 and fifty H2572

לְפָנָיו אָמַל גַּם אָמַל
men to run before H376 H7323 H6440

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 15:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 Samuel 3:4 (Parallel theme): And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;