

1 Kings 12:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

Analysis

And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of kingdom divided: rehoboam and jeroboam, within the book's focus on kingdom division as judgment for Solomon's idolatry.

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. The kingdom division (c. 930 BCE) created the northern kingdom (Israel, 10 tribes) and southern kingdom (Judah, 2 tribes).

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How can leaders today avoid Rehoboam's mistakes and lead with wisdom rather than pride?
2. What does the kingdom division teach about the long-term consequences of generational sin and compromise?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

And they spake	H1696	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים	לְאַמְתָּן וְאָמֵן	H413	וְאָמֵן	H559	לְאַמְתָּן	H518	אָמֵן	H3117	לְאַמְתָּן	H1961	תְּהִיאָה	בְּמִים:	אָמֵן	וְאָמֵן	תְּהִיאָה	בְּמִים:
If thou wilt be a servant	H5650	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	עַבְדֵּךְ יְמִינְךָ	H2088	בְּזַה	H5971	עַבְדֵּךְ יְמִינְךָ	H2896	עַבְדֵּךְ	H5647	עַבְדֵּךְ	H6030	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	עַבְדֵּךְ	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	עַבְדֵּךְ	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	
And they spake	H1696	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	H413	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	H1697	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	H1961	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	H0	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה							
If thou wilt be a servant	H5650	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה	עַבְדֵּךְ יְמִינְךָ	H3605	כָּל	H3117	כָּל	H2896	כָּל	H0	כָּל	H6030	וְאַתָּה תְּהִירֶנָּה					

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 15:1 (Word): A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

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