

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

וַדְּבַרְתָּ	אֶל יוֹ	לֵאמֹר	אִם	הַמִּיָּמִים:	תְּהִיָּה
And they spake	H413	unto him saying	H518	for ever	H1961
H1696		H559		H3117	
עֲבָד יְיָ	לְעַם	הַזֶּה	וְעַבַדְתָּ	וְעָנִיתָ	אֹתָם
If thou wilt be a servant	unto this people	H2088	and wilt serve	them and answer	
H5650	H5971		H5647	H6030	
וַדְּבַרְתָּ	אֵלָיו	דְּבָרִים	טוֹבִים	וְהָיָה	לָּךְ
And they spake	H413	words	good	H1961	H0
H1696		H1697	H2896		
עֲבָד יְיָ	כָּל	הַמִּיָּמִים:			
If thou wilt be a servant	H3605	for ever			
H5650		H3117			

Additional Cross-References

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