

1 Kings 18:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

Analysis

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, within the book's focus on prophetic ministry of Elijah confronting Baalism. The prophetic office represents God's faithful witness even in apostasy, calling His people back to covenant faithfulness.

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. Elijah's ministry (c. 860-850 BCE) occurred during Ahab's reign, a time of intense spiritual crisis in Israel.

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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this passage illustrate the importance of complete obedience to God's word without compromise?
2. What does Elijah's ministry reveal about God's character and His commitment to His covenant people?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

קִהָּה	יְהוָה ה	וּדְבַר	רַב יָמִים	יָמֵי יְהוֹיָכִן
H1961				H1961
	of the LORD	that the word	And it came to pass after many	days
	H3068	H1697	H7227	H3117
אֶל	לִי ה	לֵאמֹר	הַשְּׁלִישׁ יָתִיד	בְּשָׁנָה ה
H413				
	shew	saying	in the third	year
H7200	H1980	H559	H7992	H8141
אֶל	הָאֲדָמָה:	עַל	מָטָר	וְאֶתְּנֶה ה
H413				
	the earth	upon	rain	and I will send
	H127	H6440	H4306	H5414
		H5921		
			unto Ahab	thyself
			H256	

Additional Cross-References

Luke 4:25 (Parallel theme): But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

James 5:17 (Parallel theme): Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

Deuteronomy 28:12 (References Lord): The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

1 Kings 17:1 (Word): And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 Kings 18:2 (Parallel theme): And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria.