

1 Kings 18:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

Analysis

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

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. Canaanite fertility religion promised agricultural prosperity through ritual practices honoring Baal (storm god) and Asherah (mother goddess), posing constant temptation to syncretism. 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

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

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלִיָּהוּ	אֵל	הָעָם	אֲנִי	נוֹתָרְתִּי	וְנָבִיא י
Then said	Elijah	H413	unto the people	H589	I even I only remain	a prophet
H559	H452		H5971		H3498	H5030
לַיהוָה	לְבַדִּי	וְנָבִיא י	הַבַּעַל	אַרְבַּע	מֵאֹת	וְחֲמִשָּׁים
of the LORD	H905	a prophet	but Baal's	are four	hundred	and fifty
H3068		H5030	H1168	H702	H3967	H2572
אִישׁ:						
men						
H376						

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 19:10 (Prophecy): And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 Kings 19:14 (Prophecy): And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

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