

1 Kings 19:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Elijah flees to Horeb, 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 sacrificial system points forward to Christ's ultimate sacrifice, fulfilling all temple offerings (Hebrews 10:1-18). God's covenant faithfulness remains steadfast despite human unfaithfulness, ultimately fulfilled in the new covenant through Christ.

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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of 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

אָמַר וְאַבָּא אֵלֶּה יְהוָה	לִיהְיוֹן הַ	קָרְבָּן אָתִי	קָרְבָּן אָתִי	קָרְבָּן אָתִי	קָרְבָּן אָתִי
And he said	I have been very	I have been very	for the LORD	God	of hosts
H559	H7065	H7065	H3068	H430	H6635
פִּ	עִזָּב וְ	בְּרִיתְבָּן	בְּנֵי	אַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל	
H3588	have forsaken	thy covenant	because the children	of Israel	H853
H5800	H1285	H1121	H3478		
בְּנֵי סָרְבָּרְתָּה יְהִי	נְבִיא יְהִי וְאַתָּה	נְבִיא יְהִי וְאַתָּה	פָּרָג וְ	בְּנֵי	בְּנֵי
thine altars	thrown down	H853	H5030	H2026	H2719
H4196	H2040				
רָאַתִּים אֲתָּה וְאַתָּה נְפָשִׁי	לְבָד וְאַנִּי וְאַתָּה נְפָשִׁי				
and I even I only am left	H589	H905	and they seek	H853	my life
H3498			H1245		H5315
לְקַחְתָּה:					
to take it away					
H3947					

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