

1 Kings 19:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

Analysis

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

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 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

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

וַיֵּה	יָמָם	כִּי	בְּמִדְבָּר	וְיָמָם	וְיָמָם	וְיָמָם
H1931	But he himself went		into the wilderness	journey	a day's	and came
	H1980		H4057	H1870	H3117	H935
וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב	וְיָשַׁב
and sat down	H8478	juniper tree	under a	and he requested	H853	for himself
	H3427	H7574	H259	H7592		H5315
לֹמַת	לֹמַת	וְאָמַרְתִּי	כִּי	עַתָּה	וְיָהִי	לְכָלָל
that he might die		and said	It is enough	H6258	now O LORD	take away
H4191		H559	H7227		H3068	H3947
נֶפֶשׁ	לֹא	לֹא	טוֹב	אָנֹכִי	מֵאָבָתִים	
for himself	H3588	H3808	for I am not better	H595	than my fathers	H1
H5315			H2896			

Additional Cross-References

Jonah 4:3 (References Lord): Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.

Numbers 11:15 (Parallel theme): And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

Jonah 4:8 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.