

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

וְהוּא	הָלַךְ	בַּמִּדְבָּר	דֶּךָ	יּוֹם	וַיָּבֹא
H1931	But he himself went	into the wilderness	journey	a day's	and came
	H1980	H4057	H1870	H3117	H935
וַיֵּשֶׁב	תַּחַת	רֵתֶם	אֶת	וַיִּשְׂאֵל	אֶת
and sat down	H8478	juniper tree	under a	and he requested	H853
H3427		H7574	H259	H7592	for himself
					H5315
לָמּוֹת	וַיֹּאמֶר	כִּי	עַתָּה	יְהוָה	קַח
that he might die	and said	It is enough	H6258	now O LORD	take away
H4191	H559	H7227		H3068	H3947
וַיִּשְׂאֵל	כִּי	לֹא	טוֹב	אֲנִי	מֵאֲבֹתַי
for himself	H3588	H3808	for I am not better	H595	than my fathers
H5315			H2896		H1

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.