

1 Kings 19:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Analysis

And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Elijah fleeing to Horeb, within the book's focus on the 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

1 John 4:8 – God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

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

וַיָּבֹא	וְיָשַׁם	אֶל־שְׁמַעְךָ־הָרֶבֶת	וְיָלַן	וְיָשַׁם	וְיָבֹא
And he came	H8033	H413	thither unto a cave	and lodged	H8033
H935			H4631	H3885	H2009
דִּבֶּר	וְיָהִי	אֶל־יְהוָה	וְיָמַר	לֹא	לֹא
there and behold the word		of the LORD	came to him and he said		H0
H1697		H3068	H413	H559	
מָה	לְבָבֶךָ	אֶל־הָרֶבֶת			
H4100	H0	H6311	unto him What doest thou here Elijah		
			H452		

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 19:13 (Parallel theme): And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Jeremiah 2:18 (Parallel theme): And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

Genesis 16:8 (Parallel theme): And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

Genesis 3:9 (References Lord): And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

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