

1 Kings 20:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.

Analysis

And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Ahab's wars with Syria, 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

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

וַיַּעֲשֵׂה	מֶלֶךְ	וְאֶל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיֹּאמֶר	אַל	דִּבֶּר	וְ	אָמַר	לֹתְבָל	לְ	יְהִי	לְ	בְּעֵבֶד
answered	And the king	of Israel	and said	Tell	H408	on his harness boast	H1984						
H6030	H4428	H3478	H559	H1696									

חָגַג	רַ	פָּנָפְתָּמָה
him	Let not him that girdeth	himself as he that putteth it off
H2296		H6605

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 27:1 (Parallel theme): Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 (Parallel theme): I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise,

nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

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