

# 1 Kings 20:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city,  
and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,

## Analysis

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**And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad,**

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Ahab's wars with Syria, within the book's focus on the 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

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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

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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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

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וַשְׁלַח	מַלְאָכָיו	אֶל	אַחָאֵב	מֶלֶךְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	הָעִירָהּ:
And he sent	messengers	H413	to Ahab	king	of Israel	into the city
H7971	H4397		H256	H4428	H3478	H5892
אָמַר	לֵאמֹר	כֹּה	אָמַר	בֶּן־	דָּד	
and said	H0	H3541	and said	H0	Benhadad	
H559			H559		H1130	