

1 Kings 20:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

Analysis

And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

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 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

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	הַנָּבִיא	אֶל	מֶלֶךְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיֹּאמֶר	לֹא	לִי
came	And the prophet	H413	the king	of Israel	and said	H0	H1980
H5066	H5030		H4428	H3478	H559		
הִתְחַזַּק	וַיִּדַּע	וַיִּרְאֵה	אֵת	אֲשֶׁר	תַּעֲשֶׂה	כִּי	
strengthen	thymself and mark	and see	H853	H834	what thou doest	H3588	
H2388	H3045	H7200			H6213		
לְתִשׁוּבָה	הַשָּׁנָה	מֶלֶךְ	אֲרָם	עָלָה	עָלֶיךָ:		
for at the return	of the year	the king	of Syria	will come up	H5921		
H8666	H8141	H4428	H758	H5927			

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 20:26 (References Israel): And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.

2 Samuel 11:1 (Kingdom): And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

1 Kings 20:13 (Kingdom): And, behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

1 Chronicles 20:1 (Kingdom): And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.