

1 Kings 20:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

Analysis

And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 – Judgment according to deeds

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

בָּנִי	וְכָל־כָּלָל	בְּתִפְקָדָה	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	וְכָל־כָּלָל	בָּנִי
And the children	of Israel	were numbered	and were all present		H1980
H1121	H3478	H6485		H3557	
בָּנִי	וְכָל־כָּלָל	בָּנִי	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	לְקַנְאָתָם	
against	pitched	And the children	of Israel		before them like two
H7125	H2583	H1121	H3478	H5048	H8147
בָּנִי	וְכָל־כָּלָל	בָּנִי	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	לְקַנְאָתָם	
little flocks	of kids	but the Syrians	filled		the country
H2835	H5795	H758	H4390	H853	H776

Additional Cross-References

Judges 6:5 (Parallel theme): For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it.

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