

1 Kings 20:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother.

Analysis

So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother.

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

1 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

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

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

וַחֲגִירוּ	שָׁק ים	בְּמַתְנֵיהֶם	וַחֲבָלוּ ים	בְּרֹאשֵׁיהֶם	וַיָּבֹאוּ
So they girded	sackcloth	on their loins	and put ropes	on their heads	and came
H2296	H8242	H4975	H2256	H7218	H935

אֶל	מֶלֶךְ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	וַיֹּאמֶר	עַבְדְּךָ	בֶּן	הַדָּד	וַיֹּאמֶר
H413	to the king	of Israel	And he said	Thy servant	H0	Benhadad	And he said
	H4428	H3478	H559	H5650		H1130	H559

תַּחֲיִי	נָ א	נַפְשִׁי	וַיֹּאמֶר	הָעוֹדְנוּ	הֲיִ
I pray thee let me live	H4994	H5315	And he said	H5750	Is he yet alive
H2421			H559		H2416

אָחִי	הוא:
he is my brother	H1931
H251	

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