

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

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

Psalm 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

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| וְחִגְרֹו | מִקְרָבָل | יְמִנְתְּנִיָּה | שְׁקָרִים | וְמִבְּלָיָה | בְּרָאשִׁים | וְבְּאֹהֶל |
| So they girded | sackcloth | on their loins | and put ropes | on their heads | and came | |
| H2296 | H8242 | H4975 | H2256 | H7218 | H935 | |
| אֶל | לְךָ | לְמִלְחָמָה | וְיִשְׁרָאֵל | עָבֹדְךָ | בְּנֵי | וְיִאמְרָה |
| H413 | to the king | H4428 | of Israel | H3478 | And he said | Thy servant |
| | | | | | H559 | H5650 |
| בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי | בְּנֵי |
| תְּחִי | נֶפֶשׁ | אָמָר | תְּחִי | בְּעֵד | בְּנֵי | וְיִאמְרָה |
| I pray thee let me live | H4994 | H5315 | And he said | H5750 | Is he yet alive | H2416 |
| H2421 | | | H559 | | | |
| אֶחָד | אֶחָד | אֶחָד | אֶחָד | אֶחָד | אֶחָד | אֶחָד |
| he is my brother | H1931 | | | | | |
| H251 | | | | | | |

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