

1 Kings 20:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.

Analysis

And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it.

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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

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

וְיַיְהֵ	עֲבָדָךְ	הַעֲשֵׂה	נָהָרָה	וְיַיְהֵ	וְיַיְהֵ	וְיַיְהֵ	וְיַיְהֵ	וְיַיְהֵ
H1961	And as thy servant	was busy	H2008	H2008	H1931			
	H5650	H6213						
אֵת כֵּן	אָמַר	מֶלֶךְ	לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	כִּי				
here and there he was gone	said	And the king	of Israel					
H369	H559	H413	H4428					
מִשְׁפְּטְךָ	אַתָּה	מִשְׁפְּט	תִּשְׁפַּט					
unto him So shall thy judgment	H859	be thyself hast decided	H2782					
H4941								

