

1 Kings 20:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

Analysis

Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

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

לְאָדָן	אָמַר	1	בְּנֵי	בְּנֵי	בְּנֵי	לְבָם
Tell	And the messengers	H0	of Benhadad	Tell	my lord	the king
H559	H4397		H1130	H559	H113	H4428
כָּל	אֲשֶׁר	שֶׁל	חַטָּאת	אֵל	עָבֹדָת	בְּרִאשָׁנָה
H3605	H834	All that thou didst send	H7971	H413	for to thy servant	at the first
				H5650		H7223
לְלַעֲשָׂה	וְתַּעֲשֶׂה	אָוֶן	לֹא	בְּנֵי	הָדָרָה	לְלַעֲשָׂה
I will do	but this thing	H2088	H3808	I may	I will do	H1980
H6213	H1697			H3201	H6213	
דְּבָרָה:	וַיֵּשֶׁב	הָוֶה	בְּנֵי	בְּנֵי	בְּנֵי	לְבָם
And the messengers	again		but this thing			
H4397	H7725		H1697			

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