

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

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

הַמֶּלֶךְ לֵךְ לֵאדֹנִי יֹאמֶר וְהַדָּד בֶּן הַמִּלְאָכִים יֹאמֶר וְ
Tell **And the messengers** ^{H0} **of Benhadad** **Tell** **my lord** **the king**
H559 H4397 H1130 H559 H113 H4428

בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה עַבְדְּךָ אֶל שָׁלַחְתָּ אֲשֶׁר כָּל
H3605 H834 **All that thou didst send** H413 **for to thy servant** **at the first**
H7971 H5650 H7223

וְלָכֹו לָעֵשׂוֹת אֵיכָן לֹא הָיָה דְבָר: לָעֵשׂוֹת
I will do **but this thing** H2088 H3808 **I may** **I will do** H1980
H6213 H1697 H3201 H6213

דְּבָר: וַיֵּשֶׁב הוּא הַמִּלְאָכִים יֹאמֶר
And the messengers **again** **but this thing**
H4397 H7725 H1697

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