

# 1 Kings 22:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

## Analysis

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**And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.**

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of ahab's death and jehoshaphat's alliance, within the book's focus on prophetic ministry of Elijah confronting Baalism. The temple represents God's dwelling among His people and foreshadows Christ as Immanuel ('God with us').

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

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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

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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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

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וַיֹּאמֶר	רָאִיתִי	אֶת	כָּל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	נִפְצָּצִים	אֶל	הַהָרִים	כַּצֹּאֵן
And he said	I saw	-	all	Israel	scattered	on	the hills	as sheep
H559	H7200	H853	H3605	H3478	H6327	H413	H2022	H6629

## Additional Cross-References

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**Numbers 27:17** (References Lord): Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

**Matthew 9:36** (Parallel theme): But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

**Jeremiah 50:6** (Parallel theme): My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.

**Jeremiah 50:17** (References Israel): Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

**Zechariah 13:7** (References Lord): Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.