

1 Kings 22:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

Analysis

Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

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 prophetic office represents God's faithful witness even in apostasy, calling His people back to covenant faithfulness.

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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

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

וְעַתָּה	הִנֵּה	נָתַן	יְהוָה	רוּחַ	שְׁקָרָה	בְּפִי	כָּל
And now	indeed	has put	the LORD	a spirit	lying	in the mouth	of all
H6258	H2009	H5414	H3068	H7307	H8267	H6310	H3605
נָבִיאִים	אֱלֹהִים						
your prophets	these						
H5030	H428						

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 14:9 (Prophecy): And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

Isaiah 44:20 (Parallel theme): He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Isaiah 3:11 (Evil): Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

1 Kings 20:42 (References Lord): And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

2 Chronicles 25:16 (Prophecy): And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

Deuteronomy 2:30 (Spirit): But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day.

Numbers 24:13 (References Lord): If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; but what the LORD saith, that will I speak?
