

## 2 Kings Lesson 1

### 2 Kings Chapter 1

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Memory verses for this week: *2Co 8:21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

This book continues the history of the kingdoms to the captivities. It includes the translation of Elijah and the ministry of Elisha. During this period Amos and Hosea prophesied in Israel. Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah prophesied in Judah. The account picks up directly where it left off at the end of I Kings. The book covers approximately 310 years.

This first chapter presents the confrontation between the messengers of Ahaziah and Elijah. It culminates in a showdown between the prophet and Ahaziah himself with Elijah delivering notice that the king would die.

### I. Moab Rebels Against Israel

*2Ki 1:1 Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.*

*2Ki 1:2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.*

After the death of wicked King Ahab, Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, was the next king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Moab was the region to the east and south of the main portion of Israel. It had been subject to Israel since the time of David.

*2Sa 8:1 And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Methegammah out of the hand of the Philistines.  
2Sa 8:2 And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.*

Ahaziah fell through a lattice, perhaps covering an upper story window. It may be that sickness or drunkenness prompted his fall. Complications from his injuries was grave or perhaps produced sickness so serious that Ahaziah questions whether he will recover and live or die. The ill King sent his servants to inquire of “Baalzebub the god of Ekron” whether he would recover. The name Baalzebub literally means ‘lord of the flies’ and was a Philistine idol. When the world has issues, they look in many places, but rarely to the true and living God for help.

### II. God’s message to Ahaziah.

*2Ki 1:3 But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not*

*a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?  
2Ki 1:4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.*

God through His angel directed Elijah to confront the messengers of Ahaziah on their way to Ekron. He was to challenge them as to why they were going to Ekron and its pagan god. Implied in the question is that God had been discharged from the northern kingdom. They had forsaken Jehovah God and now had to turn to a foreign, pagan idol for help. Elijah did as directed and confronted Ahaziah's messengers.

In meeting them, Elijah said, "Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed" Ahaziah's messengers never made it to Ekron. The king sent the messengers to Ekron and their failure was a sure death. Being a wise man that feared the Lord, Elijah told them exactly what was going to happen. Ahaziah would not recover and soon would die. Notice that Elijah told the messengers exactly what the messenger sent by the Lord told him. God is pleased when we speak exact truth and our yea is yea and our nay is nay.

*James 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.*

*2Ki 1:5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?*

*2Ki 1:6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*

The messengers returned to Samaria. Ahaziah interrogated his messengers as to why they had returned. They told him what had happened and what Elijah said word for word not realizing who it was that had confronted them. God is not pleased when people seek information from false gods and refuse to her true counsel.

The instructions were clear: "Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him," The message was clear: "Thus saith the LORD, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."

*Psa 7:8 The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.*

*Psa 7:9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.*

*Psa 7:10 My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.*

*Psa 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*

*2Ki 1:7 And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words?*

*2Ki 1:8 And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of*

*leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.*

The messengers were questioned by the king. The king asked "What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words?" Their description was clear "He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins" The reference to Elijah being hairy may refer to his beard and haircut. It may refer to body hair upon his arms and torso. It may also refer to him wearing an animal skin.

After hearing this description, Ahaziah knew exactly who they had met. It was Elijah the prophet. Ahaziah was well acquainted with the prophet due to the fact that his father and mother were Ahab and Jezebel.

John Gill in his commentary said this about verse 8.

### **2 Kings 1:8**

**And they answered him, he was an hairy man,....** Either the hair of his head and beard were grown very long, having been much neglected for a great while; or he had an hairy garment on, either of goats' hair, such as the Chinese wear (f), whose women spin it, see [Exo 35:26](#) and of which garments are made; or of camels' hair, such as John the Baptist wore, who came in his spirit and power, and imitated him in his dress, being also, as Elijah here:

**girt with a girdle of leather about his loins:** for more expeditious travelling, not for warmth, the climate being hot:

**and he said, it is Elijah the Tishbite;** for he had seen him formerly in his father's court in this dress.

*2Ki 1:9 Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.*

*2Ki 1:10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*

Ahaziah sent a company of fifty soldiers led by a Captain to bring Elijah by force if necessary. Elijah was upon a hilltop when Ahaziah's men arrived. The captain of the men ordered him to come down by the king's decree. To that, Elijah replied, "If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty."

It is not clear whether the fire was a massive bolt of lightning or more conventional fire, however, Ahaziah's men were devoured on the spot.

*2Ki 1:11 Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.*

*2Ki 1:12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*

Ahaziah learns of the fate of the small army sent to take Elijah. It is not noted if or how Ahaziah was informed of the fate of his first force. It would seem however that there probably had been witnesses to the destruction of his men and word got back to him.

Another force was sent. It is noteworthy that in both instances, the captain addressed Elijah as a man of God. They knew who he was and whom he represented. It is more than ironic that Ahaziah had discounted the God of heaven but his men knew better.

Again, Elijah answered and said unto them, "If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty." The fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Though Ahaziah had rejected Jehovah God, he was receiving a clear lesson of God's power.

*2Ki 1:13 And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.*

*2Ki 1:14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.*

The wicked king remained stubborn in his defiance of God's message and man. He wants his way even if it costs the life of many of his men. A third contingent was sent to arrest Elijah. However, this officer rather pled with Elijah to spare his life and those of his men. He clearly knew what happened to his comrades' in arms. "Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight."

He repeated his plea for mercy. To their credit, these common soldiers had the good sense to fear God and His messenger. That's more than the wicked and stubborn king of Israel did. Brother Taylor has mentioned many times that what all of us need is not what we deserve, but we all need God's mercy.

Matthew Henry said this about this third captain.

The third captain humbled himself and cast himself upon the mercy of God and Elijah. It does not appear that Ahaziah ordered him to do so (his stubborn heart is as hard as ever; so regardless is he of the terrors of the Lord, so little affected with the manifestations of his wrath, and withal so prodigal of the lives of his subjects, that he sends a third with the same provoking message to Elijah), but he took warning by the fate of his predecessors, who, perhaps, lay dead before his eyes; and, instead of summoning the prophet down, fell down before him, and begged for his life and the lives of his soldiers, acknowledging their own evil deserts and the prophet's power ([2Ki 1:13](#), [2Ki 1:14](#)): *Let my life be precious in thy sight*. Note, There is nothing to be got by contending with God: if we would prevail with him, it must be by supplication; if we would not fall before God, we must bow before him; and those are wise for themselves who learn submission from the fatal consequences of the obstinacy of others.

Elijah does more than grant the request of this third captain. God is not so severe with those that stand it out against him but he is as ready to show mercy to those that repent and submit to him; never any found it in vain to cast themselves upon the mercy of God.

This captain, not only has his life spared, but is permitted to carry his point: Elijah, being so commanded by the angel, *goes down with him to the king, 2Ki 1:15*. Thus he shows that he before refused to come, not because he feared the king or court, but because he would not be imperiously compelled, which would lessen the honour of his master; he *magnifies his office*. He comes boldly to the king, and tells him to his face (let him take it as he may) what he had before sent to him (*2Ki 1:16*), that he shall surely and shortly die; he mitigates not the sentence, either for fear of the king's displeasure or in pity to his misery. The God of Israel has condemned him, let him send to see whether the god of Ekron can deliver him. So thunder-struck is Ahaziah with this message, when it comes from the prophet's own mouth, that neither he nor any of those about him durst offer him any violence, nor so much as give him an affront; but out of that den of lions he comes unhurt, like Daniel. Who can harm those whom God will shelter?

*2Ki 1:15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.*

*2Ki 1:16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*

God directed Elijah this time to go to Ahaziah. The prophet confronted the king with his rejection of Jehovah God. Elijah said to him, "Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."

It was not that God was not present in Israel. Rather, from the king on down, the nation had rejected Jehovah as God. Therefore, they were reduced to seeking help from a pagan idol in time of need. Elijah delivered to Ahaziah, face to face, the news that he would soon die.

### **III. The Death of Ahaziah and Accession of Jehoram to King over Israel.**

*2Ki 1:17 So he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.*

*2Ki 1:18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ahaziah died shortly after Elijah's verdict was delivered to him. Because he had no son, his brother, Jehoram ascended his throne. Ironically, in Judah, the new king there was also named Jehoram. He was the son of Jehoshaphat.

*1Ki 22:50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.*

Conclusion: The lesson in this chapter is clear. God's Word doesn't change. Notice, Elijah doesn't change the message neither is their need for interpretation or embellishment. The lesson here is simple. Those who will not inquire of the word of God for their comfort will be made to listen whether they want to or not.

*Rom 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*  
*Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*  
*Rom 14:9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*  
*Rom 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*  
**Rom 14:11** *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*  
*Rom 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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