

Bad News for a Bad King *2 Kings 1:1-12*

INTRO:

The last time we were with Elijah, we listened as he confronted Ahab in Naboth's vine yard. He delivered the LORD's condemnation against Ahab and his whole family. Then we watched as this ungodly king repented and God in His great mercy postponed the fall of the judgment.

Sometime has passed and the judgment of God has begun to fall. In the last of **1 Kings** the LORD announced that Ahab would die in battle. Even though Ahab thought he could outsmart God, he was killed by a random arrow which was a guided missile in God's hand. Here in this chapter we meet Ahaziah, Ahab's son, who too will die.

I. The Idolatrous King (1-2)

II. Elijah Intercepts the Messengers (v. 3-8)

III. Hit Squads Sent For Elijah (v. 9-12)

I. The Idolatrous King (1-2)

2 Kings 1:1-2 *“Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, ‘Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury.’”*

A. The first note that follows the statement of the demise of Ahab is that trouble has come to Israel. Moab is not just testing the new monarch. God is at work behind the scenes to try to make Ahaziah recognize that Israel needs her God.

B. But Ahaziah and Israel is committed to their rebellion. Even as the new king faces death, he will not turn back to Yahweh. Instead, he calls two couriers and sends them on a long trip to enquire of Baal in Philistia. God's first command is front and center in the events of this text.

Exodus 20:1-3 *“And God spoke all these words, saying: ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.’”*

The modern mindset is we should be tolerant and open-minded, everyone has their own unique way to God. The fact is our God is the only true and living God. Beside Him there is no other.

II. Elijah Intercepts the Messengers (v. 3-8)

2 Kings 1:3-4 *“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 to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?’ Now therefore, thus says the LORD: ‘You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” So Elijah departed.”*

A. What happens when these messengers start their journey? Probably before-hand Yahweh, the God of Israel, sent Elijah to intercept them. The message is strong. The first question is important. What did Ahaziah indicate by seeking another God? The king clearly demonstrated his commitment to idolatry and to his hatred of Yahweh. Here again, someone did not pay attention to God’s dramatic demonstration at Mount Carmel.

B. Because you have done this you shall die. Here is the great demonstration of God’s holiness. God is intolerant of sin, and He will not give His glory to another. Modern pluralism has infected us into thinking that opposing views of God are acceptable. The only God who exists is the God of the Bible. The LORD Himself said in **Isaiah 45:5**

“I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me.”

Don’t miss God’s mercy here also. He did not mince words, but Ahaziah could have repented as his father did. But he did not.

C. We have no record of the actual encounter with the messengers. In verse 5 we find them returning to Ahaziah. They met Elijah on the way and somehow Elijah’s command trumped the king’s commission. The LORD’s words through Elijah are repeated in **verse 6**.

D. Immediately, the king wants to know what this man looked like (**verse 7**). The description in **verse 8** cinches it. It is Elijah the Tishbite. Why did Ahaziah want to know? Was it so he could consult with Elijah and repent and receive God’s mercy?

III. Hit Squads Sent For Elijah (v. 9-16)

The answer is no. He wanted to send a hit squad to kill him.

2 Kings 1:9-12 *“Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: ‘Man of God, the king has said, ‘Come down!’ ” So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, ‘If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.’” And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his*

fifty men. And he answered and said to him: "Man of God, thus has the king said, 'Come down quickly!'" So Elijah answered and said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty."

A. Many want to condemn Elijah for what he did here. Two things we need to keep in mind. First, Yahweh sent the fire to consume these men. Therefore it must have been justified. Second, if all the king was interested in was a conversation, why did he not just send his messengers?

B. We find a clue in the conversation the angel of the LORD had with Elijah after the third captain came to him.

2 Kings 1:13–15 *"Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And he third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight." And the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king."*

The issue was not the king's command, but Elijah's safety. The plan was he would never reach the throne room. Once there Elijah repeated the LORD's message again.

WHAT DO WE TAKE AWAY FROM THIS?

1. We need to know the true and living God. He is the only God and beside Him there is no other. We know Him through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and through His Word. It is vital we know Him.

2. We must always be ready to die. Even when facing death Ahaziah did not want any part of the God who lives. He held fast to his idols. We must have the Lord Jesus, because if we have Him, we have life. If we do not have Him the wrath of God abides on us.

Hymn #516 *He's Everything to Me*