

What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Seven – 2 Kings 1:3-17

In this study thus far on the life of Elijah we’ve traveled with him through a lot of experiences. First we saw him confront Ahab in the palace and Jezebel with the fact that because they were Baal worshippers, God was going to deal with them in a serious fashion. And for three and a half years there wouldn’t be any rain.

During those three and a half years, eighteen months of that time was spent at the Brook Cherith where the Lord sent ravens to feed him and then the brook sustained him until it dried up. And he stayed there, he didn’t move, which made us realize how important it is—even though things seem bad and falling apart—that’s not necessarily an indication that it’s time to move. Sometimes it’s an indication to stay and trust the Lord in those situations to bring glory to His name.

Then we also looked at the fact that the word of the Lord came exactly on time saying, “arise and go to Zarephath.” The last place on earth that he would want to go is Zarephath because that’s the home of Ithobaal, Jezebel’s daddy, and the citadel of Baal worship. But it was there that he was sustained for two years by the widow at Zarephath what the Lord provided.

And then the third study was “go reveal yourself now to Ahab” and we met Obadiah. What a neat guy working as the assistant to Ahab in the court. He feared God greatly and preserved the lives of several of the prophets.

Then in episode four they played the Super Bowl on Mount Carmel, the confrontation with the prophets of Baal. And he called fire out of heaven on that occasion and God was vindicated in that.

And then in our fifth study it was like going from the ridiculous to the sublime, or from the sublime to the ridiculous, we would have to say, because he ran off into the desert.

Sometimes we have expectations that we are going to live perfect lives and that we’ll never fail. And we all fail. The only one who will not fail is the Lord Himself.

We cannot take a biography of anyone in the scripture—it doesn’t matter who they are—and not see some of human frailty in their lives. Abraham lied about Sarah. He was vulnerable when Sarah said, “Look, we can’t wait any longer. We’ve got to go ahead and have this kid and trust that God’s going to provide.”

Isaac, blind old father, preferred to have Esau rather than Jacob—God’s promised son. Jacob, every time he turned around was tripping over something else and God had to deal

with him quite severely.

And on and on we can go. Moses, vulnerable with his temper, hit the rock instead of speaking to it. David failed in what should have been his greatest strength. Gideon failed. Sampson failed. Any others? And we know how gracious and good God is and how He looks at the total picture. It's not an episode or an event.

And for Elijah it is going off into the wilderness at the threat of a woman who is simply saying, "I'm going to take your life." And he leaves and is ready to quit and the Lord tells him, "Look, go get the guy that's going to be your substitute." And at the end of that study Elisha comes into the picture.

Now it's been ten years since then. There have been some significant things that have happened.

Six years after that experience we had Naboth's vineyard. Ahab was feeling so bad that he could not have Naboth's vineyard right next to his summer place up in Jezreel.

He asked Naboth for it, he wanted to trade land and acreage. He wanted to pay him good money for it and he was not going to give the Lord's inheritance to a man who was trying to buy it because he was not going to be disobedient to the Lord.

Jezebel gets into things because Ahab throws a temper tantrum and turns his face to the wall and won't eat. And she says, "Don't worry about it. I'll take care of it." And sure

enough she does. She gets Naboth killed, as well as all of his sons, so that the land can revert back to the throne. And Elijah speaks that great message of judgment and says it's all over.

Alright, since that time when we ended our last study, there have been some very traumatic and bad things that have happened during these last four years that bring us up to today:

Number one, Ahab died in battle. He was shot and killed by an archer.

Secondly, Ahaziah, Jezebel and Ahab's son, is now ruling in the land of Israel.

And thirdly, the nation is weak morally and spiritually. Ahaziah is still a Baal worshipper. Jezebel is still calling the shots. She's still wearing the pants in the palace. It's still just the same. The son is just like his dad.

And it is at this critical time, when a nation is in a change of leadership, that other nations want to attack because they are more vulnerable when there's no determined policy or strong leadership. And so Moab in the south chooses to rebel against the land of Israel.

First Kings 22 will give us a little background to set the stage for our study. It says about Ahaziah, the new king:

1 Kings 22:51-53

Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, became king over Israel and Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, [and he was a good guy] and he reigned two years over Israel, [that is Ahaziah] and he did evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who caused Israel to sin, so he served Baal and worshipped him, and provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger according to all that his father had done.

So when the book of 2 Kings opens—that's where we are now—it says, “Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.”

Now whenever a person is put into a position of leadership or put into a place of having others responsible to them, God immediately starts to work on their lives.

The reason Moab rebelled in the south is because that is the first stirring up of the circumstances of Ahaziah to get him to play his hand.

God will immediately give us opportunities to express our faith by what goes on in our life. God never makes a mistake. And maybe some of the readings in our life are of such a nature that God is just saying, “Look, I love you so much, I want to demonstrate to the world that you can trust Me and respond to Me so I'm giving you a great opportunity to throw

your life into My hands and let Me work.”

Immediately he gives his state of the union address and they're in a war. There is a rebellion from the south. God starts to stir up the circumstances.

We will always find that when we get serious with God He immediately does that. If we get ready to make a move in our life, we get ready to do something, God will always stir everything up around us so that we'll get an opportunity to really trust Him and seek His face in a fresh new way.

Now how does he respond and how should he have responded? Well if he were like Jehoshaphat, the good guy in the south, when the enemies surrounded him, he called everybody to fast and to pray. And then he said, “Lord, we have no might against this great company that comes against us and we don't know what to do, but our eyes are upon You.” He doesn't do any of these things.

He doesn't fast. He doesn't pray. And another thing the king always did was lead the troops in battle. Ahaziah is flat not going to lead the troops. He has already seen his daddy die in battle recently and he would rather be a live chicken than a dead duck and he isn't going to go to battle. He is just going to stay home in the palace in this nice, secure little place.

Ahaziah, as a child of Ahab and Jezebel, cannot have anything but a perverted, warped mind about religion and everything else, as well as his character. So he stays home. And he stays

home, kind of shaking his finger in the face of God, as he sends out the troops to say, “Y’all go to war! Yay for Israel! Win the battle and do that, but forget me. I’m staying here. I’m not going with you.”

Now that brings us to verse 2, that gets us ready for our study.

Isn’t this interesting how this works? Listen to this:

2 Kings 1:2

And Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber which was in Samaria and became ill; so he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron whether I shall recover from this sickness.”

He had an upper chamber for a bedroom and he got up one morning and opened it and leaned on the screen and ended splattered all over the patio. He flat fell out and he hit hard enough to knock him silly and hurt him pretty bad. And he’s not recovering really well.

God is not limited to our being in battle to get our attention. He can get us while we’re lying in our bedroom or leaning out the window.

For Ahaziah he falls and he’s badly hurt. Now in his helplessness he has an opportunity to become religious, doesn’t he? Who is he going to call on? Who is he going to

demonstrate at this particular time as to what kind of a person he is?

He could choose God and learned from his daddy and his mother that this is not the way to do it. But it's obvious that they've had such an influence upon him that he is a worshiper of Baal.

Part of this is probably due to the fact that Jezebel is still there. And being a Baal worshiper, the son is much like his mother.

So what does he say?

“Go, inquire”—to his servants—“of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.”

Who is Baal-zebub? Baal-zebub is the god of the flies. And the god of the flies protects them from the diseases that are carried by the flies. And it is another facet of Baal worship at this point.

God has, first of all, stirred up the circumstances by letting Moab rebel against the country. We now move into phase two in God's program for recovering his errant children. He takes us on a whaling expedition to apply the board of education to the seat of knowledge. He chastens.

And sometimes in order for God to get our attention, He will touch us physically. Remember Jacob? The Lord wrestled him

all night long. When morning came, he threw his hip out.

In the book of Hosea it says that Jacob actually cried as he clung to the Lord for that blessing. He had tears in his eyes with a dislocated hip. God touched him.

“Ahaziah, you’re not going to go to battle. You’re not going to call upon Me. You’re not going to call the people to a fast and demonstrate that you are My people and I am a covenant-keeping God and you belong to Me and you’re the leader of My people. Then Moab’s going to rebel. Alright, you’re gonna stay here in your little palace, you’re going to be nice and secure.”

Phase two—chastening. Bam! He falls out of the window.

Now many times when we live without God in prosperity, in adversity we despise the chastening hand of the Lord. We’ll find that invariably, we’ll see it in the book of Revelation, when adversity comes and the judgments start to fall people blaspheme God. And if we live without Him in prosperity we’re going to be bitter and resentful toward Him when it isn’t so good. And so it is with Ahaziah.

Well, one thing that we need to recognize is that Jezebel is a hard woman. We saw her getting several guys killed as a result of her edicts. She is still calling the plays. It’s obvious by him being a Baal worshiper and by the fact that she tells him a lot of things that take place.

So he goes to look for help and he turns to the priests of Baal.

Isaiah 45:22

“Look unto me,” the Lord says, “and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.”

Now Ahaziah is disobedient to scriptural principle in several places. Listen to a few of these.

Exodus 20:3

You shall have no gods before me.

Leviticus 19:31

Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; and do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 20:6

As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists to play the harlot after them, I will also set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people.

Leviticus 20:27

As far as a man or a woman, if there is a medium or a spiritist among them, they shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones, their blood guiltiness is upon them.

Some people play around with that stuff. Ouija boards, tarot cards, crystal balls, fortune tellers and horoscopes. Biblically that is satanic and it's certainly nothing for a believer to be messing with. Just turn away from it. The will of God can be made known to us through the Word of God, not through some kind of reading or séance or whatever else they're getting into.

There are so many verses in the Bible that talk about this:

Deuteronomy 18:10, 11

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell or a medium or a spiritist or one who calls upon the dead.

All he wants is for some great fortune teller to look into the crystal ball and say, "Hey, am I going to recover or am I going to die? What's going to happen?"

Now that's the background to our passage with all that we've said up to this point. So let's pick up at verse 3 .

v. 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 to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?'"

“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?””

“But the angel of the Lord said... ‘Arise...”

The guy in the white hat’s getting ready to overtake the guys in the black hat. So they’re going up to meet the messengers.

And the question is going to be this:

““Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?””

Has Elijah learned his lessons? He just had one bad lap, didn’t he? Just one bad mark.

A lot of times in our lives, just because we have one bad lap, we spoil all the rest of them because we’re messing up with one bad lap. Satan just loves that. He’s clapping his hands with glee because we’re sitting around indulging in self-pity when we know life’s going on. We have to get after it and get behind it.

And here Elijah had learned his lesson. As soon as the word of the Lord comes to him, he’s up and at ‘em.

And it’s so neat, all the way to the end—every time. In our next study he’s going to get caught up in a whirlwind. That’s

so cool because he's just walking along with the Lord and he's just going to head on to the house.

He learned his lesson out there in that wilderness when the Lord said, "Why are you here?" Boom! That's all it took and he's back in there and he's had ten productive years now. And here he is, right back in the big middle of it. He leaves in a hurry. As soon as the Lord gives it, he's submissive and obedient—just like he always has been before.

He's saying, "Is there no God in Israel?" What is God for anyway in our lives? He's to be our counselor, to be our friend, to be our guide, our confidant.

He totally disregarded him. He's turned to the priests of Baal that have evidently been reinstituted during these last ten years since that fire came out of heaven again, and now they're back.

v. 4 Now therefore thus says the Lord, 'You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die.' Then Elijah departed.

"Now therefore thus says the Lord, "You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die." Then Elijah departed."

He just took off ready to meet him.

v. 5 When the messengers returned to him he said to

them, “Why have you returned?”

“When the messengers returned to him he said to them, ‘Why have you returned?’”

Between verse 4 and 5 Elijah had already got the job done. He went and gave that message to these guys immediately. And they hardly got out of Samaria, heading down to Ekron to get this done and Elijah meets them. And then when they come back, the king asks, “Why have you returned?”

Now there’s some interesting background in these next verses. It’s just so special.

v. 6 And they said to him, “A man came up to meet us and said to us, ‘Go, return to the king who sent you and say to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’””

“And they said to him, ‘A man came up to meet us and said to us, “Go, return to the king who sent you and say to him, “Thus says the Lord, “Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”””

We can tell what kind of guy Ahaziah is, can’t we?

v. 7 And he said to them, “What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?”

“And he said to them, ‘What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?’”

It’s not anything to do with God. It’s just what kind of a creep would come walking up and say these sorts of things? Who was he?

And a lot of times we’re like that. It’s who said it. It’s not what was said and is it true.

He’s saying in essence, “Who’d say something like that? So I can issue an all-points bulletin—we’ll get him! It’s awful to talk about the king like that.”

v. 8 And they answered him, “He was a hairy man with a leather girdle bound about his loins.” And he said “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

“And they answered him, ‘He was a hairy man with a leather girdle bound about his loins.’ And he said, ‘It is Elijah the Tishbite.’”

There’s only one guy who’s wearing a leather girdle that looks like this, Elijah the Tishbite. Ahaziah just turns his face to the wall and says, “Oh no.”

Why does he say that? He's heard about Elijah in the palace until he is full of it up to here. He knew his mother had one design and that was in his lifetime, as a little guy, he heard mom talking about, "I'm gonna kill him. I'm gonna kill him. I'm gonna kill him. You know I've got my plans. I'm gonna kill him."

And daddy was always resentful toward the prophet. Never the Lord of the prophet, just the prophet.

"We get rid of Elijah around here and it'll rain and things will surely get a lot better. If we get rid of him, everything will be fine."

Went down and got Naboth's vineyard and looked at what happened. That old trouble maker came right in there in the middle of things.

Over and over again Ahab's house has had nothing but fits over Elijah the Tishbite. We can just feel all the bitterness and resentment as it comes spilling out.

Now, this is a crucial crisis in the life of Ahaziah. How is he going to respond to the inevitable? Is he going to submit and repent or is he going to reject and fight it?

There's still hope because there was hope for Nineveh, because Nineveh changed His mind. He could have his life spared if he would come with a repentant, broken spirit and let God work in this situation.

We read in 2 Peter:

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow, the Lord of the promise is not slow but he's patient. Not willing that anybody should perish but that all should make room for repentance.

If he'd just make room for repentance. Judas Iscariot, if he'd have just said, "Lord, I blew it. Lord, I'm sorry. I've gotten all wrapped up in this thing and I've made this contract with these guys and I've got to take this money. Lord, please forgive me."

Peter knew where to go and the Lord forgave and cleansed. Ahaziah is at that point where he's either going to throw himself open to the judgment of God or he's going to respond to a message of judgment that is being perpetrated on his behalf.

Isaiah 45:9

Woe to the one who quarrels with his maker, an earthen vessel among the vessels of earth. Will the clay say to the potter, "What are you doing?" or the thing that you are making say, "He has no hands."

Now look what happens—verse 9. Now we have our answer.

v. 9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him, and behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. And he said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’”

“Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him, and behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. And he said to him, ‘O man of God, the king says, “Come down.””

He’s mad. He’s going to war.

In his tragic anger and rebellion, he does this because his mother says so. Or at least she agrees with it.

The army of Israel was divided into fifties and hundreds and into a thousand. He’s thinking, “Fifty to one ought to get him. We have pretty good odds.”

It’s interesting too that the military, for the most part, is all fighting down against Moab in the south at this time. But he’s got the Green Berets around there—the guys that are really tough stuff—close to the palace.

And so he pulls in fifty. And he said, “You guys go find this guy. If you have to, go ahead and kill him.”

And we can almost see Jezebel saying, “Sic’em son! You know I’ve been after this for a long time! Finally I’m going to get his blood! We’re going to get him!”

Sometimes we're fighting a losing battle when we fight against God and His purposes for our life.

"I want to tell you son, I sent a telegram once and he got away. Don't even bother with that, just send an army right now. Get him this time for sure." We can just feel the hatred and the venom that she has for him, that he's been gone all this time.

Notice what the captain says as he sees Elijah sitting up there on the hill:

"O man of God, the king says, "Come down.""

Isn't that interesting? "O man of God." That doesn't mean much. We're from a different authority.

"the king says, 'Come down.'"

In other words, "Ahaziah is the ruler. Just because you're a man of God doesn't mean anything."

v. 10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

"And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty,"—isn't

this cool?

“If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.’ Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.”

Burn spot.

Only a word separates us from our eternal destiny. God just has to say “Come” or God just has to say “it’s over” and our eternal destiny begins. The game is done.

Just a word. “If I am a man of God, let fire come down.” Boom!

Now what is the significance of the judgment that’s fallen?

It falls very swiftly.

It comes so quickly because the servant of the Lord is vindicated.

Ever noticed that all of the judgments in the Old Testament are represented by a consuming fire? And how much of what is said in the New Testament is similar?

Luke 10:16

The one who listens to you listens to me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects the one who sent me.

The rebellious hosts of Korah:

Numbers 16:35

Fire also came forth from the Lord and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense.

God is the giver of life and He can also take it anytime from those who reject Him.

Now there's something interesting about this. Fire has fallen twice in the life of Elijah, hasn't it? When did it fall the first time? On Mount Carmel. What did it consume? The sacrifice.

Now, what does the fire consume? It consumes the sinner who slighted the sacrifice.

There's a tremendous lesson in that.

Almighty vengeance fell
that would have sunk a world to hell,
he bore it for a chosen race
and thus becomes our hiding place.
(source unknown)

Christ bore the fire of God's judgment on Calvary so we in turn would not bear the fire of God's eternal punishment in judgment because we have slighted the sacrifice.

Want a verse on that?

2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9

In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus, and these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

Romans 1:18

For the wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

Romans 2:5

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Hebrews 2:3

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Hebrews 10:31

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Psalms 124:3

then they would have swallowed us alive when their anger was kindled against us.

Psalm 27:1-3

The Lord is my light and my salvation.
Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the defense of my life.
Whom shall I dread?
When evil doers come upon me to devour my flesh,
my adversaries and my enemies, they stumble and fell.
Thou an host encamp against me,
my heart will not fear.
Though war arise against me,
in spite of this, I shall be confident.

v. 11 So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, thus says the king, ‘Come down quickly.’”

“So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty.”—we can see how rebellious he is and how he has lost his judgment.

“So we lost fifty guys! Second captain, you’re out there to get them and to do the job. Doesn’t make any difference if you lose your life.”

“So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, ‘O man of God, thus the king says, “Come down quickly.”’”

This is a duel between Elijah and the king. But really it’s a fight against God.

What does he mean when he adds the word “quickly” this time? Ever noticed that there is a progression in urgency when we are faced with the disobedience of little children?

First you say, “Come in.” And the fifth movement of the symphony is “Get into this house right this minute!” Right? We can just play the symphony through all of its movement until we get to that finale.

“the king says, ‘Come down quickly.’”—or we’re sending the whole army.

There is that possibility Elijah.

v. 12 And 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. Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

“And 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. Then the fire of the Lord came down from heaven and

consumed him and his fifty.”—same song, second verse, a little bit louder and a whole lot worse.

Why is all this happening?

“Elijah, if you had just stayed by the stuff this is what I would have done to Jezebel for you a lot earlier when you ran away in the wilderness.”

Watch, a lot of times later in life when we are musing over our failures, God says, “Look how it could have been if you had just trusted Me when you were overwhelmed by those circumstances.”

It’s incredible how great a teacher we have in the Lord our God and how faithful He is to teach us the lessons.

One hundred guys gone! He isn’t quitting, is he? Same song, third verse, here we go.

v. 13 So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to him, “O man of God, please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.

“So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to

him, ‘O man of God, please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.’”

Had they heard about the other hundred? They walked over charred ground and made them believers. They’re walking up there and they’re thinking, “Man this is it. We might have a rebel king and he might think our lives are cheap but I’m going to check in with this guy before the fire falls!” He’s no dummy.

Isn’t it interesting that when there’s a plea for mercy God is always ready to respond by restraining His hand of judgment? When we really come broken before Him.

Remember those guys were railing these accusations against Christ on the cross and all of a sudden, this guy next to him says, “Remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

It’s just like he was the only lonely voice but the Lord heard him and He said, “Today you’ll be with me in paradise.”

And God is so gracious. He’s just waiting to get His alms of love. And all He wants is a change of attitude or heart. And this guy says to the man of God, “please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours...”

“They don’t belong to Ahaziah, they’re Yours!”

“be precious in your sight.”

The Lord is always near to a broken and contrite heart. (see Psalm 51:17)

He binds up the wounds. He loves to heal. And in this case there is love, mercy and grace available to this guy and his army.

“This is why I want it!”

v. 14 Behold fire came down from heaven, and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”

“Behold fire came down from heaven, and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”

“We already know what happened to the other two groups and we’ve been shaking in our boots all the way out here Elijah. We’re no match for Your God.”

v. 15 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.

“And the angel of the Lord said to Elijah,”

That’s kind of like Abraham as he’s getting ready to lift the knife to kill his kid, remember? He was going to plunge it into

Isaac's heart and God says, "Behold, no! Behold, now I know." And his hand is restrained. (see Genesis 22)

Here "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."

v. 16 Then he said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.'

"Then he said to him,"—that is to Ahaziah, goes right into the palace—"Thus says the Lord, "Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die."

v. 17 So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because he had no son.

"So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah,

because he had no son.”

End to Ahaziah.

What are the lessons we got out of that?

Lesson #1: You cannot get away from the Lord.

He tried to avoid God in his life and the Lord just progressively dealt with him and gave him an exact sequence of how the Lord deals with us as His children.

Stir up our circumstances, touch us physically and then bring us to physical death. And that is the phase every time. One right after the other.

Lesson #2: Don't follow a substitute god.

“You're going to Baal-zabub the god Ekron.” Just a false, phony, fake god that's a figment of the imagination.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me.” (ref. John 14:6)

Lesson #3: The certainty of God's judgment, the certainty of God's judgment is underscored in this passage.

The word “speak” is spoken and the world is destroyed. Here again we see the fire of God's judgment fall.

Luke 9:54, 55

When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But He turned and rebuked them, and they went on to another village.”

A God of grace. James and John were so mad because they got turned down in the Samaritan village for reservations and they wanted to call fire out of heaven and wipe that village out. And the Lord says, “No, I did not come to destroy men’s lives, I came to save them.” And He’s still available to save men’s lives.

The day is coming, which is the day that ends the day of grace and we’ll either walk into His presence, one way or the other, or the Lord will take us to be with Himself.

Lesson #4: There is mercy for those who seek it.

That last guy was like the thief on the cross. He just said, “Have mercy.”

Lesson #5: You’re fighting a losing battle if you are fighting against the Lord.

We’re fighting a losing battle if we are fighting against the Lord. Ahaziah lost it on every front.

Ahab did too, didn't he? He ended up just a statistic in the army in that battle.

Lesson #6: Elijah learned from past failure.

He's immediately responsive. Chafing at the bit to be used by God.

Lesson #7: The power of a mother's influence on her son.

Jezebel has a powerful influence. Somebody said, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."

We can really see that.

He is a reflection of his mother. And his attitudes and his actions display the fact that he has grown up under Jezebel's leadership. The son is like his mother.

Father, we come to You and realize in this sober passage that You are a God of grace and a God of judgment. Lord, we know that the Bible prophesied that Christ would indeed be the one upon whom the judgment would fall in Isaiah. And He has borne our griefs and He's carried our sorrows. We saw Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace is upon Him. And with His stripes we are healed. That is if we'll respond. And Lord we realize when we reject instead of responding, we throw ourselves open to the judgment that we talked about. We know You are going to

judge. The certainty of it's very real. We're living in those traumatic, climactic days that are certainly leading up to the end. And we pray that You'll help us to be eager about our own relationship with You. And also zealous and concerned about those who know You not, that we might share with them the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For it's in the Savior's name we pray. Amen.

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What You Need to Know About ELIJAH:

“Someone Who Watched God at Work”

Study Number Seven – 2 Kings 1:3-17

NOTES

v. 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 to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?’

v. 4 Now therefore thus says the Lord, ‘You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” Then Elijah departed.

v. 5 When the messengers returned to him he said to them, “Why have you returned?”

v. 6 And they said to him, “A man came up to meet us and said to us, ‘Go, return to the king who sent you and say to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”’

v. 7 And he said to them, “What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?”

v. 8 And they answered him, “He was a hairy man with a leather girdle bound about his loins.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

v. 9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him, and behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. And he said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’”

v. 10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

v. 11 So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, thus says the king, ‘Come down quickly.’”

NOTES

v. 12 And 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. Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

v. 13 So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to him, “O man of God, please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.

v. 14 Behold fire came down from heaven, and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”

v. 15 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.

v. 16 Then he said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”

v. 17 So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because he had no son.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Kings 1:3-17 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What does the angel of the Lord command Elijah to do in verse 3?

3. What message from the Lord does Elijah give to the messengers of Ahaziah?

4. How is Elijah described by the messengers in verse 8?

5. What is the purpose for fire coming down out of heaven in verses 9-12?

6. What is the request of the third captain in verses 13 and 14?

7. What message does the angel of the Lord give to Elijah in verse 15?

8. What message does Elijah give to the king in verse 16?

9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lessons have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: You cannot get away from the Lord.

LESSON #2: Don't follow a substitute god.

LESSON #3: The certainty of God's judgment is underscored in this passage.

LESSON #4: There is mercy for those who seek it.

LESSON #5: You are fighting a losing battle if you are fighting against the Lord.

LESSON #6: Elijah learned from past failures.

LESSON #7: The power of a mother's influence: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."