

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
3RD-5TH GRADE
TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 11

The Death of Ahaziah



The Death of Ahaziah

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students about the foolishness of pride, the wisdom of humility, and the confidence we can have in God and His Word.

Key Verses

2 Kings 1—Main Teaching Passage

Proverbs 3:25-26

Proverbs 16:18

1 Peter 5:5-7

Galatians 6:7-8

Memory Verse - 1 Peter 5:6

"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, _____.

Imagine that you were feeling extra adventurous one day and decided to climb a tree as high as you could. As you're climbing, a branch breaks and you fall to the ground. You are injured and need help, so you call for an electrician. Your friends say, "Are you crazy?! You need a doctor! We need to call 9-1-1!" "No!" you insist, "I need the electrician!"

Unless you're a robot, an electrician isn't going to do you any good, but people look for help in the wrong places all the time, like King Ahaziah in today's story. Let's take a look.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

King Ahab was dead, and his son Ahaziah was on the throne. This chapter starts with Ahaziah falling from his window and injuring himself so badly that he couldn't get out of bed. He sent messengers to go and ask Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he would get better from his injury. God told Elijah to intercept these messengers and give them this message to king Ahaziah from the God of Israel: "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 to which you have gone up, but shall surely die." The messengers turned back and gave this message to Ahaziah, who learned at their description of the prophet that it must have been Elijah.

Ahaziah's response was to send a troop of 50 men to tell Elijah to come to the king. These soldiers and their captain went and told Elijah the king's message. God's response was for fire to fall from heaven and consume them. The king sent another troop of 50 with their captain, and fire fell and consumed them as well. The king sent a third troop, but their captain humbled himself and pled for their lives to be spared. The LORD told Elijah to go with them and not to be afraid, so Elijah went to the king and told him in person the message that had already been spoken. "So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken," and his brother Jehoram reigned in his place.

The interpretation/
exegesis of the passage.
What does this passage
mean? How does this
passage apply to my
life?

LOOK

You can learn a lot about a person by what they do when disaster strikes. Here we see Ahaziah following in the footsteps of his wicked parents. He knew Elijah (1:9) and must have known about his ministry, but his heart was stubborn and refused to turn to the LORD. After falling through the wooden lattice of his upper room and suffering a serious injury, Ahaziah had a choice. He could seek the living God, or he could turn somewhere else for help. Instead of sending for Elijah or crying out to the God he knew to be real and alive, he sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the false god of the Philistines.

Quite often, desperate times cause people to turn to God for help. They cry out to God in their distress, promising to live for Him if He will only help them get through their problem. But Ahaziah couldn't even bring himself to do this. He was a proud man, and refused to ask for God's help, even though God gave him several chances to turn to Him. He wanted help, but he didn't want God.

So the king sent word to Elijah (along with 50 armed soldiers) to come to him. He commanded God's prophet, and seemed ready to take Elijah by force if he didn't listen, but Elijah trusted the LORD. We see how much Elijah had grown in his walk with the LORD in his response to these

LOOK (Continued)

men. He didn't run. He didn't hide. And until the LORD told him to go, he stayed put. It is true we should obey those in authority over us, but only so far as their commands are in agreement with God's Word. Fire came from heaven, destroying 100 men, and still the king sent more men. Most people would stop after seeing fire fall from heaven the first time. But pride has a way of convincing us that we are right, even when God has clearly shown us otherwise.

Now imagine being the captain of the third company of soldiers. He had seen what happened to the others, but unlike Ahaziah, he responded with humility. He fell on his knees before Elijah and pleaded for mercy for himself and his men. God's Word says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). The difference between the king and the captain wasn't what they saw—they both knew what God had done. The difference was how they responded. Pride refuses to trust God and insists on its own way. Humility acknowledges that God is King, trusts His Word, and receives His grace.

So today we have seen a foolish king, proud to the end, and a wise captain, receiving grace in his humility. But before we end, take note of the confident prophet. He had served God for many years at this point. He had moments of weakness and failure, but now he is resting in God's power and protection. Elijah was confident in his God! Are you? Elijah was confident, not because he was strong, but because his confidence was in the LORD. We can have the same confidence as Elijah because our God is the God of Elijah. He is a God who is for us, who humbled Himself to give us freedom from sin and death. Hard times will come, but we must humbly trust that God is with us, that His plan is perfect, and that His word is enough.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize 1 Peter 5:6

Pray: God, thank You that You alone are worthy of our trust. Thank You that You give grace to the humble and that You keep every promise You make. Help us to trust You instead of looking anywhere else for help. Give us humble hearts that gladly obey Your Word. Amen.

Family Question: How did Ahaziah, the third captain, and Elijah each respond to God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Kings 1 by David Guzik

AHAZIAH AND ELIJAH

A. Ahaziah's injury.

1. ([2Ki 1:1-2](#)) Ahaziah seeks Baal-Zebub.

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. **Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab:** The reign of Ahab was a spiritual disaster for the northern kingdom, but it was a time of political security and economic prosperity. After his death the kingdom of Moab found a good opportunity to remove their nation from the domination of Israel.

i. "Their land was immediately east of the Dead Sea and shared an indefinite border with Israel to the north at approximately the point where the Jordan River enters the Dead Sea." (Dilday)

ii. Moab had been under Israelite domination since the days of David ([2 Samuel 8:2](#) and [8:11-12](#)). This rebellion of Moab in the days of Ahaziah is significant of the decline of Israel's power and the judgment of God.

b. **Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria:** This was surely an unexpected crisis. Such accidents happen to kings and peasants both.

i. "The king apparently leaned against the wooden screen and fell through from the second-floor balcony to the ground below." (Dilday)

c. **Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury:** Ahaziah showed that he was a true worshipper of the pagan god Baal-Zebub because he turned to this god in his time of trouble.

i. "This could suggest that Baal-Zebub was a god who ward off plagues that were brought on by flies. There are numerous references to 'fly gods' in classical literature." (Dilday)

ii. "He was the local god of Ekron, and probably was used at first to drive away flies. Afterwards, he became a very respectable devil, and was supposed to have great power and influence. In the New Testament, Beelzebub is a common name for Satan himself, or the prince of devils" (Adam Clarke)

iii. "Men love the gods that are most like unto themselves, so it is not surprising to see Ahaziah sending to this miserable Philistine god." (Knapp)

2. ([2Ki 1:3-4](#)) Elijah's message to Ahaziah.

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. **Is it because there is no God in Israel:** There is little doubt that King Ahaziah believed that Yahweh lived, but he *lived* as if there were **no God in Israel**. He was a practical atheist, and the way he sought Baal-Zebub *instead* of the Lord demonstrated this.

b. **You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die:** Ahaziah did not seek help from the *real* God; therefore he will get no *real* help. Instead this will be an occasion for the *real* God to send a message of judgment to King Ahaziah.

i. According to Wiseman, when ancients sought their gods about medical issues, “The result was usually given in medical prognostic texts as ‘he will live/die’ as in [verses 6, 16](#) (*you will certainly die*).” This means that Elijah’s words **but you shall surely die** were phrased as a medical diagnosis. It was as if Elijah said, “Here’s your diagnosis Ahaziah: Your condition is fatal and irreversible.”

ii. In fact, this was a *mercy* to Ahaziah. God told him something that few people know – that his death was imminent and that he had time to repent and prepare to meet God.

iii. This prophetic announcement might also explain why Ahaziah did not want to seek an answer from the Lord: he knew what the answer would be. In seeking Baal-Zebub for an answer, Ahaziah may have wanted to find a god to tell him what he wanted to hear.

3. ([2Ki 1:5-8](#)) The messengers return to Ahaziah.

And when the messengers returned to him, he said to them, “Why have you come back?” So 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 to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’ ” ’ ” Then he said to them, “What kind of man *was it* who came up to meet you and told you these words?” So they answered him, “A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

a. **A man came up to meet us:** Though they were sent to seek a word from the pagan priests of Baal-Zebub, the word from Elijah persuaded them so much that they didn’t follow through on their original mission.

i. “This official delegation from the king would certainly not have turned back from their royal assignment just because some anonymous wayfarer asked them to. There must have been an irresistible quality to Elijah’s personality, a forceful spiritual presence, that compelled them to obey this stranger even though they didn’t know who he was.” (Dilday)

b. **What kind of man was it who came up to meet you:** Ahaziah clearly suspected it was the Prophet Elijah who spoke this word. His suspicion was confirmed when the **man** was described as **a hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist**.

i. The Hebrew words translated **hairy man** literally mean, “possessor of hair.” “This description more than likely refers to the hairy animal skins he wore clinched around his waist with a leather belt.” (Dilday)

ii. Identifying Elijah by his clothes also connected him to the ministry of John the Baptist, who dressed in hairy skins from animals ([Matthew 3:4](#)). When the priests and Levites saw him they asked, “Are you Elijah?” ([John 1:19-21](#))

iii. "Either because Elijah had much hair on his dead and face, or because, as a prophet, he wore a rough garment ([Zechariah 13:4](#)), as a pattern of repentance." (Trapp)

B. Elijah appears before Ahaziah.

1. ([2Ki 1:9-10](#)) Judgment comes upon the arresting soldiers.

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.

a. **The king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men:** This should have been plenty of men to capture one prophet. Clearly, Ahaziah sent *more* men than were normally required.

b. **Man of God, the king has said, "Come down!":** The captain here admitted the righteousness of Elijah when he called him "**Man of God**." Therefore they were wrong in doing this, even though they were on orders from their king.

i. The Bible clearly teaches that we owe submission to the government and governing authorities ([Romans 13:1-2](#)). Yet in the human sphere, the Biblical command to submit is never absolute, but always conditioned by the greater responsibility to submit to God ([Acts 5:29](#)). This commander should have resisted the ungodly and immoral command from King Ahaziah and obeyed God instead. His **fifty** men should have refused to obey the ungodly and immoral command of their **captain**.

c. **If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven:** Elijah put the issue in stark contrast. If he really were **a man of God**, then the captain and his men were on an ungodly and immoral mission. Since Elijah could not bring down **fire** from heaven without Divine approval, he asked *God* to evaluate these men and their rightness of their actions against God's prophet.

i. "Either they did not hold him to be a prophet, or they gloried in putting the power of their master above that of Jehovah. In any case, the insult was less against Elijah than Elijah's God." (Meyer)

ii. Elijah did not say, "You bet I am a man of God." Instead, he answered **If I am a man of God**. Essentially Elijah said, "You say I am a man of God even though you are not acting like it. Maybe I am and maybe I am not. Let's let God decide by fire."

iii. "Some have blamed the prophet for destroying these men, by bringing down fire from heaven upon them. But they do not consider that it was no more possible for *Elijah* to bring down fire from heaven, than for *them* to do it. *God alone* could send the fire; and as he is *just* and *good*, he would not have destroyed these men had there not been a *sufficient cause* to justify the act." (Clarke)

d. **Fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty:** God brought judgment on these men who acted as if Yahweh was not a real God and as if Elijah was not truly His servant.

i. The captain commanded Elijah to "**Come down!**" The man of God didn't come down, but the fire of God did.

ii. "It must be noted that the demands made of Elijah were wrong. A king had no right to ask such allegiance and his actions should always be subordinate to God's word. God was protecting his word and his servant." (Wiseman)

2. ([2Ki 1:11-12](#)) Judgment also comes upon a second captain.

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. **Man of God, thus has the king said:** The second captain repeated the same error as the first captain, but with even more guilt because *he knew what happened to the first captain*. The judgment upon the first group should have warned this second captain and his **fifty men**.

i. The specific request of the second captain (**Come down quickly!**) shows that the second captain made his request even *more* bold and demanding.

ii. The people and leaders of Israel had gone after pagan gods so long that they could not distinguish between the imaginary, impotent gods of the pagan world and Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel. They thought that Yahweh was just as powerless as their own useless gods.

b. **If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men:** Elijah left the matter in God’s hands, and God again responded in dramatic judgment.

3. (2Ki 1:13-15) The third captain comes in humility and Elijah goes with him.

Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the 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.

a. **Fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him:** The third captain approached his mission in a completely different manner. He came to Elijah humbly, recognizing that he really was a **Man of God**. Perhaps the third captain looked at the two blackened spots of scorched earth nearby before he spoke to Elijah.

b. **Go down with him; do not be afraid of him:** It wasn’t that God did not want Elijah to go to King Ahaziah; it was that Ahaziah, his captains, and their soldiers all acted as if there were no God in Israel. When the request was made wisely and humbly, Elijah went.

i. There were many reasons why Ahaziah wanted to arrest Elijah, even though he already heard the prophecy through Elijah. Perhaps he wanted Elijah to reverse his word of doom and would use force to compel him to do it. Perhaps he just wanted to show his rage against this prophet who had troubled him and his father Ahab for so long. Perhaps he wanted to dramatically silence Elijah to discourage future prophets from speaking boldly against the King of Israel. God assured Elijah that he had nothing to fear from Ahaziah.

4. (2Ki 1:16) Elijah delivers the same message to Ahaziah.

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 to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’”

a. **Is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?** This was the same message Elijah gave to the men Ahaziah sent to inquire of Baal-Zebub. The message from God did not change just because Ahaziah didn’t want to hear it the first time.

5. (2Ki 1:17-18) Ahaziah dies and leaves no successor.

So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. Because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. 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?

a. **So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken:** The proof was in the result. Elijah was demonstrated to be a man of God because his prophecy was fulfilled just as spoken. Ahaziah did not recover from his fall through the lattice.

i. “Everything he did was weak, faithless, and miserable; he achieved nothing but ruin and failure. He let Moab rebel. He hurt himself in a clumsy accident. He foolishly attempted to use military force against Elijah. And worse, he sought help in the wrong place – in Philistia at the altar of a pagan god.” (Dilday)

b. **Because he had no son, Jehoram became king:** This Jehoram was also the *son* of Ahab ([2 Kings 3:1](#)) and therefore the *brother* of Ahaziah. Ahaziah had no *descendent* to pass the kingdom to, so the throne went to his brother after the brief reign of Ahaziah.

i. The account becomes a little confusing here, because the King of Judah at that time was *also* named Jehoram (**the son of Jehoshaphat**).