

1  **Falls, Flies, and Fire**

2 Kings 1

2  **Ahab & Jezebel**

- Ahab goes to battle against the Syrians despite the warnings of God's prophet.
- Ahab takes every conceivable measure to make sure that he will come through the battle safely, including disguising himself as a common soldier so that he will not be targeted.
- Despite this, Ahab is killed by an arrow fired "by chance."

3  **Ahab & Jezebel**

- When Ahab dies, the blood from his armor and chariot is washed off in the streets of Samaria. Dogs lick up the blood thus fulfilling Elijah's prophecy (1 Kings 22:38).
- At this point, Jezebel is still alive, but her own judgment has been prophesied as well and will take place within a generation.
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4  **Ahaziah**

- Ahaziah, Ahab's son, becomes king after Ahab is killed in battle by a "chance arrow."
- *Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel.* (1Ki 22:51)
- Ahaziah's reign will be short, but it is also the subject of a poignant story in 2 Kings 1.
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5  **Ahaziah**

6  **Catalog of his wickedness**

- *Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. He did what was 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 made Israel to sin. He served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done.* (1Ki 22:51-53)
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7  **Catalog of his wickedness**

- Ahaziah:
  - Did evil like his parents (followed Baal)
  - Did evil like Jeroboam (allowed the pagan calf worship)
  - Served Baal openly (despite the fact that Baal had already been proven to be a false god on Mount Carmel, with the nation of Israel formally rejecting him)
  - Did whatever else he could to go out of his way to anger God

8  **THE FALL**

9  **Consequences of his wickedness**


- *After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel. Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness."* (2Ki 1:1-2)
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10  **Consequences of his wickedness**

- As soon as Ahaziah becomes king, things start going very wrong for him:
  - Moab, who had previously been under subjection to Israel (and Judah) and forced to pay tribute, revolts against Israel (as they had previously done against Judah)
  - Ahaziah has a nasty fall that results in his being deathly ill

11  **1) You can't hide from God**

- Ahaziah's father (Ahab) was killed in battle by a "chance" arrow.
- Now, Ahaziah himself refuses to go to war even with the Moabites having rebelled against Israel.
- He is unable to avoid judgment simply by staying home: even the palace itself proves dangerous to him.

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12  **1) You can't hide from God**

- Some places we try to hide from God:
  - In a church
  - In Christian ministry
  - In a marriage
  - In external conformity to God's laws


13  **THE FLIES**

14  **Baal-zebub**

- Baal-zebub was a "baal" – a pagan Canaanite deity. This is not the same Baal (Baal-Hadad). He was specifically linked with both flies and the healing of diseases.
- It was believed, at the time, that flies were a direct cause of illness.
- Ahaziah sends a messenger to the temple of Baal-zebub, thus further angering God.

15  **2) You can't ignore God**

- Ahaziah's actions were a clear violation of the first commandment – "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."
- Any time we prefer or seek out a solution from a source other than God, we are putting "other gods" before him.
  - Idolatry is looking for *anything* from people, possessions, or position, that we ought to be looking for from God.

16  **2) You can't ignore God**

- Ahaziah knew that he would not get a favorable reply from God or a prophet of God (recall the earlier example of Jeroboam), so he decides to "shop around" for deities.
- Today, we follow in Ahaziah's footsteps when we try to ignore God, or more specifically, his will.

17  **2) You can't ignore God**

- Ignoring God can take the shape of simply not taking His power into account when trying to solve a difficulty or hardship (Abraham & Sarah).
- Ignoring God can also be trusting in the teaching or methods of men rather than the God who is sovereign over them all.

18  **THE FIRE**

19  **Elijah**

- *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-zebul, 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 went. (2Ki 1:3-4)*

## 20 **Elijah**

- *The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, "Why have you returned?" And they said to him, "There came a man to meet us, and said to us, 'Go back 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-zebul, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" (2Ki 1:5-6)*

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## 21 **Elijah**

- *He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite." (2Ki 1:7-8)*

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## 22 **Ahaziah's revenge**

- Ahaziah has spent the last several years of his life watching both of his parents (Ahab and Jezebel) be thwarted at every turn by this meddling prophet.
- At this point, he has had enough.
- Keep in mind that Jezebel is still alive as the "Queen Mother" and holds a powerful sway over Ahaziah's decisions.

## 23 **Ahaziah's revenge**

- Ahaziah decides to get revenge by sending a troop of 50 men after Elijah to bring him back to the palace – so that he can execute Elijah.
- *Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "**O man of God**, the king says, 'Come down.'" (2Ki 1:9)*

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## 24 **Fire from the sky**

- *But Elijah answered 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. Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty.*

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## 25 **Fire from the sky**

- *And he answered and said to him, "**O man of God, this is the king's order, 'Come down quickly!'**" But Elijah answered 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. (2Ki 1:10-12)*

## 26 **Two captains**

- 1) The first captain mockingly challenges Elijah's credentials.
- 2) The second captain is emphasizing his own credentials as acting upon the authority of the king.
- God intervened on Elijah's behalf, not to protect Elijah (God could have done that

any number of ways), but to protect the glory of His name.

27  **3) You can't fight God (and win)**

- When we are no longer able to ignore God, His Word, or His commandments, we are likely to do one of two things:
  - Mock that with which we do not agree (“thou man of God”)
  - Exalt what man says above what God says (“the king says...”)

28  **51 lives spared**

- *Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, "O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. (2Ki 1:13)*
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29  **51 lives spared**

- *Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight." (2Ki 1:14)*
- This captain approaches Elijah with a humble spirit, acknowledging his own powerlessness and Elijah's position as a prophet of God.

30  **Stop and ask**

- We need to stop and ask ourselves a couple of questions:
  - Why was it OK for Elijah to call down fire to consume these 102 men, but Jesus would not let James and John do the same to a village that rejected Him (Luke 9:54)?
  - Was the difference merely the fact that one was in the Old Testament, the other in the New Testament?

31  **God does not change**

- Many people have the misconception that the God of the Old Testament is somehow harsher and more judgmental than the God of the New Testament, and thus things that were done or allowed in the Old Testament would not be tolerated by the God of the New Testament.
- In fact, this kind of thinking violates Scripture. Malachi 3:6 – *"I am the LORD, and I change not..."*

32  **The difference**

- The difference between the two is clear if we read a little further on. It is plain to see where Elijah is receiving his orders:
- *Then 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 (2Ki 1:15)*
- Elijah was not calling down fire from heaven at his own whim or wrath – he was taking orders directly from God.

33  **Sons of Thunder**

- James and John, on the other hand, were notorious for their tempers. They were angry and their pride was hurt because in rejecting Jesus, the Samaritan village had rejected them.
- Thus motivated by a spirit of anger instead of the Spirit of God, their desire to see judgment fall was motivated by sin and pride.

34  **Sons of Thunder**

- *And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of*

*spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. (Luk 9:54-56)*

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### 35 **God glorifies Himself**

- God's ultimate motive for whatever He does is to glorify Himself. To do otherwise would in fact be idolatry, and God cannot sin.
- What James and John did not understand was that Jesus did not come to earth to glorify Himself in that way – He came to earth to glorify Himself by setting for us the example of the Suffering Servant.

### 36 **God glorifies Himself**

- There are multiple times throughout the New Testament – primarily in the Book of Acts – where God actually does strike unrighteous men and women dead on the spot because they try to cheapen His glory.
- Thus, the argument that God has changed from the Old to the New Testament does not hold water.

### 37 **Elijah comes to Amaziah**

- Verses 16-18 – *“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.”*

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### 38 **Amaziah's End**

- *So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. (2Ki 1:17)*

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### 39 **Are you hiding from God?**

- Are you “hiding” from God and from others by living a life that externally seems to be in order, but in reality is marked by hidden sin and hypocrisy?
- Are you “hiding” from God in the church, telling yourself that being a part of a good church, a good family, or a strong marriage will be enough?

### 40 **Are you ignoring God?**

- Are you trusting to your own wisdom, plans, or devices to accomplish things that you have prayed for?
- Have you made a higher place in your life for the world's wisdom and solutions than you have for the Word of God?
- Are you willfully ignoring God's calling for your life?

### 41 **Are you fighting God?**

- Do you mock, deride, or make fun of those who have higher standards than you?
- Do you challenge the calling or credentials of those who disagree with you?
- Are you exalting education, teaching, degrees, or credentials above the Word of God and His calling?