**2 Kings 1: Elijah and King Ahaziah**

***“Go and inquire of Baalzebub,***[***\****](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/2kings/1#12001002-1)***the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury.”***

* In 1 Kings 19, the sacrifice of Mount Carmel reveals that Yahweh is the true God while Baal is a man-made God.
* The Israelites who were present acknowledged that the God of Israel is the true God.
* All of Israel knew of Elijah’s sacrifice on Mount Carmel and that the prophets of Baal served a man-made God.
* Even with this mighty work performed by God through Elijah on Mount Carmel, the people of Israel returned to the worship of pagan gods.
* King Ahaziah sends messengers to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, if he shall recover or die from his illness.
* The Israelites were the children of the covenants. As the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob they had a direct line to the one true God.
* Yet King Ahaziah sends messengers to inquire of a pagan man-made god if he will live.
* King Ahaziah’s action to inquire of a pagan god reflects the depravity of Israel.
* In the present day, the idolatry that is commonly practiced is not of pagan gods but an idolatry of money, material possessions, and relationships with other people.
* It is idolatry when wealth, material possessions or our relationships with other people takes the place of God in our lives.

***“Go and meet the messengers of Samaria’s king, and tell them: ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?’”***

* Despite the Israelites hardness of heart and their persistence in worshipping pagan gods, God continually makes Himself known to His people.
* When the messengers return to king Ahaziah they advise him that a man approached them and questioned why the king was inquiring of Baalzebub and advised that Ahaziah would die.

***“The king asked them, ‘What was the man like who met you and said these things to you?’ They replied, ‘He wore a hairy garment***[***\****](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/2kings/1#12001008-1)***with a leather belt around his waist.’ ‘It is Elijah the Tishbite!’ he exclaimed.”***

* The modesty and simplicity of Elijah’s attire identified him as a prophet, a holy man of God.
* We know from Scripture that John the Baptist came in the person of Elijah. (Matt. 17-11-12)
* John the Baptist imitated Elijah in his attire of a garment of haircloth with a girdle of leather about his loins.
* The simplicity of dress of some of the prophets speaks against the extravagance and materialism which idolatry produces.
* Material possessions are not bad in themselves. They become bad when they take the place of God in our lives.
* Material possessions are necessary. It is not God’s will for us to live in squalor or poverty.
* To live in a spirit of poverty is to have material possessions but to use them in serving God and other people. The material possessions do not take the place of God in our lives.
* Ahaziah sends a captain with his company of fifty men to retrieve Elijah.
* The captain addresses Elijah as a man of God and “commands” him to come the hilltop.
* Elijah replies, *“If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.”*
* If Elijah is a man of God, then the captain and his company of fifty men were on an ungodly and immoral mission.
* God sends down fire and the captain and his company of fifty men are consumed by fire.
* King Ahaziah sends another captain with a company of fifty men. The captain addresses Elijah as a man of God and “commands” Elijah to come down from the hilltop.
* Once again Elijah replies, *“If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.”*
* Elijah is a man of God. The captain and his company of fifty men are on an immoral mission. Fire comes down from heaven and consumes them.
* King Ahaziah is undaunted by the loss of two captains and one hundred men. Ahaziah sends a third captain with a company of fifty men to retrieve Elijah.
* The third captain addresses Elijah as a man of God but does not command Elijah to come down.
* The third captain acts with humility. He falls to his knees before Elijah. Unlike the first two captains he recognizes that Elijah is a true man of God in his actions.
* The third captain pleads for his life and the life of his men.
* An angel of the Lord instructs Elijah to go down with the captain.
* The third captain realized that it was inappropriate for him to “command” a man of God. His humility saved him.
* King Ahaziah did not want to see Elijah to reconcile with God but for Elijah to retract his prophesy.

***“He declared to the king: ‘Thus says the LORD: Because you sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron—do you think there is no God in Israel to inquire of?—you shall not leave the bed upon which you lie; instead you shall die.’”***

* King Ahaziah was like all the other kings of the northern kingdom.
* The God of Israel revealed that he is the true God while Baal like the other pagan gods is a man-made god.
* The kings of the northern kingdom were incapable of repentance and conversion.

The Navarre Bible; Joshua – Kings; 2 Kings; Scepter Publishers; New York; 1986

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/2-kings-1/>

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