

**A PERSONAL
VERSE-BY-VERSE COMMENTARY**

2KINGS

**by
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2Kings 1:1 ¶ Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.

This book opens with a seemingly random statement declaring that Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. Commentators note that they had been under tribute to Israel since the time of David.

2Kings 1:2 And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.

“lattice” = Any work of wood or metal, made by crossing laths, or thin strips, and forming a network; as, the *lattice* of a window....

“sick” – The Hebrew includes the thought of being wounded.

After looking at the Hebrew, it seems that one day Ahaziah fell through the lattice of an upper floor window in his palace in Samaria. His injury was so severe that he feared he was dying. So he sent messengers to go and inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, as to whether he would recover.

Baalzebub = lord of the flies

2Kings 1:3 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 unto them, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?*

2Kings 1:4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

The LORD sent an angel to tell Elijah the Tishbite, to go and meet the king’s messengers with the following message (my paraphrase): Why are you seeking Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, instead of the God of Israel? Your actions have incurred judgment. You will die.

Then Elijah left.

I liked Guzik’s observation: “Ahaziah did not seek help from the *real* God; therefore he will get no *real* help.”

2Kings 1:5 And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back?

2Kings 1:6 And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.*

2Kings 1:7 And he said unto them, What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet you, and told you these words?

2Kings 1:8 And they answered him, *He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.*

When the messengers returned to the king so quickly, he wanted to know why. They told him that a man had intercepted them with a message for the king; they then relayed the message from Elijah.

The king asked them to describe the man that gave them this message. They replied that he was a hairy man wearing a leather girdle around his waist. Ahaziah knew it was Elijah.

I liked this observation from the NIV Commentary: “The secret mission and the hidden desires of the royal chambers were not unknown to the true King of the universe. What an awesome realization that must have been for Ahaziah!”

2Kings 1:9 ¶ Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.

2Kings 1:10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I *be* a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

2Kings 1:11 Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly.

2Kings 1:12 And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I *be* a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

Did the message from the LORD cause Ahaziah to fall down in humility and repentance? No. He was determined to punish the prophet that delivered the message.

Isn't it interesting that Ahaziah sent a couple of messengers to seek the counsel of Baalzebub. He deemed it necessary, however, to send a captain and his 50 men to go and get the prophet of God. It's like he thought that 51 men could overpower the prophet that served Almighty God.

The captain and his 50 men went to get Elijah and bring him to the king. When the captain came to Elijah, he was sitting on top of a hill. The captain ordered “the man of God,” to come down by the order of the king. It's interesting that he chose to command the prophet rather than attempt to take hold of him physically. So, maybe his address was a show of bravado to cover his fear of God's prophet.

Elijah answered by declaring that to prove him to be a man of God, fire would come down from heaven and consume him and his men. And it did!

Ahaziah was not deterred. He sent yet another captain with 50 men to go and get Elijah. Their encounter with Elijah mirrored the encounter of the first group.

JFB makes a good observation regarding the judgment of fire from heaven: “Not to avenge a personal insult of Elijah, but an insult upon God in the person of His prophet; and the punishment was inflicted, not by the prophet, but by the direct hand of God.”

2Kings 1:13 And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.

2Kings 1:14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight.

2Kings 1:15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

The king was obviously a slow learner. He sent yet another captain with his 50 men to go and get Elijah. This captain was smarter than his predecessor. When he came to Elijah, he fell on his knees before him and begged him to spare his life and the lives of his men. He admitted that he was aware of how the previous two contingents of soldiers had died and begged again for his life to be spared.

The angel of the LORD told Elijah to go without fear with the soldier. So Elijah went with the captain to see the king.

What a change from the cowardly prophet that ran in fear from the threat of Jezebel!

2Kings 1:16 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.

2Kings 1:17 So he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no son.

2Kings 1:18 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?*

Elijah then delivered the LORD's message to the king personally. He again stated that because Ahaziah had sent messengers to seek the counsel of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, instead of seeking the counsel of the LORD God of Israel, he would surely die. And the king died according to the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.

Jehoram (aka Joram), his brother, succeeded him to the throne because he did not have a son.

2 Kings 3:1 "Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years."

This occurred during the second year of the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram in Judah.

Obviously, there is a discrepancy between the two verses regarding when Jehoram began his reign. Clarke quotes this explanation from Dr. Lightfoot: "But the reason why both their sons came thus into their thrones in their lifetime, and both in the same year, was because their fathers, Jehoshaphat and Ahab, were both engaged in the war against the Syrians about Ramoth-gilead: and while they were providing for it, and carrying it on, they made their sons viceroys, and set them to reign in their stead, while they were absent or employed upon that expedition."

The record closes on Ahaziah with a note that more about him was written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel (not scripture).