



Lessons from Elijah's Life

Ahaziah and Elijah

Date: 13 May 2020

Text: 2 Kings 1:1-17

Key Lesson: Our sovereign God sees and judges sin.

King Ahaziah is Sick

Ahaziah was the son of Ahab and Jezebel. He was a wicked king and only reigned 2 years in Israel (1Ki 22:51-53). He fell from an upper chamber and seriously hurt himself.

Because he followed the ungodly ways of his parents, he rejected Jehovah God. Therefore, in this time of great need for supernatural help, he had no one on whom to call. Perhaps he had already prayed to his local Baal god. Now he sent messengers to seek help from Baalzebub, the god of Ekron (v.2). Ekron was a Philistine town, enemies of Israel.

When a person who does not know the Lord faces a serious illness or setback in life, it ought to drive him to God, but often it does not. Even in our present pandemic, I have not heard of any sparks of revival where people are turning to God for comfort and help. That is sad. We must use every opportunity that the Lord provides to point people to our God who controls the future.

Elijah's Mission

Once again, the angel of the LORD visited Elijah and gave him a new assignment (v.3). He was to go meet the messengers of the king and give them God's edict (i.e., proclamation). He went out and met them on the road to Ekron. Notice carefully the words of God edict or pronouncement.

1. God begins with a question. Though He was still LORD of all, Israel had rejected Him. Israel no longer had faith in Him. Only a few years had lapsed since the great draught followed by Elijah calling down fire from heaven and praying down rain. Some of the common folk had turned back to God, but the royal family remained as pagan as ever.
2. The LORD said that the king would not get well and leave his bed (v.4). While sickness and death are a result of Adam's sin, sickness is not always the result of personal sin (though it may be). Health and death are in the hands of the LORD (e.g., Job (Job 2:6), Hezekiah (2Ki 20:7), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4)). Often, His sovereign choices are beyond our understanding, yet we must trust His will.
3. Ahaziah would surely die. In his case, he had sinned and God had chosen to shorten his life.
4. Then Elijah departed and walked away.

The Messengers Return

The king was surprised that his messengers returned so quickly (v.5). They explained what happened and gave the king God's edict (v.6).

The king asked for a description of the man who gave them God's edict (v.7-8). The description convinced the king that it was none other than the prophet Elijah. He was not ignorant of God's man.

The King's Soldiers

The king sent 50 soldiers and their captain to bring Elijah to the palace. Though they addressed Elijah as the man of God, they were not God-fearing men themselves. In judgment upon the ungodly, and to glorify God's sovereignty, Elijah prayed down fire upon the soldiers (v.9-10). The king with no fear of God sent another 50 soldiers and their captain. Again, God meted out judgment and displayed His sovereignty by sending fire from heaven (v.11-12). The king sent a third band of soldiers. Though the king's attitude had not changed, the **captain of this band feared God** and **begged** that Elijah might spare his life and the lives of his soldiers (v.13-14).

This is a sober reminder to each of us that we must fearfully respect God and His servants. Preachers are not always right. They too are humans, but because of their ministry, we must show them respect. Ponder again (Hebrews 13:17) "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

God's Instructions to Elijah

The angel of the Lord now told Elijah to go with the soldiers (v.15). Note that he said, "Be not afraid of him." Elijah feared the king, and rightly so. In his last appearance in the palace, he pronounced judgment upon Ahab and Jezebel, Ahaziah's parents. Elijah delivered the same message directly to king Ahaziah (v.16). The king showed no repentance and he died as God had said (v.17).

When God convicts us of sin, the wise response is to repent and confess (Pr 15:5). If we are right with God and walking in His will, we need not fear even in the face of danger. We must hold confidently God's shield of faith (Eph 6:16) – faith in God's faithfulness. "*Great is thy Faithfulness*" p. 40