

General Church Education



Judgment on Ahaziah of Israel

1 Kings 22:48-53; 2 Kings 1:1-18

Lesson 15

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 6: The Lord Is Our Prophet

For ages 11-12 years

Judgment on Ahaziah of Israel

1 Kings 22:48-53; 2 Kings 1:1-18

Teacher Background

When king Ahab died, his son Ahaziah ruled Israel. Almost immediately, Moab declared independence from Israel. Soon afterwards, Ahaziah fell through a lattice and was badly injured. He sent messengers to ask Baal-Zebub what would happen to him. The prophet Elijah met them and sent a message to Ahaziah saying he would die. Ahaziah sent fifty soldiers to confront Elijah. Elijah showed the Lord's power by sending fire from heaven and consuming them. Ahaziah sent more men and it happened again. When Ahaziah sent a third captain, he begged for his life. So Elijah went to Ahaziah and told him that he would die of his wounds.

This story of Ahaziah shows the Lord both saving and punishing people while demonstrating His power. The Lord could not save Ahaziah because he worshipped Baal and did evil like his father Ahab. While this story may seem very harsh, it's important to note that the Lord can only save people who are in states of innocence and faith in the Lord, and do what He asks.

Focus Points

- When Ahaziah became king of Israel, Moab rebelled.
- Ahaziah fell through a lattice and was warned that he would die.
- Through the prophet Elijah the Lord sent fire from heaven and killed Ahaziah's emissaries. Finally, Elijah went to Ahaziah to warn him that he would die.

Readings from the Writings

"[T]he greatest signs were made by fire from heaven; whence it was a common expression among the ancients in confirmation of anything, when the attestation of truth was spoken of, that 'they could bring down fire from heaven and testify it;' by which was signified that they could testify even to that extent. 'Fire from heaven,' in the opposite sense, was a sign testifying that they were in evils and thence in falsities and that they would perish; but this fire was a consuming fire; as ... that which twice consumed fifty men sent by the king to Elijah." *Apocalypse Revealed* 599.1, 2

"Divine influx from heaven ... appears in the heavens as a fire vivifying, reanimating, and conjoining; while with the evil below, it appears as a fire consuming and destroying. Because such is the effect of Divine Love flowing down out of heaven, therefore, in the Word, anger and wrath are so frequently ascribed to Jehovah, that is, to the Lord, anger, from fire, and wrath, from the heat of fire. That this is the case is evident from the fire which appeared on mount Sinai." *Apocalypse Explained* 504.19

Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following activity choices:

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.” (2 Kings 1:13)

Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

King Ahaziah Circle the Best Answer

Read each statement and circle the answer that you think is right.

The Way We See the Lord

The way we see the Lord reflects the kind of person we are. The first two captains the king sent brought the king’s anger to Elijah. The third approached with humility and was spared. Look at a list of people mentioned in the story and think about their actions. Circle the way in which each person might see the Lord in the spiritual world.

Additional Project and Activity Choices for Parents and Teachers

A Chart of the Kings of Israel and Judah

As you learn about the kings of Israel and Judah, complete a chart. Think about whether the king is good or evil as you fill in the spaces. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-a-chart-of-the-kings-of-israel-and-judah-1-kings-2-kings.pdf>

The Number Three

In the Word, the number three commonly means full or complete. Explore examples of triads in relation to the Lord and nature. Online at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-the-number-three-numbers-6.pdf>

Judgment on Ahaziah of Israel

1 Kings 22:48-53, 2 Kings 1:1-18

Vocabulary

foothold—a secure position from which further progress can be made

flourished—grew large and strong

confront—to face up to and deal with a problem or person

Ahaziah Becomes King

When Ahab died, his son Ahaziah became the king of Israel. Ahaziah tried to continue the alliance between Judah and Israel by offering to help Jehoshaphat man a fleet of ships that had been wrecked, but Jehoshaphat refused, perhaps because he feared Israel having a foothold in Judah. Ahaziah was like his parents, Ahab and Jezebel. He did not care about the Lord and His commandments. He worshiped Baal and did evil. The Word says that this angered the Lord.

Moab Rebels

Almost immediately after Ahab died, Moab declared its independence from Israel. The kingdom of Moab was to the east of the Dead Sea. Its people were descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot. When Moab flourished, its population was about five hundred thousand people. David

conquered Moab, but it had rebelled against Israel several times before king Ahaziah's reign. The rebellions were stopped by kings Omri and Ahab. This lesson does not tell us whether the rebellion led to Moab's freedom. You can learn more about this in another lesson.



Ahaziah Falls

Near the end of Ahaziah's short reign he fell through a lattice—possibly a latticed window or a stair rail. It must have been a terrible fall, for he wondered if he would recover. Instead of asking a prophet of the Lord what would happen, he sent messengers to ask Baal-Zebub, a Philistine idol in Ekron, what might happen. Baal-Zebub means "lord of flies," or the fly-god.

Inquiring of an idol meant rejecting the Lord. Ahaziah did not turn to the Lord even when he feared for his life. He must have known of the prophecies about his

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father and his father's house. However, he did not pay attention to them even though his father died as had been prophesied.

Ahaziah Is Warned

An angel of the Lord appeared to Elijah, the prophet of the Lord, telling him to meet the messengers and give them a warning to take back to the king. He was to tell them that Ahaziah would die because he had turned to a false idol instead of the Lord.

“You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.” (2 Kings 1:4)

Elijah did as the Lord told him, and the messengers returned to Ahaziah with the Lord's warning. They repeated the Lord's words almost exactly. It was important for the king to understand what would happen so he could choose differently. Ahaziah wanted to know who had given the warning. He knew it was Elijah from the messengers' description. Either he had heard of him from his father, or had met him before. He may have heard stories about Elijah's power. In spite of this, Ahaziah sent fifty men and their captain to confront the prophet.

Fire From Heaven

When the captain commanded Elijah, the “Man of God”, to come down from the hill, Elijah did not obey. Instead, he demonstrated the Lord's power by calling upon the Lord to send down fire from heaven to consume the captain and his soldiers.

The greatest signs of ancient times were made by fire from heaven. In this case, the Lord was showing the messengers that Elijah was a “Man of God”.



When Ahaziah heard what had happened, he sent another captain and his fifty men. Again, the captain demanded that Elijah come down, and again the Lord sent fire from heaven, consuming the men. Then the king sent a captain and fifty men to bring Elijah to him yet again.

The Third Captain and His Fifty Spared

The third captain was different—he was humble, and begged for his and his men's lives. He said,

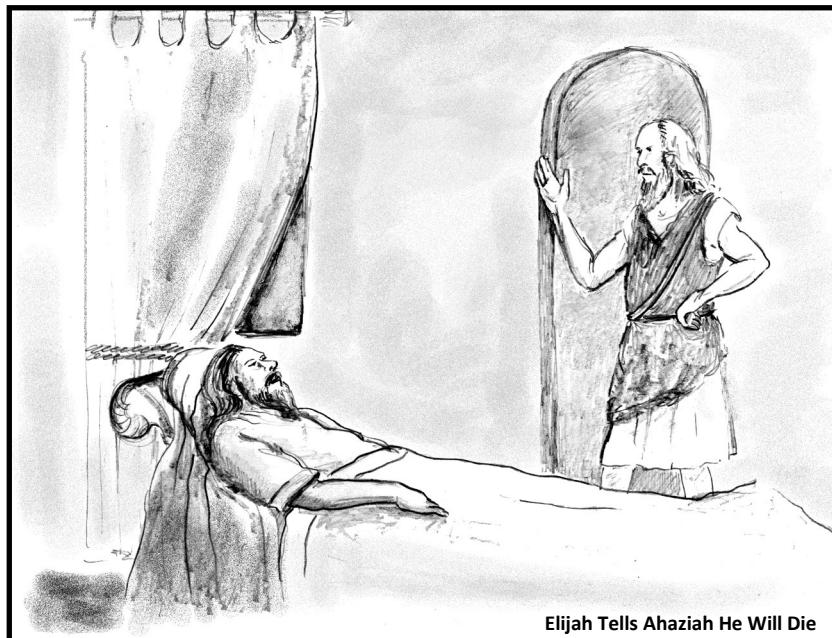
“Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.” (2 Kings 1:13)

He acknowledged the Lord's power and mercy. The angel of the Lord said that this captain was not to be feared. So Elijah went down with the captain to see the king. When he arrived, Elijah told the king exactly what Ahaziah had heard

before—because he had turned to Baal-Zebub and not to the Lord, the king would die. So after ruling for two years, Ahaziah died of his wounds, and Joram became king.

A Harsh Message

This story might make us wonder why the Lord used such harsh methods to try to bring Israel into order. The Lord appears to have been angry and vengeful. To understand this, we first need to understand the people of Israel at that time. They focused on the world and natural things. They did not care about spiritual ideas or about heaven. Many of them did not care if they were good or bad, they only wanted worldly possessions and power. If the Lord had promised them heavenly happiness they would not have known what He was talking about, nor would they have come into order if He had told them they would go to hell.



Elijah Tells Ahaziah He Will Die

The Lord needed to promise Israel earthly wealth and power if they were good, and the loss of wealth and power, or physical harm or death if they were evil. It was all they understood. The worst evil was to turn away from the Lord and worship false gods—Ahab and Ahaziah had to die because they ignored the Lord’s warnings, and so that they would not cause others to choose the same evil path. Their deaths were not only a punishment but a warning to future leaders.

Zeal

Have you ever thought that your parents or another adult was really angry with you? They may have been angry. However, their response may also have been zeal—an emotion caused by love. The person may have been worried that you or someone else was in physical, emotional or spiritual danger due to a choice you made. The Lord appeared angry to the Israelites because they could not understand His love for them.

When we are in worldly or selfish states of mind, we don’t worry about helping others, loving the Lord or going to heaven or hell, we just want to have whatever makes us feel happy. We don’t want to listen to warnings or even promises of reward, but unless we are completely evil like Ahab and Ahaziah, we will eventually pay attention and make a better choice. Each time we do this we are developing the ability to make good choices for the best reasons—love for the Lord and the neighbor.

Activity Overview

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.” (2 Kings 1:13)

Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Choose one or two.

King Ahaziah Circle the Best Answer

Read each statement and circle the answer that you think is best.

The Way We See the Lord

The way we see the Lord reflects the kind of person we are. The first two captains king Ahaziah sent brought Ahaziah’s anger to Elijah. The third captain approached Elijah with humility and was spared. Look at a list of people mentioned in the story and think about their actions. Circle the way in which each person might see the Lord in the spiritual world.

King Ahaziah Circle the Best Answer

1 Kings 22:48-53, 2 Kings 1:1-18

Circle the best answer to each question.

1. After Ahab's death, who became king of Israel?
a. Jehoshaphat b. Ahaziah c. Elijah d. Joash
2. When the king of Israel was hurt by a fall, to whom did he send asking if he would recover?
a. Micaiah b. Baal-Zebub c. Elijah d. The prophet of Baal
3. Who did the Lord send to intercept and warn the king's messengers?
a. Elijah b. Baal-Zebub c. Elisha d. Micaiah
4. What was the warning given to the king from the Lord by means of the messengers?
a. The king would fully recover from his wounds.
b. The king would die of his wounds.
c. The king would slowly recover, but would lose his kingship.
d. The king would partially recover.
5. Why did the king receive such a warning from the Lord?
a. He turned to a false prophet when he was hurt.
b. He turned to a prophet of Baal when he was hurt.
c. He turned to an idol of the Philistines when he was hurt.
d. He turned to the king of Judah when he was hurt.
6. How many times did he send 50 soldiers and their captain to confront the prophet who gave the warning?
a. Once b. Twice c. Three times d. Four times
7. What miracle did the Lord do twice by Elijah to demonstrate the truth of the warning and the power of the Lord?
a. He sent thunder and lightning to scare away the soldiers and their captain.
b. He sent an earthquake to consume the soldiers and their captain.
c. He sent a flood to wash away the soldiers and their captain.
d. He sent fire from heaven to consume the soldiers and their captain.
8. What did Elijah tell the king?
a. The king would fully recover from his wounds.
b. The king would die of his wounds.
c. The king would slowly recover, but would lose his kingship.
d. The king would partially recover.
9. Did the Lord's words by Elijah come true?
a. Yes b. No

The Way We See the Lord

1 Kings 22:48-53, 2 Kings 1:1-18

The way we see the Lord reflects the kind of person we are. This story is about three captains who were sent to Elijah. The first two brought the king's anger to Elijah. The third approached him with humility. The response each captain got reflected the attitude they brought to Elijah.

Elijah and the Three Captains

The First Captain

Then the king sent to Elijah 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.

The 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.

The Third Captain

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.

In the spiritual world, people who are filled with anger against the Lord see Him as a destroying fire, but people who love the Lord see Him as the sun of heaven, giving light and warmth to all. The way people see the Lord is a reflection of their own state of mind. Think about the way the people below acted and circle how each might see the Lord in the spiritual world.

Ahab	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven
Elijah	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven
Jezebel	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven
Jehoshaphat	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven
Micaiah	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven
Ahaziah	Consuming fire	Sun of heaven

Answers

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King Ahaziah Circle the Best Answer

1. b, 2. b, 3. a, 4. b, 5. b, 6. c, 7. d, 8. b, 9. a.