

Lesson 7 – 2 Kings 1-3

Text: 2 Kings 1-3; 2 Chronicles 21

Main Characters: God, Ahaziah, Elijah, Elisha, Jehoram (Israel), Jehoram (Judah)

Key Passages:

- 2 Kings 2:11-12 – Elijah was taken directly to Heaven by God; Elisha took his place as prophet.
- 2 Chronicles 21:6 – Jehoram was evil because of his relationship with Ahab's daughter, Athaliah.

Main Storyline:

One day, Ahaziah, king of Israel and son of Ahab, fell through some lattice while in his palace and was injured very seriously. He sent some messengers to speak with the prophets of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, to find out if he would live or die. God instructed Elijah to meet with the messengers as they were on their way and rebuke them for going to meet with prophets of a false god. He also told Elijah to inform the messengers that Ahaziah would not recover from his injuries; he would die. Elijah did as he was told, and the messengers returned to Ahaziah with the message from God.

Ahaziah sent 50 men and a captain to bring Elijah to him. The captain found him and demanded that he come back with him. Elijah called for fire to come down on them. Just then, fire from God came and consumed the men. Ahaziah decided to send another captain and 50 men to bring Elijah back. The same thing happened to this set of men. Ahaziah stubbornly sent another set of men to bring Elijah to him. This time, the captain fell on his knees and begged Elijah for his life. God told Elijah to go to Ahaziah with them, his point apparently proven. When Elijah arrived, he told Ahaziah that he would die. Just as Elijah had spoken, Ahaziah died, and, because he had no son, Jehoram, his brother, became king.

At some point, God informed Elijah that He would be taking Elijah to Heaven shortly. God began to send Elijah to different places. Elijah, before he left to go to each place, told Elisha (who was to succeed him, 1 Kings 19:16ff) to remain where they were. Elisha told him each time that he would never leave Elijah. Near the end of their journeys together, Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the waters of the Jordan River. When he struck it, it divided, allowing them to pass to the other side.

Elisha asked that he be given a double portion of Elijah's Spirit (of God) when he left for Heaven (i.e. a firstborn's portion, as Elisha considered Elijah his father and master). Elijah told him that if Elisha saw him being taken away, he would be granted his request. As they continued talking, a fiery chariot with horses of fire appeared and separated them. A whirlwind then came and took Elijah to Heaven. Elisha picked up Elijah's mantle and returned to Israel. He began to perform many miracles for God.

Jehoram, Ahaziah's brother, was not as wicked as Ahaziah or Ahab, though he was still evil. During those days, Moab had rebelled against Israel's rule. Jehoram called on Jehoshaphat to help. He agreed, and they left to attack Moab. During their journey, they had no water for 7 days. Through God, they received water and defeated the Moabites (though later apparently God became angry with Israel).

After Jehoshaphat's death, Jehoram, his son, became king in Judah. He was a very wicked king who served false gods like Ahab had (recall that his father had given him Athaliah, Ahab's daughter, as a wife). He persuaded many of the people of Judah to follow along with his idolatry. Jehoram also killed all of his brothers to secure the throne for himself. God punished Jehoram with an incurable intestinal disease which ultimately killed him. Judah did not mourn him at all, and they gave him no honor.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God demands honor and respect; those that do not honor and respect him are punished.
- 2.) God provides for His people even when the odds are against them; we must rely on Him alone.
- 3.) Having deep relationships with those who do not love God will ultimately turn us against Him.