

Elijah

God's man to a nation in crisis

Life-changing Events!

Lesson 9

Michael K. Hudson Sr. - Senior Pastor - Christ Independent Methodist Church
4078 Silver Lake Drive, Palatka, FL 32177

2 KINGS 1:3 KJV "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 INQUIRE OF BAAL-ZEBUB THE GOD OF EKRON?"

2 Kings 1:1-18

What happens to a person when life is moving along and then crisis or a tragedy strikes? Where should that person turn to? Whom should that person seek for answers?

This is what was facing King Ahaziah, the son of Ahab. King Ahab had been killed; Queen Jezebel received her just reward for her wickedness and sinfulness. Ahaziah, their son, began reigning over Israel.

1 Kings 22:51-53 KJV "Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done."

King Ahaziah was no different from his father and his mother. He worshipped Baal. He lived sinfully. He caused the nation to go into sin and idolatry. One would think that after all he saw that happened to his parents, he would live for the Lord. But, the sins of the parents are visited on the children because they learn from the parent's example. How many times have you seen children follow down the same path of destruction that the parents traveled? If parents want their children to live holy, they must live the right example before them. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were wicked and idolatrous and this is what their son became. King Ahaziah reigned over Israel for two years.

I. Life-changing events can happen suddenly

2 Kings 1:1-2 KJV "Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. 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, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease."

There is not much mentioned about the rebellion of Moab against Israel other than this one

verse. But, in the reign of King Ahaziah, the Moabites successfully rebelled against the rule of Israel. But, this was not the big event in the reign of King Ahaziah. The big event was an accident that happened to him.

During this time, there were no air conditioners to keep the temperature at a comfortable level in the house or palace. So, many of the homes were built with a flat roof that allowed the people to sit and sleep on the roof in the summer time because it was cooler. Many of the homes would place a lattice around the edge to keep someone from falling off the roof. King Ahaziah was on the roof and fell through the lattice to the ground below. He was probably relaxing and talking to others, leaned back and the lattice gave way. One moment, he was enjoying himself and the next moment he was gravely injured.

Life can change in a second. One moment, you can be sitting on a couch and the next moment a serious event can occur. I have had two individuals within my family that one moment was sitting on a couch and the next moment, they were dead. Life can change in a moment.

II. Life-changing events improper response

2 Kings 1:2 KJV "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, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease."

So often, it is not that life has changed suddenly that matters, but how one handles the change. One can either handle the change in the right manner or in the wrong manner. When King Ahaziah fell through the lattice and was gravely injured, he wanted to know one thing, "Am I going to recover from this incident in my life?" He wanted

to know the future.

So, the king sends messengers to Ekron, the northern most of the five major Philistine cities. Baal-zebub was the god of the flies that the Ekronites worshipped. So, as in keeping with his father and mother, he worshipped an idol. The messengers were to ask about the king's future.

His response to this life-changing event was wrong. He sought for answers from one that could not give him an answer. He sought for answers in the wrong place. He sought for answers in the wrong person. So many today are seeking to find answers about the future in places that have no answers. They look to those who supposedly speak to the spirit world, to horoscopes, to fortune-tellers, and other places for the answers about the future.

King Ahaziah sought counsel from one who could give no counsel. He completely rejected Jehovah and sought counsel with a false God

III. Life-changing events proper response

2 Kings 1:3-8 KJV "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 inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? 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. And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back? 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 inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? there-

fore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? 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."

A. Proper response to a life-changing event is to look to the Lord

Notice that in verse 3, the Lord knows exactly what has happened and why it has happened. He speaks to Elijah and sends him to King Ahaziah to ask one question, "Why are you going to Ekron when the true god, Jehovah is here in Israel?" In other words, why are you looking for answers to your life in places other than the Lord? The proper response to a life-changing event is to keep one's eyes on the Lord and look to Him for the answers.

King Ahaziah did not look to Jehovah for the answer but Jehovah gave him the answer to his question. King Ahaziah wanted to know if he was going to recover from his fall. Elijah, God's prophet, told the messengers that King Ahaziah would not recover and would die from his injuries. He received his answer.

B. Life-changing events, one must remember:

1. God already knows that what has happened and what will happen
2. God is ready and willing to guide one through life-changing events if the person will seek Him

C. King Ahaziah denied the Lord

One must remember that denying the Lord has devastating consequences. The Lord is seeking to bring men to Him so they might be saved; but, when a person seeks

something or someone else other than the Lord, they will receive the judgment of the Lord.

John 3:16-21 KJV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

IV. Life-changing events - learning from others

2 Kings 1:9-14 KJV "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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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."

A. Failing to learn from the mistakes of others

When King Ahaziah realized that it was Elijah who has sent the message of judgment on him, he sent fifty soldiers to bring him back to the palace. The king's response was not one of repentance but one of arrogance. He wanted his men to bring Elijah back by force.

Two of the captains made a tragic mistake when they confronted Elijah. Both treated him the same way, with sarcasm and disrespect. One can understand this in the manner in which they addressed Elijah and how Elijah responded. The captains addressed him in a questioning and rude manner by doubting that Elijah was a prophet of the Lord. Elijah responded back, "If I am a prophet of Jehovah, then let fire fall down from heaven and consume you and the fifty." Fire promptly came down and the fifty men were destroyed. The second captain did not learn from the mistake of the first captain.

B. Learning from the mistakes of others

King Ahaziah sent the third captain and fifty men to bring Elijah back to the king. The captain was much wiser than the others because he learned from the mistakes of the other two. He approached Elijah in a

respectful and humble manner. Notice that in verse 13, the captain fell on his knees before Elijah and begged for the lives of his men and himself. He recognized the power and majesty of God. He recognized that Elijah was a man of God.

Elijah spared the fifty and came down to King Ahaziah and repeated the message of judgment.

2 Kings 1:17-18 KJV "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. 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?"

V. Life-changing events: Lessons

A. Life-changing events can happen at any time, in a moment. One must be prepared for what might lie ahead.

Matt 7:24-27 KJV "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

B. Life-changing events can be sent from the Lord to get one's attention and prompt a person to

repent.

C. Life-changing events require a proper response - proper response is looking to the Lord for guidance, answers, and strength.

D. Life-changing events in others can help us learn lessons without making the same mistakes.