



Second, are we showing those around us that there is a God? Remember, Elijah's goal in dealing with Ahaziah was to show him that there was a God in Israel! Unlike Elijah, we don't have the ability to use miraculous signs, but we all have a responsibility to show people that there IS a God! How do we go about accomplishing this task?

doesn't exist? Sure, we're content to sit in our nice church building and we enjoy the camaraderie of church fellowship, but what about when it comes to life changing decisions? What about when we are forced to decide between following God and following the world? Inquiring of the Lord will not always give us the answers we want to hear, but inquiring of the world will always result in death.

(1) We do this by teaching people when the opportunity arises. If we TRULY believe there is a God in heaven, we will boldly stand **"to give a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you"** (1 Peter 3:15). After all, what can man do to harm me (Matthew 10:28)? (2) We also show people there is a God in heaven by the way we live our lives. If we live like everyone around us, will people see anything noteworthy? If we dress like the world, talk like the world, or go where the world goes there will be nothing unique about us. When people observe your life, they should be able to very clearly see Christ living in you (Galatians 2:20)!



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Faithful Sayings Issue 16.43 October 26, 2014

*Welcome Visitors*

**We are so glad that you joined us today.  
Please come again.**

● **Let us know if you have any questions.**

ISSUE

16.43

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

October 26,  
2014



## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM  
10:20 AM  
6:00 PM  
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

### Elders:

Pat Ledbetter  
Jeff Nunn  
Kyle Pope

### Deacons:

Eddie Cook  
Steve Dixon  
Jack Langley  
Neil Ledbetter  
Brady McAlister  
Walker McAnear  
Lance Purcell  
Rusty Scott

### Evangelists:

Kyle Pope  
Andrew Dow

## "Is It Because There Is No God in Israel?"

(2 Kings 1:1-18) **By Andrew Dow**

The books of the Kings record the decline of the Israelite nation. At the beginning of these books the people are led under the rule of King Solomon. They constructed a Temple for the Lord and they lived in peace and prosperity. By the end of these books, however, the nation is divided into a Northern Kingdom and a Southern Kingdom. By the time all is said and done both Kingdoms turned from serving the Lord and became captives in a foreign land. Amidst the story of Israel's decline we are introduced to a prophet named Elijah. Elijah spoke the word of the Lord during the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah. In Second Kings chapter one we read about Elijah's final encounter with a king of Israel.

### The Story of Ahaziah and Elijah

Our story begins by describing how Ahaziah, the king of Israel, **"became ill"** (2 Kings 1:1-2a). As a result of his unfortunate situation, Ahaziah **"sent messengers and said to them, 'Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this sickness'"** (2 Kings 1:2b, NASU). Why did Ahaziah inquire of Baal-zebub? I have no doubt that Ahaziah

was aware of the true God of Israel. After all, Elijah spoke forcefully about God to Ahaziah's father, Ahab. Elijah powerfully proved the existence of God and the non-existence of Baal in the contest on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18). Although Ahaziah was not the King of Israel at the time, I'm confident that he was aware that these events took place. Despite any knowledge that Ahaziah may have had, when he needed the Lord the most, he acted like God wasn't there. Instead, he sent messengers to inquire of a false god.



As the story continues, Elijah is instructed by an angel of the Lord to intercept the king's messengers and give them a message for Ahaziah. Elijah spoke to them, **"Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Now therefore, thus says the Lord, 'You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die'"** (2 Kings 1:3-4). The messengers reported to King Ahaziah exactly what Elijah spoke to them. I can only imagine what was going through Ahaziah's head as he listened to this message. He expected a message from Baal-zebub telling him everything would be just fine. What he received was a message from the Lord telling him that he would die.

At this point, the story seems to get rather odd. We're told that Ahaziah **"sent to him [i.e. Elijah] a captain of fifty with his fifty... and he said to him, 'O man of God, the kings says, 'Come down'"** (2 Kings 1:9). Instead of politely coming down to see King Ahaziah or sending word of his refusal, Elijah declared, **"If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty"** (2 Kings 1:10a). The instant Elijah spoke these words we find that **"fire came down from heaven and consumed"** them all (2 Kings 1:10b). As if this strange event wasn't enough, Ahaziah sent **"another captain of fifty with his fifty"** with only a slightly different message for Elijah: **"Come down QUICKLY"** (2 Kings 1:11, emphasis mine). Once again, fire came down from Heaven and consumed these fifty-one men (2 Kings 1:12).

Why is all of this happening? Why is Elijah striking people down, and why is Ahaziah sending

more? Consider again the message that Elijah sent to king Ahaziah: **"Is it because there is not a God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?"** (2 Kings 1:3, 6). Elijah's purpose here (and throughout his work as a prophet) was to show the people that there was a God in Israel, and that they needed to listen to Him! What is so shocking to me is the fact that Ahaziah just didn't get it. After the first group is put to death, he sends another group telling Elijah to **"come down quickly"** (2 Kings 1:11). Ahaziah was trying to ignore the true God of Israel, and it wasn't working.

After the first two groups were sent to summon Elijah, Ahaziah **"again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty"** (2 Kings 1:13). Considering the way things went the previous two times, we can expect to see more fire from heaven. However, this captain acted differently toward the man of God. **"The third captain of fifty... came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to him, 'O man of God, please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight..."** (2 Kings 1:13-15). The angel of the Lord instructed Elijah to go with this humble captain, **"So he arose and went down with him to the king"** (2 Kings 1:15).

The story ends with Elijah standing before the bed-ridden king. Elijah said, **"Thus says the Lord, 'because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore**

**you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die'"** (2 Kings 1:16). The story of Ahaziah's life closes with this statement: **"So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken"** (2 Kings 1:17).

### Lessons from the Text

The story of Ahaziah and Elijah may seem obscure, but I think that there are some lessons from this story that we can apply to our lives. Consider two applications with me.

First, do we ever try to act like God isn't there? Remember, Ahaziah was in a situation to know the true God, but instead he inquired of a lifeless idol. Even when he was confronted with the fact that his men had been struck with fire from heaven, he still refused to accept the truth of God's power. Do we ever try to act like God