

Series: Questions the LORD asked sinners

Title: Is It Not Because?

Text: 2 Kings 1: 2-17

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The great object for our souls to seek is the LORD God of heaven and earth by coming to Christ in faith. It is true at all times: from our youth to old age; when we fall under conviction of sin; when we come into great trial; when we face decisions; when things are good. At all times the great object for our souls to seek is the LORD God of heaven and earth in Christ Jesus his Son.

**Proposition:** Those who come to Christ asking mercy shall receive mercy but those who do not shall receive the fiery judgment of God.

## THE FALL

**2 Kings 1: 2: And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick:...**

The reason we need to seek mercy from Christ is because we are fallen.

The law of God required that lattice should be put around ones top floor of his house and made strong to keep men from falling.

Deuteronomy 22: 8: When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

The reason God gave that law is *“that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.”* Ahaziah broke the law of God by not putting up stronger lattice. And by breaking that law, it was he who fell and died.

Adam broke one law of God and fell and brought blood on his house—every person needs to seek Christ because we all fell into sin in Adam.

Romans 5: 12: Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Like Ahaziah when we fell in Adam we became sick: sin-sick. Legally we are unrighteous and guilty before God—*“the judgment was by one to condemnation.”* Spiritually in our sin-nature we are unholy before God—*“by one man’s offence death reigned by one.”*

Now that he sees he has fallen and is very sick, if Ahaziah turned and obeyed God’s law, put up stronger lattice, could Ahaziah heal himself and put away his offense before God? No. He had already broken God’s law, was fallen and was sick. When a sinner sees his sin, he cannot turn and start trying to keep God’s law and thereby heal himself of his sin problem. We cannot cure ourselves by our works. Christ said, *“A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.”*

Romans 3: 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Do not miss this point. Wrong on the fall, wrong on it all! We are so guilty and sinful before God by birth that there is nothing we can contribute to our salvation. Christ must do it all!

## THE FRUIT

**2 Kings 1: 2: [Ahaziah] sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.**

Since we are fallen in sin dead fruit is all we can produce.

Ahaziah was king of Israel—he is in the one nation where God revealed himself. Yet he sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub in Ekron. Baal means Lord. If you would have heard them speaking they would have said, “*Lord, Lord.*” But Christ said, not everyone that says, “*Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you.*” Their lord was another Lord. Zebub means flies—they were worshipping a man-made, idol, called the LORD of the flies. The idols men worship are worshipped in church buildings as the call, “Lord, Lord!” But except a man be made new by Christ then the Lord he calls upon is a false god.

To make this even more insulting to God, they had to go right past Jerusalem to get to Ekron. Jerusalem is where God promised to meet with his people over the mercy seat! God has promised to meet with his people in heavenly Jerusalem in Christ our Mercy Seat through faith in him! Therefore, to by-pass Christ for a god of our imagination is the greatest insult to God.

The king was not interested in eternal salvation, he only wanted his fortune told. He wanted to know “*shall I recover from this disease?*” A spiritually dead sinner is the most irrational thing there is. He is not interested in God or his word but he will go out of his way to a fortune teller or some preacher who tells him what he must do in order to be saved. He is not interested in hearing how men can live eternally by Christ’s blood and righteousness but is only interested in how to live right now in this life by the work of his own hand.

Sinner, if you get a disease, if you recover, the sin-problem that caused it is still there and you will still die! This body is going back to the dust. Christ is the only Physician that can heal us of our sin-disease and give us eternal life so that though these bodies die, we shall never die! Seek him!

## THE QUESTION

**2 Kings 1: 3: 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 enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?***

Ahaziah was guilty of a complete and absolute denial of Jehovah and God called him on it! To go after an idol rather than Christ is denying God. I ask every unbeliever that hears my voice the same question, “*Is it not because [you imagine] there is no God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of the idol gods of this world?*”

I ask this of you and me who believe. When we come into trials, into a tough situation and know the will of God, especially when times are good, so often we let something come between us and God. Whatever takes us away from Christ or comes between us and Christ is an idol: sports, pleasure, money, drugs, music, fortune-tellers, philosophy, loved ones, the many forms of will-work religion, irrelevant doctrines of men. God makes this charge—*Is it not because [you think] there is no God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of the idol gods of this world?*

I don't want to play the fool, do you? God says, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*" (Ps 14: 1)

## THE DIFFERENCE

**2 Kings 1: 4: Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shall surely die. And Elijah departed.**

**2 Kings 1: 9: 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. 10: 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. 12:...And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.**

Here is how the Lord deals with a man who rejects Christ—"*Now therefore [for this reason] thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shall surely die. And Elijah departed.*"

All who refuse to believe on the Lord, the Lord shall sentence him to die and not recover. But physical death is not the eternal death—after physical death comes the judgment of Christ and his fiery judgment on all unbelievers—we see it pictured here. When Ahaziah heard that this word came from Elijah then the king sent these captains of fifty with their fifty to arrest Elijah.

The first fifty came with no reverence, no repentance, no respect for God or his prophet. The fire of God came down and consumed them. Christ shall judge all who stand before him having never bowed the knee to Christ in saving faith. Just as Elijah was on the top of a hill, Christ is on top of a high hill at God's right hand and all judgment is committed unto him.

Acts 17:31: he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

God shall pour out fiery judgment at Christ's word on all unbelievers in the day of judgment. God is holy. He must honor and vindicate his law which we broke. Christ honored and vindicated God's justice on the cross for his people when he bore the fire of God's wrath for all who believe! But Christ shall vindicate God's justice by pouring it out on all who refuse to believe on him in the day of judgment. Paul said,

Romans 1: 18: the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

2 Thessalonians 1: 7:...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Sinner, do not meet Christ on top of that high hill in judgment. Believe our testimony now and come bowed down asking mercy from Christ.

Let's see how the last group of soldiers came and what happened to them—**2 Kings 1: 13: 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. 14: 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. [how does Christ receive such a humbled sinner?] 15: And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.**

The other men demanded Elijah to come down. But Christ has already come down when he bore the fire of God's holy justice on behalf of his people and redeemed us from the curse of the law. Christ is not coming down until the day of his return. So in these last men we see it is the sinner who must come down and bow to Christ and confess him.

The day of Christ's judgment is coming. But for now, this is the day of salvation. When Christ walked this earth, when confronted by unbelievers, James and John said, "*Lord wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?*" But Christ rebuked them and said, "*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*" Don't misunderstand, the day of judgment is coming when he shall cast men out into outer darkness. But this is the day of grace. Christ will receive all who come to him in true God-given faith and humility.

John 6: 37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out...44: no man can come to me, except the Father which heath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

You might say, "*If I had been there and saw what happened to the first two bands of soldiers, I would have come like those last men came as well.*" Would you? Every day, you see sinners perishing all around you living in rebellion against God, taking God's name in vain, continually blaspheming him and perishing in sin under the wrath of God. In this place you have seen sinners who God drew to Christ who Christ received—who joy in the Lord. So will you? Which one will you join in with?

Those who never bow shall bow the knee in that day then receive the fiery judgment of God for eternity. But right now, Christ receives all who come with a broken and contrite heart asking him, "*Lord, let now my life be precious in thy sight!*" To that plea, Christ delights to show mercy!

May God regenerate and draw his lost sheep that we might give him all the glory now and forever!

**Amen!**