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⁵¹ Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. ⁵² 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 caused Israel to sin. ⁵³ So he served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger, according to all that his father had done.

(1 Kings 22:51-53)

3

Now Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. ² And Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber which was in Samaria, and became ill. So he sent messengers and said to them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this sickness." 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 to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel *that* you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?' ⁴ Now therefore thus says the LORD, 'You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" Then Elijah departed.

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⁵ When the messengers returned to him he said to them, "Why have you returned?" ⁶ They said to him, "A man came up to meet us and said to us, 'Go, return to the king who sent you and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel *that* you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.''" ⁷ He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?" ⁸ They answered him, "*He* was a hairy man with a leather belt bound about his loins." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

(2 Kings 1:1-8)

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Yahweh vs. Baal – Round Two

➤ Key Question:

"Is it because there is no God in Israel...?"

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Yahweh vs. Baal – Round Two

1. Yahweh's intolerance of idolatry

- idolatry belittles God by exchanging the truth of God for the lie (cf. Rom. 1:25)
- the Lord's intolerance of idolatry is an aspect of His holy love

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¹¹“Has a nation changed gods
When they were not gods?
But My people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.
¹²“Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate,” declares the LORD.
¹³“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water. (Jer. 2:11-13)

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⁹ Then *the king* sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him, and behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. And he said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’”
¹⁰ Elijah replied to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.
¹¹ So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he said to him, “O man of God, thus says the king, ‘Come down quickly.’”
¹² Elijah replied to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

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¹³ So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he 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. ¹⁴ Behold fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”
¹⁵ 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.

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¹⁶ Then he said to him, “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.’”

¹⁷ So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. ¹⁸ 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?

(2 Kings 1:9-18)

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Yahweh vs. Baal – Round Two

2. Yahweh's vindication and triumph

- the king/soldiers represent all authorities opposed to God and His witnesses (cf. Psalm 2)
- the last captain models a proper response—a terror of God's wrath and a plea for mercy

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Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ²"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ³For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said,

"THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS,
'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD,
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!'"

⁴Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan; ⁶and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

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⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; ⁹and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

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¹¹"As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

(Matthew 3:1-12)

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