

Joash / Jehoash

Review: We studied Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram and his grandson Ahaziah while we were studying the life of Jehu and his destruction of Ahab's house. These two kings were closely aligned with both Ahab and Jezebel. Jehoram married one of Jezebel's daughters Athaliah. The first thing Jehoram did when he became king was kill all his brothers. He continued in this wickedness and was so wicked, God struck him with an incurable disease of his intestines from which he died (when the intestines came out) after only eight years as king. His son Ahaziah only reigned 1 year, before he killed by Jehu while on the way to visit Ahab. After Ahaziah's death Jezebel's daughter Athaliah killed all her grandchildren and began to reign as queen.

Joash hidden from the Slaughter

But one of her grandchildren was hidden from her. In the confusion as the children were being killed, Athaliah's daughter secretly hid Joash and brought him into the house of God (temple).

Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of the house of Judah. 11 But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she did not kill him. 12 And he was hidden with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land. 2Chr. 22:10-12; 2 Kings 11:1-3

In the passage we get the main characters in the life of the next king.

1. **Athaliah** the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, the wife of Jehoram, the mother of Ahaziah and Jehoshabeath and grandmother of Joash.
2. **Jehoshabeath/Jehosheba** - The daughter of Jehoram and Athaliah, sister of Ahaziah and wife of Jehoiada the priest.
3. **Joash/Jehoash** the son of Jehoram and last of the seed of David in that line.
4. **Jehoiada** the priest.

The life of Joash begins with him hidden in the house of God (temple) for seven years with Jehoiada and his wife Jehosheba. Since he was only seven years old when he began his reign, he must have been a new born baby at the time he was hidden. It is very similar to the early life of Samuel.

Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. 2Chr. 24:1

Joash anointed King

The events that brought Joash out of the temple as king are given in great detail in both Kings (11:4-21) and Chronicles (23:1-21). The highlights of this revolt against Athaliah's conspiracy are found here. First, they went out into Judah and gathered Levites and chief fathers in Israel. He put them under oath then the Levites and priests came into the temple and to protect Joash. Jehoiada then brought out Joash and they anointed and proclaimed him king.

4 In the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds — of the bodyguards and the escorts — and brought them into the house of the LORD to him. And he made a covenant with them and took an oath from them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son. ... 8 you shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes within range, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king as he goes out and as he comes in." 11 Then the escorts stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, all around the king, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, by the altar and the house. 12 And he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the Testimony; they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!" 2Kings 11:4; 8-12

2 And they went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the chief fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. ... 5 All the people shall be in the courts of the

house of the LORD . 6 **But let no one come into the house of the LORD except the priests and those of the Levites who serve.** They may go in, for they are holy; but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD . 7 **And the Levites shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes into the house, let him be put to death.** 2 Chron 23:1-11

True Worship to God Restored

After Jehoiada made several covenants, the people went to the temple of Baal, tore it down and killed the priest.

Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord, the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord's people, and also between the king and the people. 18 And all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal, and tore it down. They thoroughly broke in pieces its altars and images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. 2Kings 11:17-18

Jehoiada also restored the work in the temple.

Also Jehoiada appointed the oversight of the house of the LORD to the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had assigned in the house of the LORD , to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD , as it is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was established by David. 19 And he set the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD , so that no one who was in any way unclean should enter. 2Chr. 23:16-19

The Reign of Joash

At the age of seven and in the seventh year of the reign of Jehu, Joash began his 40 year reign over Judah. He was a good king who did what was right for as long as Jehoiada the priest and his mentor/father instructed and guided him. It is evident that once that guidance was removed, Joash became a different king altogether.

In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. 2 Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. 2Chr 24:1-2

Joash Reigns in Israel

The only event recorded about his reign under Jehoiada centered on restoring the temple. It had been defiled during the time of Athaliah.

For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also presented all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord to the Baals. 2Chr 24:7

It appears he was sincere and not simply doing the will of Jehoiada. We don't know how long into the reign this occurred.

Now it happened after this that Joash set his heart on repairing the house of the Lord . 5 Then he gathered the priests and the Levites, and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah, and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you do it quickly." However the Levites did not do it quickly. 2Chr. 24:4-5

And Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the Lord — each man's census money, each man's assessment money — and all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord, 5 let the priests take it themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the damages of the temple, wherever any dilapidation is found." 2 Kings 12:4-5

Although the command is simple enough, it has some difficulty. It appears that the king is asking, at least in part for the priests to use the money that would have gone to them and use it for the temple. All the dedicated things would normally belong to the priests(see Num. 18). Whether that was part of the reason for the problem, or it was a flaw in the priests an levites is not revealed. They just didn't do it.

After 23 years, Joash called them in and rebuked them for not doing what he had asked. It was agreed that they would not repay what had been already given, but that they would no longer take

money from the people.

Now it was so, by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, that the priests had not repaired the damages of the temple. 7 So King Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest and the other priests, and said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damages of the temple? Now therefore, do not take more money from your constituency, but deliver it for repairing the damages of the temple." 8 And the priests agreed that they would neither receive more money from the people, nor repair the damages of the temple. 2 Kings 12:6-8

A new way was devised.

Then at the king's command they made a chest, and set it outside at the gate of the house of the Lord. 9 And they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God had imposed on Israel in the wilderness. 10 Then all the leaders and all the people rejoiced, brought their contributions, and put them into the chest until all had given.

From the way the people responded it appears the message had not really been proclaimed. Either that or the priests had not been honest and the people had become discouraged up until they saw a legitimate way. Things moved quickly after this.

11 So it was, at that time, when the chest was brought to the king's official by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, that the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it and returned it to its place. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. 2Chr. 24:11

The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the Lord ; and they hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord , and also those who worked in iron and bronze to restore the house of the Lord . 13 So the workmen labored, and the work was completed by them; they restored the house of God to its original condition and reinforced it. 14 When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada; they made from it articles for the house of the Lord , articles for serving and offering, spoons and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada. 2Chr. 24:12-14

Jehoiada's Death and Joash's apostasy

The last words above are a hint of what was to come: *"they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada."* Although Jehoiada lived a long life of 130 years and he was given great honor at his death, it changed everything.

But Jehoiada grew old and was full of days, and he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old when he died. 16 And they buried him in the City of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house. 2Chr. 24:15

After his death, the leaders of Judah, who had been compelled to worship God evidently against their will all these days now came to Joash and asked him to change the way they worshiped God. The king it appears did not take much convincing and he too willingly left God to worship idols.

Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them. 18 Therefore they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served wooden images and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. 19 Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the Lord ; and they testified against them, but they would not listen. 2Chr. 24:17-19

Their quickness and the completeness of this apostasy revealed the impurity of their devotion up to this time. Joash lost his love and zeal for God, and God's wrath came upon them. Once again prophets were sent to bring them back, but they wouldn't listen.

The Holy Spirit then came upon one of Jehoiada's sons. The son of the very man who had done so much for Joash is now standing before him, and at the commandment of the king he is stoned to death.

20 Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God: 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord ,

so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord , He also has forsaken you." 21 So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord . 22 Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son; and as he died, he said, "The Lord look on it, and repay!"

God's Vengeance

At some point after this event, God sent the Syrian army against the people and all the leaders were killed and all their money sent to Damascus.

23 So it happened in the spring of the year that the army of Syria came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the leaders of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus. 24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men; but the Lord delivered a very great army into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash.

25 And when they had withdrawn from him (for they left him severely wounded), his own servants conspired against him because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and killed him on his bed. So he died. And they buried him in the City of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. 2Chr. 24:23-25*

20 And his servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of the Millo, which goes down to Silla. 21 For Jozachar* the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer,* his servants, struck him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place. 1Kings 12:20-21*

Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established for him, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 2Chron 25:4