

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GOLDEN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

I and II Kings - Session 5 / Wednesday, September 12, 2018

THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF YOUNG JOASH

II Kings 11 and 12

1 Imagine being a 7 year old boy, hidden from assassins all your life, and suddenly - you
2 become the king of a nation! That's our story tonight.

3
4 The boy's name is Joash. For the first seven years of his life, he was a "wanted man."
5 By whom? His grandmother, Queen Athalia, who was the daughter of Ahab and
6 Jezebel, who had already killed every grandson she had (so she thought) was one of the
7 most vicious women to ever sit on a throne.

8
9 2 Kings 11:2-3

10 **But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son**
11 **of Ahaziah and stole him from among the king's sons which were slain; and they hid**
12 **him, even him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not**
13 **slain. [3] And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Athaliah**
14 **did reign over the land.**

15
16 Here is the cast of characters:

17
18 Ahaziah: the former king of Judah who reigned for only a year of so

19 Athalia: his queen, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel - unbelievably vicious

20 Jehosheba: the sister of the former king Ahaziah

21 Jehoiada: married to Jehosheba and the priest of Judah

22 Joash: seven year old son of Ahaziah
23

24 Ahab and Jezebel ruled for a couple decades in the northern kingdom of Israel. As
25 already seen, they were despicable and died terrible deaths. But they left behind them an
26 equally despicable daughter named Athalia who had married the king of Judah, Ahaziah.
27 Ahaziah was also an evil man and left a number of sons when he died after only a year on
28 the throne. Athalia hated those boys and very quickly had them all dispatched. Or so
29 she thought. While her husband Ahaziah was on the throne, he pretty much ran the
30 show. She was not about to lose her power. So she found where the sons were and had
31 had them assassinated. All of them! Or....so she thought.

32
33 The daughter of a former king, Joram, was Jehosheba, apparently a godly woman. She

1 saw what Athaliah was doing and hid seven year old Joash, one of Ahaziah's sons - and
2 the only one who had survived the royal bloodbath. She hid him for all seven years of
3 his young life.

4
5 I wonder if through those seven years if Athaliah wondered in the night if any of her
6 progeny has escaped her hand. She must have kept an eye on Jehoiada and Jehsheba but
7 they were clever. But then came the day when everything was revealed!

8
9 2 Kings 11:4

10 **And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with**
11 **the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and**
12 **made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and**
13 **shewed them the king's son.**

14
15 Why was this such big news? Several reasons: No one knew a legitimate heir to the
16 throne existed and because Joash was in the lineage of King David. When the leaders
17 heard about Joash it was big news, indeed!

18
19 Now Jehoiada, the priest, had a plan - and a good one:

20
21 2 Kings 11:5-7

22 **And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part**
23 **of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's**
24 **house; [6] And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate**
25 **behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken**
26 **down. [7] And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep**
27 **the watch of the house of the Lord about the king.**

28
29 This seven year old had to be protected at all cost. Queen Athaliah would have killed
30 him in a second, if she could. Remember she was the daughter of Jezebel!

31
32 2 Kings 11:9-12

33 **And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the**
34 **priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the**
35 **sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the**
36 **priest. [10] And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears**
37 **and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord. [11] And the guard stood, every**
38 **man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of**
39 **the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple. [12]**
40 **And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the**

1 **testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their**
2 **hands, and said, God save the king.**

3
4 There was great rejoicing in this southern Kingdom of Judah for at last the rightful owner
5 was found and seated. But what about the wicked queen? What would she do?

6
7 2 Kings 11:13-14

8 **And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to**
9 **the people into the temple of the Lord. [14] And when she looked, behold, the king**
10 **stood by a pillar, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the**
11 **king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah**
12 **rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason.**

13
14 Of course, this vicious woman didn't think of her murders of the rest of the King's sons
15 was a crime. But now that the light was shining on her plots and killings, now she is
16 crying, "Unfair - treason!" But the priest Jehoiada, in charge of this great ceremony,
17 was in no mood to put up with her:

18
19 2 Kings 11:15-16

20 **But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of**
21 **the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that**
22 **followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the**
23 **house of the Lord. [16] And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the**
24 **which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.**

25
26 The thought strikes me that if Athaliah could have escaped to the northern kingdom of
27 Israel, over which her late and wicked father Ahab had once ruled, she might have
28 escaped justice. But Jehoiada made sure she didn't get free!

29
30 What a family! Ahab, her father, had been killed in battle at Ramoth Gilead in 853 (an
31 accidental arrow fired at him); Jezebel, her mother, had been pitched out of a tower and
32 dogs ate her several years later. And now, Athaliah, the murderess daughter, is dragged
33 out of the Temple area and killed by a sword. My friend.....the way of the transgressor is
34 very, very hard!

35
36 The horses trampled over Athaliah's body where she lay dead in the street. In her
37 miserable end, Athaliah bore a singular resemblance to her mother Jezebel, who was
38 abandoned to the jaws of hungry dogs. Athaliah was left in a street, a horse-path, to be
39 trampled upon. Like her mother, she had been a queen but in her death no one cared.

1 Dr. Herbert Lockyer wrote, “Among the lessons one can gather from the record of the
2 murderess is that we reap what we sow. To Athaliah, life was cheap, and thus those who
3 thwarted her purpose must be destroyed. But taking the sword, she perished by it. She
4 breathed out murder, and was in turn murdered. A further lesson we learn from her
5 stained history is that no one can thwart God’s purposes of grace. Persecution and
6 martyrdom have never been able to destroy the loyal worship of the true God. Idolatry
7 and infidelity cannot possibly annihilate the imperishable Word of God.”

8
9 Dr. Robert G. Lee added, “Her very name is an execration. She put the whole nation
10 under the shadow of a great horror. She trampled on all faith. She violated all
11 obligation. She lived with the shrieks of those she butchered in her ears. She lived with
12 her hands red with the blood of princes and princesses. She died, frantic with rage, with
13 the accusation of TREASON on her lips. She died in the street under the blades of an
14 aroused people.”

15 16 THE REIGN OF JOASH

17
18 Imagine it: a 7 year old boy becomes the ruling monarch in Jerusalem. He did not have
19 the wisdom or experience to lead anything. Fortunately he depended upon the spiritual
20 wisdom of the priest, the one who saved him from the murdering Athaliah, Jehoiada.
21 Right away we learn of this man’s wisdom:

22
23 2 Kings 11:17-21

24 **And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people**
25 **that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people. [18]**
26 **And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his**
27 **altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of**
28 **Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord.**
29 **[19] And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all**
30 **the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the Lord,**
31 **and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the**
32 **throne of the kings. [20] And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in**
33 **quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the king's house. [21] Seven**
34 **years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.**

35
36 The priest shook up the country. It was tragic that the influence of Jezebel had even
37 seeped like an open sewer into Judah. Yes, the people still went to the great Temple,
38 built by Solomon; however, they also worship the non-god, Baal. This is not unlike
39 many in our own country who attend their church on Sunday, but have little or no regard
40 for God the rest of the week.

1 So 7 year-old Joash now sits on the throne. He has good advisors. Will he be a great
2 king all his life? We shall see.

3
4 2 Kings 12:1-2

5 **In the seventh year of Jehu (the king in the northern kingdom of Israel) Jehoash**
6 **(Joash) began to reign (in the southern kingdom of Judah); and forty years reigned he**
7 **in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. [2] And Jehoash did**
8 **that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest**
9 **instructed him.** Yes....when Jehoiada the priest instructed him. But the priest was
10 older and would one day die. Then what?

11
12 2 Kings 12:3

13 **But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt**
14 **incense in the high places.**

15
16 Compromise! A good move here....a bad one there. Trying to make everybody happy.
17 The goal should have been to make God happy!

18
19 A century or so had gone by since Solomon built the first great Temple in Jerusalem. It
20 was one thing to construct it - yet another to keep it in good shape. We know that at
21 First Assembly as over the past few years we have spent in excess of two million dollars -
22 roof, parking lot, etc. - to keep this church in good working order. And money had been
23 set aside under Joash to care for the Temple. But it was either squandered or siphoned
24 off to someone because there didn't seem to be money to repair God's House.

25
26 2 Kings 12:4-8

27 **And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the dedicated things that is**
28 **brought into the house of the Lord, even the money of every one that passeth the**
29 **account, the money that every man is set at, and all the money that cometh into any**
30 **man's heart to bring into the house of the Lord, [5] Let the priests take it to them,**
31 **every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the breaches of the house,**
32 **wheresoever any breach shall be found. [6] But it was so, that in the three and**
33 **twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the**
34 **house. [7] Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests,**
35 **and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore**
36 **receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the**
37 **house. [8] And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither**
38 **to repair the breaches of the house.**

39
40 I can say to anyone that the tithes and offerings given to this ministry are spent precisely

1 the way they are supposed to be. And taking care of God's property is a very important
2 part of our work. After reading that last passage of scripture, one has to wonder, "What
3 happened to all the money given exactly for the purpose of keeping up the Temple?"
4

5 So what did the leaders in Judah do? They prepared a locked box:
6

7 2 Kings 12:9

8 **But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it**
9 **beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the**
10 **priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house**
11 **of the Lord.**

12
13 Some churches do not take offerings. Instead they have a box in the lobby and people
14 put their offerings that box. I have never believed in that (although I once pastored a
15 church where it was insisted upon) because giving to the Lord is as much a part of
16 worship as singing. We don't ask people to go to the church basement (if they have one)
17 and sing in private – so what demand they give in private? But this system was used in
18 Jerusalem for awhile - mainly to keep religious leaders from helping themselves to it.
19

20 THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL ESCALATES

21
22 The spiritual revival did not last long in Judah. The tyranny of the cycle took hold and
23 some bad things began to happen. Joash was a great king as long as the priest Jehoiada
24 was leading him.
25

26 Remember Hazael who became King of Syria? The prophet fore told him face to face
27 that he would be a blemish on the Middle East and a killer. Now it starts:
28

29 2 Kings 12:17-18

30 **Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and**
31 **Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. [18] And Jehoash king of Judah took all**
32 **the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings**
33 **of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was**
34 **found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to**
35 **Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem.**
36

37 Joash - who started quite well - now begins to make really bad decisions. Rather than
38 asking God to enable his nation of Judah (capital in Jerusalem) to defeat the Syrian threat,
39 Joash foolishly tried to buy off the Syrian tyrant. He offered sacred treasures to the king
40 in Damascus and it cost him his life:

1 2 Kings 12:19-21

2 **And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the**
3 **book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [20] And his servants arose, and made**
4 **a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla. [21]**
5 **For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants,**
6 **smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David:**
7 **and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.**

8
9 So Joash died at age 47 after having reigned for four decades. He was followed by
10 Amaziah, his son, who was a good king and who reigned for 29 years....and then
11 Amaziah's son Uzziah reigned for another 52 years. So after a string of bad kings in
12 Jerusalem, Joash set the standard for the next 121 years of good to excellent government
13 in Judah.

14 THE FINAL ACTS OF ELISHA

15 II Kings 13

16
17
18 Now the scene shifts back to the northern kingdom of Israel (the 12 tribes that broke off
19 after Solomon died). We have just learned about Joash who set off a long period of good
20 rule in the southern kingdom. What a difference we will see in Israel!

21
22 2 Kings 13:1-2

23 **In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah**
24 **Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned**
25 **seventeen years. [2] And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and**
26 **followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he**
27 **departed not therefrom.**

28
29 You remember Jeroboam? When the kingdom of Israel divided (over taxation) about
30 900 B.C., Jeroboam was the first king of the north and the one who set up the golden
31 calves at Bethel and Dan. That sin began the several-hundred year slope into non-
32 existence in the north. Soon, as we have seen, along came Ahab and Jezebel, the
33 worship of Baal and actual demonism in the kingdom.

34
35 Does God take our sinning with a shrug? Obviously not!

36
37 2 Kings 13:3-4

38 **And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into**
39 **the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael,**
40 **all their days. [4] And Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto**

1 **him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.**

2
3 Just for a short time, the Syrian King Jehoahaz turned to God. It didn't last long:

4
5 2 Kings 13:5

6 **(And the Lord gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of**
7 **the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime.**

8
9 A reprieve! Would that not be enough of a lesson for the people in the northern
10 kingdom? Apparently not!

11
12 2 Kings 13:6-7

13 **Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made**
14 **Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.) [7]**
15 **Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots,**
16 **and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made**
17 **them like the dust by threshing.**

Syria reduced Israel's military power to almost nothing. The revival did not last long in Israel! Today we remember the horrifying 9/11 of just 17 years ago. That night, not a church night, with nothing announced, we opened the church for anyone who wanted to pray. This sanctuary was packed! Cries and shrieks pierced the air! Pretty short-lived. Things got back to "normal" very quickly. That's pretty much what happened in this 13th chapter of II Kings. In time of peril, with Syria breathing down their necks, the Israelis called out to God. God intervened. And then the people forgot Him.

19 2 Kings 13:10-11

20 **In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of**
21 **Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. [11] And he did**
22 **that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from all the sins of**
23 **Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein.**

24
25 Yes, I realize it! It's a confusing series of verses because the names of the kings in both
26 kingdoms are similar - seemingly identical. But in the northern kingdom, remember,
27 **OUT OF THE NINETEEN KINGS WHO RULED THERE, THEY WERE ALL BAD!**
28 The first king of Israel, Jeroboam, had set the standard - and it was abysmally low!

1 2 Kings 13:14-19

2 **Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash (Jehoahaz)**
3 **the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my**
4 **father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. [15] And Elisha**
5 **said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. [16]**
6 **And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand**
7 **upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. [17] And he said, Open the**
8 **window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he**
9 **said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria:**
10 **for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. [18] And he**
11 **said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite**
12 **upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. [19] And the man of God was**
13 **wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst**
14 **thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria**
15 **but thrice.**

16
17 This king was not noted for his faith. In his last hours of life, Elisha wanted to see the
18 king exhibit some faith in God. He never showed it. Many times, potentially powerful
19 demonstrations of God's capacities are never seen because leaders lack the faith and
20 vision to see them through. They cave in when they hear opposition. What a sad note
21 for the last hours of Elisha's life!

22
23 2 Kings 13:20-21

24 **And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the**
25 **land at the coming in of the year. [21] And it came to pass, as they were burying a**
26 **man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the**
27 **sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of**
28 **Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.**

29
30 Elisha had such power with God that even when he was dead he had more of God than
31 most living people!

32
33
34
35 NEXT WEEK: II KINGS 14-15