

The Kings of Judah
Ahaziah: The Beginning of His Reign
2 Chronicles 22:1-4
Lesson I

Written: February 25, 1990

Before we read our Scripture lesson, I want to say a few more things about Jehoram's death as found in 2 Chronicles 21:20

Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

2 Chronicles 21:20

Verse 1 And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned. **Verse 2** Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri. **Verse 3** He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. **Verse 4** Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction.

2 Chronicles 22:1-4

(1) He was 40 years old when he died. What a sad, sad, story. The man could have been in the prime of life. God had given him 40 years and he was no longer fit to live on earth. "Forty" is found often in the Bible. It is the number of complete test. Thus I believe there is significance in the fact that the Lord gave this man "full-time-space" to repent of his evil ways. But he did not repent; and he was not going to repent. More years would have been years of increased sinning, so his life was ended.

(2) He departed without being desired. What a tragic end. No one wanted him to live longer. Every one was waiting for him to die. All men have not lived as did Jehoram. All men have not died as he died. There are two experiences relative to death that come to my mind. July 6, 1955, I conducted the funeral service for Brother James McNicol. He came to Canada from Scotland, near the beginning of the century. He took up a homestead in southern Saskatchewan, and sometime between the years 1913-1915 he was gloriously saved. He became a much beloved brother and a good Bible teacher. Brother Harold Hollands left these words in print, "The saints would trust Jimmy under any circumstances." Those words alone, reveal the man. In 1948 or 1949, He decided to return to Scotland. He sold all his property, and the morning he left our village, came to our home and blessed our little girl, Judy. We never expected to see him on earth again.

But in Scotland, he became so homesick for the saints, in the early fifties he returned. Having sold his property, when he came back he moved in with another Christian brother, a bachelor, whose name was Fred Hollands. The last Friday night of June 1955, Bro. "Jimmy" led in a prayer of dedication as the Church at Pangman sent us forth as messengers to another field of service. I believe it was the very next day, he was involved in a car accident and never awakened in the hospital where he died.

I was at Veteran camp, and we were called back for the funeral. The morning of the funeral, July 6, 1955, brother Fred Hollands and I went to view the body. No brother in the flesh could have been closer than Brother Fred was to Jimmy. Fred wept, as we stood there together. They had enjoyed great fellowship. And we both knew a Prince and an honourable man had been taken from us. I NEVER WANT TO FORGET THAT DAY.

Then, December 6, 1968. One of our dear friends and a great pastor, E.L. McRae, had died in Calgary. Brother Frank Kosick and I were standing by the casket, and oh how the memories linger. Brother Kosick with tears coursing down his face said: "Good-bye Pal, we'll carry on! We were standing by the casket of a brother, dearly beloved, an honourable man, and we knew it. Brother McNicol and Brother McRae were living for Christ and therefore were ready to die. If we are not walking with God we are not fit to live, nor are we fit to die.

Back to Jehoram

(3) "They Buried him in the City of David BUT NOT in the sepulchres of the Kings." Parker: "Here was a king without kingliness. They buried him in Jerusalem, because he was a king's son, but they did not bury him with the kings, because even in death, he had no right to be there."

There are two ways to live. There are two ways to die. Don't expect to die right if you live wrong. (perhaps that is not good english, but get the point.) Oh the blessing of dying when one is walking with God. "For me to live is Christ (wrote Paul) to die is gain." Philippians 1:21 The second statement is true because of the first. Revelation 14:13, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.." The blessedness is only for those who die in the Lord. Hebrews 11:13 After listing the heroes of faith we read, "These all died in faith.". A person dies with faith or dies without faith. There is no other ground.

For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

Philippians 1:21

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Revelation 14:13

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:13

Oh the awfulness of dying without faith, dying without Christ, dying without hope! The rich man lifted up his eyes in hell. And so did King Jehoram. The rich man was and ever will be without excuse, he had known Lazarus. Jehoram was and is without excuse, he was the son of godly Jehoshaphat. On the day of judgment, no man will be able to blame God. That is plainly taught in Scripture. Men go to Hell because they reject light, not because they have none. Well may we ask, if the Lord doesn't come before that time, how will you die?

KING AHAZIAH

1. 2 CHRONICLES 22:1 PROBLEM ONE; HE HAS THREE NAMES.

(1) 2 Chronicles 21:17 Jehoahaz

(2) 2 Chronicles 22:6 Azariah

(3) 2 Chronicles 22:1 Ahaziah.

In 2 Kings chapters 8 and 9, this king is only known as Ahaziah, and is so named 8 times. 2 Kings 8:24,25,29, 2 Kings 9:16,21,23,27,29.

And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 Chronicles 22:1

And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 Chronicles 21:17

And he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

2 Chronicles 22:6

And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2 Chronicles 22:1

In 2 Chronicles 22, he is also identified 8 times as Ahaziah. 2 Chronicles 22:1,2,7,8,9

As we have noted, once he is named Jehoahaz. Once he is named Azariah.

With the name Azariah there may well have been a "copy" mistake, but with the name Jehoahaz, there is none. I have not found a satisfactory answer to this small problem. I have wondered if he had not been given two names, which is not uncommon in Scripture, nor is it uncommon in our own experience. However, this does not hinder our faith.

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Verse 1 And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned. **Verse 2** Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri. **Verse 3** He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. **Verse 4** Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction. **Verse 5** He walked also after their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramothgilead: and the Syrians smote Joram. **Verse 6** And he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick. **Verse 7** And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. **Verse 8** And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them. **Verse 9** And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom. **Verse 10** But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah. **Verse 11** But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. 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 slew him not. **Verse 12** And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

2 Chronicles 22:1-12

He was made king because he had escaped death. All the other sons of Jehoram had been slain. 2 Chronicles 21:17. I don't know if there is much honour involved in being made king when there is no one else to choose or not! When thinking about it, I remembered a situation I faced many years ago. In our wee village, at that time, the United Church had no dealings with our congregation, for we were then noted for being the "holy -rollers".

(I have history records to prove all this). Remember in Bible days, "The Jews had no dealings with the looked-down upon Samaritans either!

And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

2 Chronicles 21:17

Well, to get to my story, one spring, when the United Church preachers of the district were all at a conference; and at the same time the roads were in unbelievable, almost impassible conditions--a 12 year old girl died in our village and someone had to conduct the funeral service. I shall never forget, how I felt, the morning the girl's uncle came to our home to ask me to conduct the service.

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He actually said, we have phoned all over the area and we just can't get anyone else, so we have to have you take the service!

I was chosen only because there was no one else available.

Well, Ahaziah is listed among the Kings, because there was no one else of the kings seed remaining. But there is also another thought here. God had promised to preserve the seed of David and here He is doing that. His promise could not be broken. Behind the scene the Devil was at work to destroy the seed royal and destroy the promise of God, but God has His way in the storm and God over-rules in the affairs of men.

11. 2 CHRONICLES 22:2 PROBLEM TWO: HE IS NAMED AS BEING 42,HIS FATHER DIED AT 40 YEARS.

Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

2 Chronicles 22:2

Verse 2 states, "forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign." And we have just learned from chapter 21, that his father died when he was only forty. So that makes Ahaziah two years older than his father! This is a copy mistake without question.

Here the skeptics have a field day. But I ask, are you going to throw out the whole because of a mistake like this? I doubt if man has ever published a book in which there cannot be found at least one error. I remember J.B.C.'s first Year Book. Of course we wanted a good production. If ever we wanted a good job, we wanted that FIRST to be it.

And on the very introductory page "Genesis" was spelled incorrectly. For this problem in this chapter, the answer is found in 2 Kings 8:26, where we are told that Ahaziah was twenty two years old, which most certainly is correct.

Two and twenty years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel.

2 Kings 8:26

3 2 CHRONICLES 22:2 PROBLEM NUMBER THREE.

Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

2 Chronicles 22:2

"His mother Athaliah was the daughter of Omri." Now we are specifically told that Ahaziah was the son of Jehoram. In 2 Chronicles 21:6 we have been told that Jehoram's wife was the daughter of Ahab. But here, she is called the daughter of Omri, who was the father of Ahab. I am told that in the Hebrew language there is no word for grandfather, grandmother, grandson or granddaughter. So the obvious answer is: Ahaziah's mother, Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and therefore the granddaughter of Omri.

And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD.

2 Chronicles 21:6

I certainly do not know, nor have I all the answers. But it seems to me that Athaliah is named as the daughter of Omri to point out the long history of the evil upbringing she had had. Omri reigned for 12 years. 1 Kings 16:23. Ahab reigned for 22 years. 1 Kings 16:29. Thus for 34 years the idolatry and evil in Israel had progressively become worse and worse. And out of that pit of idolatry, and out from Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal the king of Zidon, priest of Baal 1 Kings 16:31, came Athaliah the mother of the one who now becomes King of Judah. God wants us to know and understand the reasons this woman Athaliah had so many wicked ways.

In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

1 Kings 16:23

And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.

1 Kings 16:29

And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

1 Kings 16:31

1V. 2 CHRONICLES 22:3 THE KINGS PROBLEM, WAS HIS MOTHER.

He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

2 Chronicles 22:3

Verse 3 begins, "He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab.." Read once again, 2 Chronicles 21:6,13. Ahaziah follows in the steps of his ungodly father. Again we must observe that God does take account of the WAYS of men. "There is a way that seemeth right in the eyes of men, but the end thereof is death." "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." The ways of Ahab and the ways of God could not have been farther apart. And in our story, here is a young man stepping into the footprints of his wicked father, and that is bad. But the remaining part of the verse is much more sad. "FOR his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly." Athaliah had turned her husband away from God. Now, she in delight, does the same to her boy.

Verse 6 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD.

Verse 13 But he also walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and he made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also he slayeth his brethren of his father's house, *which were* better than himself:

2 Chronicles 21:6,13

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McGee:

"She had been the power behind the throne during the days of Jehoram, and when her son came to the throne she did not give up her position as queen and counselor. Now her son listens to her. She was his counselor. That involves pre-meditation, that involves plotting, planning, pre-arrangement. She was a schemer. She took time to plan her evil. She took time to instruct and show her son how to do evil!

Parker:

"What heart can read these words without being sad? "Mother"-can we find some other word for "mother? Any other word is better, even father, But no, the word is "mother."

She was his school mistress, he her one great pupil. Napoleon said, "The hands that rock the cradle rule the world." "Surely she did not teach him to do wickedly. Should it not be she taught him to do bravely? to do wisely? to do patiently? . No man can pray like a woman. It is because women can be so heavenly, that she can be so low, so wicked, so bad. It is because she can be so like a saviour that she can be such an engine and agent for ruin" (end quote)

Athaliah was counsellor to her sons destruction. She was immoral and she taught her son to be immoral. She was wicked and she taught her son to be wicked also. She was vile and she taught her son to be vile like herself. She was corrupt and she delighted in corrupting others, even her own son. Perhaps, under God, this history moved Isaiah to write in Isaiah 1:4 "Ah sinful nation. A people laden with iniquity. A seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters..." Athaliah was not only corrupt, she was a corrupter of others. A mothers influence cannot be fully tabulated in this life. For the wickedness continues when she is gone, it may be to a lesser degree, but it does continue on.

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Isaiah 1:4

Well may we ask: Mother what are you teaching? In Titus 2:3,4, Paul gives good advise. Teachers of good things, that they may teach the women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

Verse 3 The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

Verse 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

Titus 2:3,4

In reading the book, "Caesar and Christ" by Will Durant, published less than 50 years ago, I could not help but see the history of Athaliah, and the history of the Romans as being much like today in Canada. I quote: "The upper middle class with impressive speed passed from stoic simplicity to reckless luxury. Houses became larger as families became smaller. The old simple diet gave way to long and heavy meals. Drinking increased. They no longer listened to good advise, for the belly has no ears. The individual became rebellious. Usually the power of women rises with the wealth of a society; for when the stomach is satisfied hunger leaves the field of love. Prostitution flourished. Homosexuality was stimulated. Cosmetics became a necessity. Even in government the role of women grew. Livy puts into his mouth a speech that every generation has heard; "From the moment women became equals they will become your masters." Women won their freedom, divorced their husbands, on occasion, poisoned them. They doubted the wisdom of bearing children in an age of imperialistic wars. Everyone longed for money, everyone judged or was judged in terms of money." (end quote)

There is no new thing under the sun. And Athaliah would have been at home in Roman society.

V. 2 CHRONICLES 22:4 ANOTHER PROBLEM FOR THE KING.

Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction .

2 Chronicles 22:4

2 Chronicles 22:3 counsellor 2 Chronicles 22:4 counsellors 2 Chronicles 22:5 counsel. It seems to me the words "counsel" and "counsellors" stands out. His was a day of counselling! Someone has said of our day: "One half of the world is seeking advise and the other half is giving it." I have changed that just a little. One half of the world is giving advise and the other half is paying for it.

He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

2 Chronicles 22:3

Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction .

2 Chronicles 22:4

He walked also after their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramothgilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

2 Chronicles 22:5

As Tony Stone said: "There was never so much marriage-counseling and counselors in any part of the world as there are in America, and at the same time, there has never been so many people being divorced." Someone told me about a patient and his psychiatrist sitting by the river. The patient was contemplating suicide. And before the doctor was finished with his counsel, they both jumped in the river!

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Much counsel today is based on wisdom that is not from above. James 3:15 says, " This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish"

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish .
James 3:15

James 3:17 tells us about a wisdom that is from above which is first PURE..."

In the mid 1950's I had severe back trouble. The doctor in Eston could not help me, so he sent me to a physiotherapist. After a few days of treatments, this lady doctor said to me. "You are all tied up. You are too religious. What you should do is go where no one knows you, and really get drunk, so you can loosen up! I did not take her counsel.

Hebrews 13:7 "Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation", or in other words, notice how they live. Following ungodly leaders will lead to ungodly counsel. And ungodly counsel will destroy you as it did this king, because it will undermine your faith. We have had too many example of this in recent years.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.

Hebrews 13:7

First Jim Jones..

Almost forgotten now, but he threw his Bible on the floor, and told his congregation: "Don't listen to that. listen to me." That was foolish counsel from a fool, and his followers should have left him then but they followed him to their own destruction.

Jim Bakker.

When revealed, should no longer ,in my opinion, have had followers. Those who continue to follow a man like that will be led into something worse.

When men break public trust, they should no longer be followed. If following evil counsel and evil counselors brought the downfall of this king, how can we expect to escape a downfall if we follow evil counsel? And evil counselors? There has never been more need of vigilance and close attention to what the Scriptures teach than at this present time. Awake thou that sleepest!