

The Kings of Judah
Joash: Murders the Prophet
2 Chronicles 24:1-27
Lesson V
Written: April 29, 1990

Verse 1 Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Zibiah of Beersheba. **Verse 2** And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. **Verse 3** And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters. **Verse 4** And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the LORD. **Verse 5** And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not. **Verse 6** And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness? **Verse 7** For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim. **Verse 8** And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD. **Verse 9** And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. **Verse 10** And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end. **Verse 11** Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. **Verse 12** And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD. **Verse 13** So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it. **Verse 14** And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada. **Verse 15** But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. **Verse 16** And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house. **Verse 17** Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. **Verse 18** And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. **Verse 19** Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. **Verse 20** And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

Verse 21 And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. **Verse 22** Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it. **Verse 23** And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus. **Verse 24** For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash. **Verse 25** And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings. **Verse 26** And these are they that conspired against him; Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess. **Verse 27** Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 24:1-27

Today we purpose to conclude our study of the life of Joash. Next week we conclude this series for this time. When we shall begin again, we know not.

Everything in our world is changing so rapidly. Never before have the signs of the soon coming of the Saviour been so large, in every area of prophecy. Yet the doctrines that are being proclaimed and accepted by the majority of the Churches are doing everything but preparing people for the Coming of the Lord. The message of the hour for the world should be, repent or perish. And for the Church, life up your heads, start setting your affection on things above not on things of the earth, for your redemption indeed draweth nigh. One of the sad events of the present is that the Church, by and large, is not hearing and seemingly not desirous of hearing the proclamation of the soon Coming of Jesus Christ. We are looking for everything but for Him! "More love to thee Oh Christ", is our need. For the more we love Him the more we shall look for Him. Someone said, Paul only had two days. Today and that day!

6. 2 CHRONICLES 24: 15-16 We REVIEW OUR CONCLUSION LAST TIME.

We begin by looking back at the last statement in verse 16. They buried Jehoiada among the Kings BECAUSE (there was a reason) he had done good in Israel both toward God, and toward his house." And as we said, that statement speaks volumes. The people recognizes that the true leader in the Nation was not the King, it was not the man who held the position of leadership, it was not the man with the title, the true leader was the aged ,godly, spiritual man. When the history of our generation will finally be written and revealed, we then will learn that the true leaders have often , not been men in positions, but rather, the spiritual men. Those who behind the scenes have been leaders but not Lords of God's heritage.

Verse 15 But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. **Verse 16** And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.

2 Chronicles 24:15-16

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Joseph was first true to God, therefore true to Pharaoh. Daniel was true to his God, therefore true to men. Paul was true to God therefore he kept the faith to the end. Jehoiada did good toward God and therefore good toward his house. "The men who move the world are the men the world cannot move."

7. 2 CHRONICLES 24: 17-19 HOW QUICKLY THINGS CHANGE.

Verse 17 Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. **Verse 18** And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. **Verse 19** Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.

2 Chronicles 24:17-19

After the death of Jehoiada, Joash fell into the hands of evil advisors.

McLaren:

"The worst men in the Bible are not those who begin deliberately to do evil. They are the men who have never learned to say "no". "

Parker:

"Joash represents those who develop unexpected corruption of character."

Before further comment, I read 2 Chronicles 24:17 from the Roman Catholic Bible.

"And after the death of Jehoiada, the princes of Judah went in and worshipped the king, and he was soothed by their services and hearkened unto them." The word "soothed" is most interesting. Joash was pleased by the attention given him by these political leaders,

"as when a baby is given a soother." From this word "soothed" comes the word, "sooth-sayer."

And according to the dictionary, a "sooth-sayer" is one who foretells the future in smooth language." To be "soothed" says the dictionary, is to have a sedative effect and in brackets (syrup) So now we have the picture! These princes of Judah came before the King with their smooth, suger-coated, syrupy speech, and so flattered the King, that he fell into their trap, and could not say "no". (Even children know how to soft-soap mother!) These princes were idolators. 2 Chronicles 24:18 says they served the groves and idols. And having waited their time, immediately after the godly priest had died, they must have said something like the following to this weak king.

I quote Parker:

"Now you are free to grant us religious liberty. King, you know you were not free while your uncle lived, and we were not free either. He hindered our religion, and you know how he restrained you! Now you are free to renew the worship of Baal and Astaroth." And under these new circumstances, Joash begins to reveal himself. He had what McLaren says, "only traditional religion." "Brought up in a Christian home. Influenced from infancy by only godly people, he remained, for many years outwardly righteous." McLaren:

"If you young people are good, just because you have pious parents who make you go to Church or chapel on Sunday and keep you out of mischief during the week--your goodness is a sham.."

"It was a great deal easier for Joash to make a chest for contributions to a Temple-Repair-Fund, and to get it filled up, and to patch up the house of the Lord, than for him to get down on his knees and pray; and he may have thought to be busy about the house of God was to be devout."

Think that through!

"So it may be with many a Sunday School Teacher and Church worker. Their religion may be merely superficial, and as little personal as this mans." (End quote)

We read 2 Chronicles 24:18: "And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols." So the matter is revealed. Jehoiada had kept the King and the princes of Judah, outwardly true to the God of their fathers. But now, the implication is, with the consent of the King they leave the house of God deliberately, and choose to worship and serve idols in groves where their heart had been throughout the years!

And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.

2 Chronicles 24:18

Parker:

"Once lose reverence for the Bible and the sanctuary, lose faith in the Supernatural, and victory for the enemy will be easy. Let a man lose his reverence for God and his reverence for man, however much he may boast of it, will in that measure go down."

To illustrate. As long as men held reverence for God they rejected abortion, but by losing reverence for God, they have lost respect for the value of human life. The same can apply to the present trend to let the aged die. This principle of Scripture remains. One cannot serve God AND idols. One must serve God OR idols.

Here is the mercy, 2 Chronicles 24:19 "Yet he sent prophets to them to bring them again unto the Lord. (false prophets do not do that). And they (the true prophets) testified against them (the false prophets do not do that either). True prophets tell people , not what they want to hear, but what they need to hear. "But they would not hear." This verse sounds very much like 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 (Read it) Remember Stephen's sermon in Acts 7:51-52

"Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye, which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted..."

And as we move on we shall see but another example of what Stephen was speaking about. 2 Chronicles 24: 19 concludes, "They would not give ear. " They would not hear. We are dealing with what best, must be described as apostate conditions. By apostasy we mean, the departure from the truth. Apostates will not listen to the truth.

Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.

2 Chronicles 24:19

Verse 15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

Verse 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

2 Chronicles 36:15-16

Verse 51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. **Verse 52** Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

Acts 7:51-52

2 Timothy 4:4 Tells us what happens. They turn their ears from the truth, and as a consequence are turned unto fables. Apostates are willing to listen to some NEW THING but they have little time or no time for the "Old Story." I am hearing many new things, things strange to my ears these days. And the old statement needs repeating, "If it is TRUE it is not NEW, If it is new it is not true."

And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

2 Timothy 4:4

8 2 CHRONICLES 24:20-22 THE KING MURDERS THE MAN OF GOD.

Verse 20 And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.

Verse 21 And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. **Verse 22** Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.

God raises up a man in their midst, one they had all known from his childhood. He was not an outsider, he was one of their very own. The Spirit of God came upon the son of Jehoiada and the man spoke an inspired word from the Lord. There is no question as to the source of the message. "Because (there is that word again) ye have forsaken the Lord (you have chosen to do that) He hath also forsaken you." There was no syrup in that speech! The prophet did not stutter. He could not be misunderstood. A man of faith and power, a spokesman like Stephen. He spoke the truth, only the truth and he spoke it plainly. There were no added words. No unnecessary words in that speech. He said only what the people needed to hear.

It angered the audience and the King commanded that the prophet be stoned right in the court of the house of the Lord. When the king was rebuked, having the power to do so, he stoned the prophet. Matthew 23:35 tells us it was between the temple and the altar, that not only the innocent blood, but the righteous blood of Zacharias was shed,”

That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Matthew 23:35

McLaren comments:

"Beginning at verse 20, we have the second stage in the Kings life. What a picture here of Divine Love which follows every wanderer with its pleadings and beseechings. It came to this man through the lips of a prophet. Joash, who never attempted to say "no" ..forsook the house of God and ends up a murdered. My brother, once you get your feet upon the steps incline to evil, once forsake the path that is right and true; and you are every much like a climber who misses his footing up among the mountain peaks. Once put your foot on that slippery slope and you know not where you may fall to."

Parker:

"To the King God sends a Prophet. What became of Zacharias ,son of Jehoiada? What became of every true prophet? They conspired against him. They stoned him. Joash owed so much to Jehoiada, yet actually commanded the slaying of his godly son! Verse 22 confirms a vital principle. When religious faith goes down, all else of personal and social obligation goes down with it. The man who would forget God, could easily forget Jehoiada. But what does killing the Prophet mean? To kill a prophet means in reality to kill God, so far as is possible. We know well the Prophet is only the representative. He is nothing of himself. He owes his whole power to inspiration. It is therefore, not against the Inspired man that we rebel, but against the Inspired Spirit. We know well in our conscience that our whole trouble is that, God is looking. God is judging. God is appealing and we seek to mitigate the pain of that fact by taking vengeance upon the preacher, the prophet, the man who reasons, of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come."

So the dying prophet prays, "Lord look upon it and require it." The prayer of the dying man will be remembered. The act of murder will not be overlooked by a righteous God.

1X. 2 CHRONICLES 24:23-27 THE END OF THE STORY.

Verse 23 And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.

Verse 24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash. **Verse 25** And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings. **Verse 26** And these are they that conspired against him; Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess. **Verse 27** Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 24:23-27

What a sad end for a man who had so much going for him at the beginning. That very year, the year they murdered the prophet of God, Joash falls under the hand of a righteous God. Joash does not escape judgment. First the Syrians rise up against Judah, and slew the very men who had slain the prophet and had re-introduced the worship of Baal in the Nation. "And they carried off much spoil to Damascus.(That city is still on our map). The king escaped, although he was badly wounded. 2 Chronicles 24:24 The Syrians came with a small company of men and overcame a great host in Judah, BECAUSE they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. What a lesson for Judah and for us. Again, we learn that war was a judgment from the hand of God. And today, men think they can abolish war in a sinful world!

2 Chronicles 24:25, The Syrians wounded Joash. He escaped, in great pain, and arrived home to Millo. (2 Kings 12:20 a south slop of Jerusalem) There he crawled into his bed. Thanking his lucky stars (for remember he had become an idolator). But he was not left to die in peace. He died a violent death. His servants, one an Ammorite, the other a Moabite, came into his bed chamber and slew him there. Notice 2 Chronicles 24:25, They did so for the blood of the SONS (plural) of Jehoiada. We were only informed about the death of one son, but it would appear that Joash had not stopped at one murder.

And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.

2 Kings 12:20

So these two men took matters into their own hands, deciding that this king should live no longer. But we know the cause was of God. He had reigned forty years from 878 B.C. to 838 B.C. They buried him in the city of David but not in the sepulchers of the kings. As we have said, the true king had been the Priest. What a sad ending. He had had every opportunity. He threw it all away. He started so well, he ended so badly.

The major lesson: God is not mocked, what a man sows he will reap. He who sows to the wind will reap the whirlwind. I often feel sickened when I read the newspaper writers who so openly reveal their apostasy. A recent example April 12,1990 writer Jim Taylor commenting on the death of Mr Ballard, "hoping that Mr. Ballard has met King Clancy over a beer, whoever they are with, for they were less than angels." Such mockery will not be forgotten on the day of judgment.