

RATHMINES BIBLE SCHOOL - 2006

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JEHOIADA THE PRIEST

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Study #3 - Joash did right all the days of Jehoiada

In today's session, we will be looking at the two parts of Joash's life. Just as we saw in king Asa, two phases to life, we saw it in Jehoshaphat, two phases to his reign; we are going to see two distinct phases in the life and reign of Joash the boy-king. We're going to see him absolutely wholly dependent on Jehoiada, that was his problem. It had to be that way, but that essentially was his problem. So we're going to be reviewing the first part, God willing, of the life of Joash in this session, but before we do that, I need to bring you to 2 Chronicles 23, because this is the chapter that records the work of Jehoiada in overthrowing Athaliah. Now I don't intend to spend much time on it, but we'll just quickly summarize this chapter to see what happens, and if you are into highlighting, you can actually very effectively get the jest of this chapter by highlighting a few words and phrases.

Let's start with the name 'Jehoiada'; it occurs 8 times in this chapter, but he's referred to more frequently but his name is there 8 times. On 4 of those occasions, beginning in verse 8 where there are two of them, verse 9 and again in verse 14, he's called Jehoiada the priest. So he's the dominant figure, he's the reason why Athaliah was overthrown. He's the agent of Yahweh to restore the throne of David in Judah, he is the man to whom the whole nation looks, he's the rock upon which the foundations of Joash's reign are established. An enormous figure in the history of the **truth** is this Jehoiada the priest.

B&S, his opposition was Athaliah, she was the one who had imbued her husband Jehoram with the spirit of the assassin; he had killed all his brothers. We just read language like that, and we don't often stop to think about what that means! I have a brother, you know him well, I have a sister, Jehoram had half a dozen brothers; I would no more seek to kill my brother or my sister! or jump off a cliff myself. I couldn't! the thought of destroying my own family is ridiculous, but here was a man under the influence of his wife, killed all his brethren. Why would he do that? because they were potentially competition for him on the throne; his father had put him on the throne because he was the eldest, but she got an idea and said, 'Jehoram, if you don't kill your brethren, one of them might one day, put you off the throne and take over your job; then I won't have any power in Judah. I've only got power because I'm married to you, kill them! She's the one who when her son Ahaziah was killed by Jehu, her mind went into immediate, feverish activity; 'I've got to kill all of David's children', because she wanted to continue ruling, it was all about Athaliah.

But she had a problem, and that problem is actually emphasized in the record. You look at the last verse of chapter 22, you know, this is the verse that's telling us; that after she

had lined up the bodies (we don't know how many) maybe 12 or 13 year olds now, she's lined up the bodies of the sons of her son, Ahaziah. They used to marry early in those days; 12 year old kings were having children; she lined up all these bodies and she didn't even know how many grandchildren she had, and she missed one. If she'd known that she missed him she would have gone looking for him. Can you imagine all those kids lying there in the courtyard of the palace, while there are 2 women in a bedroom hiding, fearful of being found, Jehoshabeath and her maid, until they could get out of there and into the temple.

That's the graphic imagery we have and the record says in verse 12, 'and he was hid with them in the house of God 6 years; and Athaliah reigned over the land'. I want you to notice that, in my bible I've got that phrase, 'Athaliah reigned over the land'. But you look at how chapter 23 ends in the last verse after she is put to death, it says, 'and all the people of the land rejoiced'; and the city was quiet after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword'. You see, her problem was, she may have reigned over the land, she did not reign over the people of the land. Now think about this, b&s, if you read through chapter 23 and you see what happens here, how that Jehoiada when Joash reaches the age of 7, he sends out missionaries throughout Judah, with a purpose and that purpose is to gather all the people required to overthrow Athaliah, so after the Levites and the priests, and they go through the land and they're going to people and saying, 'going on board; are you going to get on board with us and get rid of this wicked Athaliah?' Now if she had had any support at all in Judah, someone, somehow would have come and told her and said, 'do you know what's happening here? they're about to overthrow you'. She would have been forewarned, but the first thing she knows about it, the coup that is being developed, is when she hears the noise and the acclamation of the people in the temple. The place is absolutely full of people; the Levites and the priests who have come to serve in the temple for a couple of weeks, haven't been sent home; they stay; they sleep in the palace, people slept in the streets, she must have seen huge crowds of people, she must have known surely that something was going on, but she didn't realize it and nobody told her! SHE DID NOT RULE OVER THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND, and that's one of the great values of any reformation when it goes into a dark period. And the brotherhood, as in our own personal lives, and as in our ecclesias, will go into dark periods from time to time for whatever cause. When things become pretty shaky, when perhaps some come to positions of influence and they shouldn't be there, as in the case of Athaliah. If the reformations that proceeded it in the times of Asa and Jehoshaphat had produced qualities in people who know where they're going in those dark times, it will sustain the brotherhood and then there will be a recovery, a reformation as there was here in the times of Jehoiada the priest.

That phrase 'all the people of the land' occurs again in verse 13 of chapter 23, so you can highlight that one as well; in the middle of verse 13. She looked, so she hears the commotion, she comes out and for the first time perhaps, she enters this temple and see the king by the pillar. She's heard the voice of the people, she hears the trumpets, and it says in that verse, 'and all the people of the land rejoiced', the hearts of the people were with Jehoiada, they were not with Athaliah. You know, b&s, when we talk about reformation, one of the most important principles of the reformation, has to come

from the individuals. Now the incentive, the enthusiasm can and is often received in covenant. Have a look at verse 16, 'and Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people and between the king, that they should be Yahweh's people'. So here they are, this great community in the temple, they have crowned the king, a boy-king of 7, there is great rejoicing; Athaliah in the previous verse has been put to death by the horse gate, just outside the temple, and the people are all there together, a breath of fresh air is blowing through the ecclesia of Judah. It's just like coming to a bible school, isn't it?

What happens next? Look at verse 17, 'Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and break it down, and break his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal, before the altars'. In other words, they went away and cleaned up their act. That's what reformation is about! it's about doing something on the basis of commitments that are made; those commitments made be made in covenant but it requires us to act, maybe together on some occasions, but it comes down to the individuals making up their minds that this is what needs to be done, and going away and doing it. Nobody regretted the departure of Athaliah, and in that, she matched her husband.

Just step back a page or so to 2 Chronicles 21 and verse 20, this is the man who died when his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness. Verse 20 says, 'Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem for 8 years and departed without being desired'. I wonder what they will say about us when we depart? good riddance? no one had any desire for Jehoram, he was 40 years of age and died in the prime of his life in absolute corruption, morally and physically. 'They made no burning for him, no one regretted him, he departed without being desired'. I don't know if I'm terribly popular, but I don't think I want to go like that! But she did, just like her husband! So, b&s, what happens in chapter 23 is a transition from the dark era of Athaliah to the bright new day of the reign of Joash under the tutelage of his mentor and adopted father, Jehoiada the priest and his lovely and wonderful mother, adopted mother, Jehoshebeath the sister of Ahaziah.

Let's have a quick review then of this king Joash, whose life story is given to us in 2 Chronicles 24 and it begins in verse 1. 'Joash was 7 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 40 years in Jerusalem, his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba' (I have a question to ask about her in a moment). But first of all his name, it's fascinating, isn't it? the way names can sometimes tell a story; his name means 'Yahweh fired' (3101) but he was never, never Yahweh fired. He was Jehoiada fired because he was dependent on Jehoiada, and as soon as Jehoiada was dead he became 'princes fired'. Other people fired him up in a certain direction, he was never his own man, have you ever encountered someone like this? filled with enthusiasm in their youth, because they happen to be related or connected to someone who fires them up? They get out there and they get involved and they're working in the truth, but when that mentor disappears the wheels fall off. Have you ever seen someone like that? Well, that's Joash and that's the great lesson we want to learn today, it has to be in the individual, a relationship with God, that it is so strong that it doesn't matter if parents or mentors or anybody else who

may have influence on their lives, disappears or departs from the faith, or whatever may happen, it doesn't matter! the relationship with God is so strong, that it will carry them through. That's how it has to be, it is not always that way.

So here he is, he dies at the age of 47 does Joash, having reigned for 40 years. His mother's name was Zibiah 'a female gazelle' (6645), now my question about her is this, where was she when the events of 2 Chronicles 22 verses 10 and 11 were going on? Well, I'll tell you something, b&s, without going back to the chapter; there was a characteristic about the house of Ahab, that was universal throughout that house, and it's recorded for us in 2 Kings 10 (you can check this out later) when Jehu destroys the house of Ahab, one of the first things he does is to write letters from Jezreel to the elders of Jezreel who were at that time in the city of Samaria. These were the men who had received letters from Jezebel, who wrote from Samaria and sent the letters to the elders of Jezreel, telling them to assassinate Naboth the Jezreelite and in those letters that Jehu sends, prior to the destruction of the 70 sons and grandsons of Ahab, he makes constant reference to this fact, when you go you give these letters to the bringers-up of the children. It's repeated to the bringers-uo of Ahab's children; that was the characteristic of the family of Ahab's house, other people raised their children, their babies were cared for by other people! and we live in an age, where almost every Australian household have their children (however many children they have, and now they give you \$4000 to have them) are cared for by someone else. There's a big debate going on in Australia right now, as to whether the government should use its huge windfall of a 11 billion dollar surplus this year, to give handouts to rich and poor for one reason, to pay the people who bring up their children. That was the house of Ahab, and that was in Judah! and when Athaliah died that policy was thrown out. Those were the times and as I said before, they were pretty dynamic, Jehu was there, and we've seen the reason why Joash is not in the record of Matthew 1.

Now this is what the text means in the times of Joash when he came to the throne as a boy-king; the Syrians in the north were on the march, because, you see, b&s, the reformation of Jehu in the north which could have completely changed the direction of that ecclesia, had come to a grinding halt at the end of a bottle; we read in the prophets the reason for the collapse of the reformation of Jehu. He rid Israel of Baal worship and of Baal worshippers but he did not reform their religion, he just simply carried on with the religion of Jeroboam and yet he was in the company of men like Jonadab the son of Rechab, who was zealous for Yahweh and whose progeny was still there hundreds of years later when Judah was taken into captivity and they remained behind in the land because they had remained faithful to their God and never touched the bottle. They never touched the bottle

and Jeremiah was commanded by God to take them into a secret room, you know, like the model room (and you don't even know where it is, do you?) and sit them down and bring out the bottles. Now I know you people, you Christadelphians, you're not alcholics and you don't touch the stuff, do you? but look. no one can see you in here; you taste this, it's Grange, it's \$400 a bottle! 'we will not touch it! because our father, Jonadab, commanded us not to touch it, and we haven't done so in the family for 250 years; you think we're going to change now with the Babylonians breathing down our necks, come

on!' But I hear reports, b&s, that in some of our gatherings the bottles come out. Jehu's reformation finished dead stop at the end of a bottle, you read Hosea chapter 1 because it tells you that, and the brotherhood is coming into a phase, not far behind the world, a survey recently done in Australia showed that 74% of our young people in this country drink, and many of them binge drink, and then occupy themselves with risky practices, person to person and behind the wheels of motor cars.

So while in the north the wheels were falling off, and God was saying, 'Now listen, Jehu, this is just a reminder that you're not quite up to scratch since the Syrians'. Now I want you to keep this in mind, the Syrian king that comes down against Jehu and his sons, was a king called Hazael, now that's very important in relation to the life of Joash, and we won't find this out until Friday probably, 'Hazael' his name means 'God has seen' (2371). and He had seen and sent His angels and at the same time in the reign of Jehu because he didn't continue the reformation, he was forced to submit to the Syrian king, Shalmanezzer the 3rd. Now I can't the record of this in scripture but we believe it happened because of the Black Obelisk of Shalmanezzer which was found by the serologist Henry Layette in 1835, and it's a victory monument of Shalmanezzer the 3rd when he came down from the north and came into Israel. It stands about 2 metres high and depicts Jehu paying tribute to Shalmanezzer. Now you've got there the Black Obelisk, and I actually have a photograph of it that someone else got for me in 1986. Modesty prevents me from showing the photograph but really the true reason is that you would laugh at the degeneration since 1986. But there he is, there's Jehu bowing down before the Syrian king Shalmanezzer the 3rd. So this is true, it's a black obelisk, black stone and stands this high and my eye was right there at eye level and this is what he looks like. Now I put this picture up because sometimes we don't make the effort that we should make, to try and close the record with reality; try and think about what they looked like and what they're doing, you really have to do that to make the scriptures come alive. Here he is! have you any idea how they used to dress in those days? the Syrian artist might have used a lot of licence, but it's highly unlikely, the artist who did this when Shalmanezzer was alive, it's probably somewhere near the mark! this is the man whose reformation in the north ended at the end of a bottle.

But Judah in the south was given peace, and they were given peace because there was a **true reformation** going on there. It involved this boy-king Joash, who tragically has two distinct phases to his life. You see in 2 Chronicles 24 it says in verse 2, 'that Joash did that which was right in the sight of Yahweh all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters'. So he was rescued, raised and found wives by Jehoiada; he just depended on him and here are the two phases of this man's life; (we'll go down the left hand side first, and then we'll come back and add comments to the notes on the right hand side.)

1. He did right all the days of Jehoiada, it says.
2. In verse 4 he was minded to repair the house of Yahweh. (we'll come back to that in a moment.)
3. He declared his disgust for the desecraters of the temple, the sons of Athaliah.
4. He collected large some of money for the temple project, he was supported by princes

and the people in this.

5. He successfully completed the temple project.
6. He dedicated vessels for the temple. He's not doing too bad, is he?
7. He remained faithful all the days of Jehoiada.
8. He succumbed after the death of Jehoiada to the advances of the princes who had supported him in his labours.
9. He forsook the house of God and turned to idolatry.
10. He refused to listen to the rebuke of Yahweh's prophets who were sent, rising up early
to go to him.
11. He gave commands to stone his own cousin with whom he had grown up in the house of God.
12. They stoned him between the altar and the temple.
13. He was sorely wounded by the Syrian invaders.
14. The king who lead them was Hazael, and we'll see the reason for the later on.
15. He was assassinated by his servants upon whom he was wholly dependent. You know God used the principle of 'poetic justice' (I shake when I say it because all of us have done foolish things and we often suffer in kind). David committed adultery with his neighbour's wife. His oldest son Amon raped one of David's daughters, his own sister. His favourite son, Absalom, laid with his father's wives, and so the story goes. Poetic!

We are going to see the (and look, I'm given to exaggeration and won't change) but anyway, I'll make the statement anyway, we are going to see the most pristine, classic example of divine poetic justice in the bible, in the life of king Joash. He's assassinated by his own servants, now that's the area! We'll come to it in due time, I'm just making sure that you're interested enough to come along on Friday. Because that's what we're going to talk about.

Now let's come back to verse 4 of 2 Chronicles 24. Let's review this man's attitude to the building of the house of God. It says, 'It came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of Yahweh'. As you can see that word 'minded' (5073,3820) is two Hebrew words, 'in leb' or in the heart, Rotherham translates it, 'near the heart' of Joash. So this was something very important to him. He had been instructed by Jehoiada, he had been raised up in the house, and it was very, very close to him. So he set out on the work of building up the house of God. It says that 'they repaired it' if you read on from verse 4, 'he was minded to repair the house (chadash - 2318) means to 'renew or rebuild or refurbish it' and that word occurs again in verse 12 in the word 'repair' in the middle of the verse 12.

In verse 5 we read, '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 you hasten the matter'. This word 'repair' is a different word 'chazaq' (2388) it means 'to make strong', to restore the strength' or 'to give strengthj' and again that word occurs in the word at the end of verse 12, the word 'mend', where it says 'they wrought iron and brass to mend the house of

Yahweh'. Now when you think about this ecclesial terms, b&s, this is how we should think about it. What this king Joash is doing in the vitality of his youth under the tutelage of Jehoiada, is devoting himself to the building up to the refreshing of the house of God, the ecclesia. Now it's a wonderful thing to see the young brethren and sisters, particularly the young brethren, getting in there and doing what they can, after the example of faithful brethren who have gone before them, to build up the house of God. It's important that that happens as you'll see in a moment, because some of us older ones are beginning to tire; it happened to Jehoiada! 'See that ye hasten the matter'; but it says, 'they hastened it not', at the end of verse 5. And there are probably reasons for that, many reasons, and one was the fact that Jehoiada was nearly 130 years old. It does make a difference, doesn't it?

Now then leaving the record in Chronicles, I want you to come back to the companion account in 2 Kings 12 and verse 4, which gives us just a bit more detail about the raising of the money that was required to repair the house. 'Jehoash (Joash) said to the priests, all the money of the dedicated things that are brought into the house of Yahweh even the money of everyone that passeth the account, the money that every man is set at, and all the money that cometh into the man's heart to bring into the house of Yahweh, let the priest take it, etc'. So there are actually 3 principles involved here in the repairing of the temple. It says there that 1. everyone that passeth the account, the word implies, it's the word used actually of the half-shekel in Exodus 30 verse 13, and implies that this is the tribute paid by every Israelite when they were numbered in the census - now this was done rarely in ancient times; but by the time of Christ, it was actually done annually; they collected this half shekel of the sanctuary. Then it says, the money that everyone is set at, the word in the Hebrew 'erek' (6187) means 'to estimate' or 'to evaluate', it is used in relation to the price put by the priest on the redemption of vows; then it says, 'and all the money that cometh into the man's heart, and this refers to a free-will offering. So there are 3 types here of money collected for the work of building the house of God, and they had relationship, b&s, to our building in the house of God, these 3 forms of contribution.

Now I've also put in yellow here, their antithesis! and the reason for that is I'm going to direct your attention in a moment to a verse in 2 Chronicles 24, where we see the antithesis in the activity of Athaliah and her sons. Let's just review these 3 forms, the duty required of every man.

1. Everyone had to pay the half shekel of the sanctuary to indicate their acknowledgement that they needed redemption (silver=redemption). This is submission to obligations based upon our understanding of our need. Everyone has to pay that!
2. The second one had to do with vows, and if you made a vow it meant that you were actually going a step further. So when someone made a vow, they did so deliberately, supposedly fully conscious of the implications of what they were doing, they didn't have to make it; you're better not to make it, if you're not going to pay it, so if you're going to do this, it means you're willing to go a step further. It's the value of dedication over and above duty! You know we all have a basic duty in relation to our redemption, and we all acknowledge amongst other things that one of those duties is to turn up to the

memorials to remember the sacrifice of Christ. You expect to see Christadelphians there if they are in health, you expect to see them at the meeting; if not at their own ecclesia then at another meeting, it's fundamental! you pay the half shekel of the sanctuary.

3. But there are other people who desire to go a step further. and they vow unto Yahweh and give themselves in a course or a direction for the benefit of his house. The antithesis of #1 is the spirit of lawlessness; the antithesis of #2 is deliberately break down what others are trying to build up; the #3 part of money, is offerings freely given from the heart. You know, it's like the people when they hear that \$20,000 is being spent in the ecclesia or in the bible school or for something else and slip a cheque to the treasurer. It happens! This is total dedication to Yahweh and the antithesis of that, is dedication to false gods.

I want you to come back to 2 Chronicles 24 because this is what motivated young king Joash. It comes out, you know things do come out! We go about our business in ecclesial life and every now and then you get a revelation of what is motivating someone. Here it is, (we'll come back to verse 6 in a moment) verse 7, this is part of Joash's speech to Jehoiada his mentor; 'For the sons of Athaliah, he says, that wicked woman had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of Yahweh did they bestow upon Baalim'. That's his motivation, this is why he's actually chastising the ancient Jehoiada; the sons of Athaliah, now these were the older brothers of Ahaziah who ended up being killed by the Arabians and Philistines, 2 Chronicles 21 verse 17, but they are only boys! Ahaziah was 22 years of age when he was killed, his older brothers must have been in their mid 20's. They're only boys really, but she used them to bust up the house of God. He calls her that 'wicked woman', a female wicked doer'(4849) is what the Hebrew means; Rotherham translates it, Athaliah the lawless, and her policy was very simple, encourage and promote lawlessness among God's servants! That was her characteristic and she promoted it. She used the immature starting with her own sons, to desecrate and break up the house of God, the ecclesia. You know, 'let the young do as they please, bring what they like into the ecclesia, it doesn't matter and dedicate the vessels (that is, the individuals who belong to the house of God) and there are all kinds of vessels in the house of God, says Paul to Timothy, they belong to Yahweh, some to honour and some to dishonour; you dedicate them to worldly gods, that's what she did. Now there is the antithesis to what we read in 2 Kings 12. The collection that was made was the opposite to what Athaliah had done; two different policies and that is what imbued Joash. Sadly, it was all to come unstuck.

Come back to verse 6 in 2 Chronicles 24, to the start of Joash's speech to the aging Jehoiada. There's another little exhortation here for us, especially the younger amongst us; '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 Yahweh, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness. For' and he goes on about Athaliah. So have you got this picture in your mind? you have a 128 year old or thereabouts venerable, dignified, rock-like priest whose heart is beating about half the pace it used to beat in his younger

years. Bro. Morris noted that bible school in some things never changes, He's right, every time I come here I see many of the same people that I've been seeing for the last 25 to 30 years; some of them have aged considerably in that time, but they are still interested in building up the house of God; but they're tired, they're worn out, many of them, they would but their body sometimes won't let them. I'm beginning to understand that! and there are younger brethren who can't understand why we can't get things done; 'come on, let's get on with it'. Here we've got it! Jehoiada the father and the mentor, Joash the son and the student. He was nearing 130 and Joash was about 35 years of age. I would like to just reflect on this for a minute! 35 was about the time I felt that I was at the peak of whatever powers I had; physically and mentally, you begin to fade slowly but surely after that; he was worn out and tired was Jehoiada, and Joash was in his prime; Jehoiada's strength was fading and Joash's was young and strong. Jehoiada was looking for rest and release, and Joash was looking to make his mark! Jehoiada had a life of patient endurance, Joash undertakes foolishly, unthinking criticism; he could have done it another way, but he chose this one, but however, it did work out.

Turn the page to 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'. It was perfected the word 'perfected' is the Hebrew word (5927,724) alah-arukah means to ascend to wholeness. 'They set the house', it means to stand itself. The house of God, they used elohim, the house of the mighty ones, and Paul tells us in Timothy, 1 Timothy 3 verse 15, that the house of God is the ecclesia. 'In his state' (4971), it's the same language, isn't it? or as the Hebrew has it, 'through his proportions' and they strengthened it. In Ephesians 4 Paul picks up this language of building in the house of God and he speaks of the ecclesia ascending into the head; that it might be whole from the effect of every joint, that it might grow up into wholeness; that's what they did with the house of God in the times of Jehoiada.

'And the vessels were taken' in verse 14, and brought into the house of God; individuals were brought in, as it were, burnt offerings were made; the principle of sacrifice was instituted and the stability of all this was laid at the feet of Jehoiada. End of verse 14, 'And they offered burnt offerings in the house of Yahweh, continually all the days of Jehoiada.' He died at the age of 130 and they buried him amongst the kings because he had done good in Israel; (he was tired, awfully tired), 'but he had done good in Israel, both toward God and toward His house '.