

A Timely Word from King Joash To Us All

*This article all leads to one main point. It is a point I felt was almost like a prophetic word from the Lord for this time, but you be the judge. In order to really receive the full impact of this will require walking through a bit of confusing history. I know that my head was aching at the end of all this research, **but if one follows through with the context and history, the end point will be really powerful.***

As you read, I encourage you not to give up because of the historical context, and resist the urge to get too academic with it. The very fact that it is difficult to distinguish between Israel and Judah at this time in their history is probably something through which the Spirit can speak to our hearts. That being said, be encouraged to simply press in to what the Spirit is trying to say, even if you don't fully grasp the family connections at first.

A note before we launch: when David was king over Israel, there was one united nation. His son Solomon ruled over the same nation. After Solomon's death, Israel split into two kingdoms: one, called "the kingdom of Israel" in scripture, had a new line of kings; the other, called "the kingdom of Judah" in scripture, maintained the seed of David on the throne. Throughout their histories, Israel got farther and farther from the Lord. Judah, through its many kings, struggled to maintain that heart of David that sought a habitation for God, and a perpetual offering of the Lamb on His altar...

We as believers are now that habitation of God, and our hearts the altar on which we desire to let the true Lamb of God, Jesus Christ who is in us, to give Himself perpetually in sacrifice to the Father...

Will we allow a spirit that wars against the Lamb to infiltrate? Will we truly be good ground for the Seed of God, or will all His pouring into us be for nothing?

Enter Ahab and Jehu...

Our story today will begin with King Ahab and Jehu. Ahab was one in a line of many evil kings in Israel's history. King Ahab "*did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him*" (1 Kings 16:30). As a result, in 1 Kings 21 the word of the Lord comes to Elijah, declaring that the Lord will "*take away [Ahab's]*

posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male..." This same passage also prophesies the death of Jezebel, Ahab's wife.

Fast forward several years: Ahab has died, and his son Jehoram now reigns in Israel. God raises Jehu to power, and commissions him to eliminate all of king Ahab's seed, as Elijah had prophesied in 1 Kings 21. Upon being anointed, Jehu immediately takes off with a company of men to carry out his God-ordained mission.

King Ahab had seventy sons. SEVENTY sons. Jehu made sure they were *all destroyed* (2 Kings 10:1-11). During that time, the king of Judah was a man named Ahaziah. Ahaziah's mother was Athaliah, the daughter of king Ahab and Jezebel. To be clear: Ahaziah's father married Athaliah, the daughter of Israel's evil king Ahab. Even as God was eradicating all trace of Ahab from the earth through Jehu, Ahab's daughter Athaliah, who had a spirit that sought to destroy all that matters to God's heart, had infiltrated David's descendants and the people of Judah – who still maintained any semblance of care for His needs and desires (2 Chronicles 21:6-7).

Ahaziah was also killed by Jehu. In fact, Jehu had Ahaziah and Athaliah's entire extended family in Samaria put to death in his quest to annihilate the seed of Ahab (2 Kings 9:14-10:31). And that is when Athaliah's rage broke loose to destroy the royal seed.

Enter Athaliah...

"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" (2 Chronicles 22:10).

Athaliah was raised under Ahab and Jezebel and received the spirit and mind to destroy the royal seed at all cost. But although Athaliah was raised in Israel in the house of Ahab, it was Jehoram from Judah that married her... placing her in the royal family of the kings of Judah (2 Kings 8:18; 2 Chronicles 21:6). Athaliah had infiltrated David's royal line through marriage, while maintaining a spirit and heart that warred against all that David loved.

Athaliah's husband King Jehoram died when *"the LORD smote him in his intestines with an incurable disease... his intestines fell out by reason of his sickness; so he*

died of severe diseases” (2 Chronicles 21:18-19). His very inward parts had become diseased by another spirit, a spirit of war against the Lamb, instead of the slaughtered Lamb possessing his inward parts, the very thing David cried out for in Psalm 51:6 – and his physical death was the outward manifestation.

Before Jehoram died, the Lord sent the Philistines to carry away all his sons, except one... the youngest, Ahaziah (2 Chronicles 21:17). Perhaps the Lord hoped that this one, the youngest of his brethren like David, who would never have expected to be placed on the throne, could have a lowliness of heart that would return to the Lord, especially in light of all he saw result from his mother’s influence and his father departing from the Lord and from the altar of the true God, and the spirit of that altar, the slain Lamb.

But Jehoram and Athaliah had raised Ahaziah in the ways of Ahab (2 Chronicles 22:3). Athaliah was her son’s wicked counselor, and therefore used him as a tool to control the kingdom, much like Jezebel did with Ahab. So, when Jehu slew her son Ahaziah, Athaliah lost her control and her tool for infiltrating Judah with her spirit that warred against the Lamb.

The same fury and devotion that Jehu had to slay the sons of Ahab, Athaliah had to slay the royal seed of the house of Judah. But her passion to destroy the royal seed at all costs extended even to her own grandchildren in Judah. In fact, it is in the horror of her rage against the royal seed that our real story begins.

Enter Joash, Jehosheba, and Jehoiada...

“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” (2 Chronicles 22:11).

Joash was one of Ahaziah’s children, and therefore Athaliah’s grandson. Athaliah’s desire to destroy the royal seed in the line of David would not spare even her own, therefore she sought the lives of her grandchildren who could be potential heirs to the throne. Ahaziah had a sister named Jehosheba, who was

married to Jehoiada, the head priest in the temple. Jehosheba and Jehoiada rescued Joash – Ahaziah’s youngest son – from Athaliah’s mass slaughter.

For six years, they hid the sole surviving heir to the throne within the Temple.

A Son Sheltering In Place

“And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land” (2 Chronicles 22:12).

For six years, Joash was in hiding, a form of sheltering in place. **Joash was hidden with purpose.** His sheltering-in-place years bore eternal significance in the heart of God. Outwardly Athaliah was reigning on David’s throne and releasing the spirit of Ahab even after the seed of Ahab had been destroyed by Jehu. But concealed deep below the surface and hidden away was Joash, who was of the royal seed (*a type of Christ in you*), forming with purpose. God nurtured and prepared that hidden son through Jehoiada the priest, a man with a heart after God who most assuredly fed Joash the Lamb constantly. What a time those six years must have been for Joash as ordained in the heart of God. A time to feed on the Word, to sit at Jehoiada’s feet and drink in the spirit of the Kingdom from one with a heart after God like David. A time to not be distracted with the constant needs of the kingdom that would one day be upon this young man. Rather, these hidden years provided undistracted time to know the true King, and receive of His Spirit and Life, such as David did before he ruled and became King. **But Joash’s story is not over yet, and time will tell whether he truly partook of the Lamb or not during these years he sheltered in place.**

Jehoiada Heart – A Heart for the Lord, A Heart Like David

“And in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself [just as David encouraged himself in the LORD, 1 Samuel 30:6], and took the captains of hundreds... into covenant with him. And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath said of the sons of David” (2 Chronicles 23:1-3).

It was Jehoiada who gathered the leaders and made a covenant that the king's son – Joash – shall reign, as the Lord had said of the sons of David. Then these leaders and the Levites and all the people of Judah anointed Joash king (2 Chronicles 23:11). After that, Jehoiada and the captains slew Athaliah (2 Chronicles 22:14-15).

*“And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, **that they should be the Lord's people**. Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, **to offer the burnt offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David**” (2 Chronicles 23:16, 18).*

As soon as Athaliah is slain, Jehoiada makes a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between king Joash, that they should “BE THE LORD’S” (2 Chronicles 23:16). His first move out from under the tyranny of Athaliah and under the new child-king Joash is to covenant himself, all the people, and the king to BE THE LORD’S! And immediately after that, Jehoiada sets up worship to the Lord through offering burnt offerings. Oh, how beautiful this passage is, as we hear Jehoiada instructing the people to offer according to the law of Moses, **but to do it with a heart of love for God as ordained by David**, “with rejoicing and singing”! Jehoiada, like David, was a man who had the spirit of the thing, and a heart for God.

One Great Act

*“And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord. 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 not. 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?”
(2 Chronicles 24:4-6)*

“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. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada” (2 Chronicles 24:12,14).

There is one instance in the scriptures, and only one, that describes Joash doing something out from his own initiative and desire, and that is to repair the temple (2 Chronicles 24:12-14). The account of this in 2 Chronicles 24:6 almost sounds as if Joash is questioning Jehoiada’s heart when he inquires of him concerning raising funds for the repairs: *“Why hast thou not required of the Levites...”* If someone only judged by this one isolated incident, they might assume that Joash truly emerged from sheltering in place as one filled and ready to minister to the Lord as David did all the days of his life.

Yet this is not so with Joash. In fact, when Jehoiada died, Joash left the Lord. Rather, if you search these scriptures, you will see the heart for God that is in Jehoiada in 2 Chronicles 24:14, *“And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually **all the days of Jehoiada.**”* Yes, Joash did something hugely significant, but look who is making burnt offerings at the end of it... Jehoiada. In fact, the scripture declares that ALL the days of Jehoiada’s life they were offering burnt offerings in the Lord’s house CONTINUALLY! This is a man who wants to LOVE ON THE LORD all the time by always offering up the Lamb to Him. Joash repaired the house, but Jehoiada filled it with the slaughtered Lamb ascending to God as a sweet savor!

NO LAMB IN HIS OWN HOUSE

“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.

*And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord **all the days of Jehoiada** the priest” (2 Chronicles 24:1-2).*

One might consider that, since Joash was one year old, Jehoiada’s heart for the Lord had been carrying him almost his whole life. God gave such a counselor to Joash for a begetting of spirit and kind after the nature of God the true King. *We now understand that spirit to be Christ in us in His Lamb nature. **Yet, how easy it can be to have that “royal seed which is Christ” in us, while passively allowing someone else’s heart for God to carry us instead of the Lamb that is within.***

Even as Ahab, and Jezebel had imparted the spirit of their kingdom into Athaliah, Jehoiada had spent much of his life trying to impart the things of God's heart into Joash. In a certain sense, Joash was "sheltering in place" in the Temple, and the spiritual father that was daily feeding Joash the Lamb was Jehoiada. The question is: was Joash partaking of the Lamb or just hearing great messages from Jehoiada? God gave Joash six years to immerse and partake and grow before being sent forth to rule. Even after that time of hidden preparation, God graciously allowed Jehoiada to counsel and impart into Joash for most of his 40 year reign, keeping Jehoiada alive to the age 130 years (2 Chronicles 24:15).

No more Jehoiada, No more Lamb

"Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king [Joash]. Then the king hearkened unto them. 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 24:17-18).

While Jehoiada was alive, Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord, but once Jehoiada died, Joash hearkened to wicked counselors and left the Lord and worshipped idols. **The context of this can be very impactful if one considers the depth of influence Jehoiada should have had on Joash, and did not.** From one year old to the final years of his forty-year reign, Joash had constant input from Jehoiada. God kept Jehoiada alive well past his normal life span to be able to continue to bring the influence of the Lord that was in Jehoiada to Joash. But Jehoiada's influence during the six years of sheltering-in-place and over thirty years of Joash's reign never brought forth the spirit of the Lamb and His Kingdom. **The burnt offering was continually ascending while Jehoiada was alive, making the Lamb more than a teaching but a fragrant spirit of selfless giving... yet Joash never took that spirit in beyond practical counsel and sermon notes.**

God Calls...

*"Yet he sent prophets to them [Joash and other leaders], to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. 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" (2 Chronicles 24:19-20).*

“And they conspired against [Zechariah], and stoned him with stones **at the commandment of the king** in the court of the house of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 24:21).

Despite Joash’s rejection and rebellion, God cries out to Joash to return to Him. At first the Lord sent his prophets, and Joash stood with his peers and testified against the prophets and would not give ear to the Lord. At this point, God had received rejection after rejection from Joash, but instead of becoming silent and no longer reaching out to him, God sent JEHOIADA’S SON Zechariah. God chose someone that had the potential to prick Joash’s heart with love for the man who fathered him all the days of his life. But rather than being deeply moved by God sending Jehoiada’s son, Joash commanded that he be stoned to death in the court of the Lord’s own house. Joash, whose life was spared in the house of the Lord.

“Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son” (2 Chronicles 24:22).

Joash, whose life was spared by this man and his wife.

Joash, who was raised as a son by this man who gave his life to nurture him in the Lamb.

Joash, whose main legacy as king was based on the counsel of this one man.

Joash, who was fed with constant powerful sermons straight from God shared by this man.

Joash, rejects the spirit of all his nurturing and sermons and leaves the Lord.

Joash murders Jehoiada’s son.

One might wonder what the difference is between passively receiving the care, teachings, and admonition of the Lord and actively partaking of the Lamb with a free will and open heart. I believe Joash’s life story can clearly show us the difference. Had Joash embraced his time of sheltering in place, and then remained in a spirit and heart to partake and receive of all Jehoiada imparted, his story would have had a much different end.

At The End...

“Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the many sermons preached to Joash, 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 24:27).

Joash’s life ended with Judah being conquered by the Syrians because of their forsaking of the Lord (2 Chronicles 24:23-24). After that, Joash became very diseased, and then his own servants conspired against him and slew him on his bed (2 Chronicles 24:25). We find in 2 Chronicles 24:27 that Joash’s final testimony was concerning these three things: 1) The story of his sons; 2) The many great sermons that were preached to him; 3) The repairing of the house of God.

Joash was a man who experienced incredibly powerful and dramatic moves of God and attacks by the enemy in his youth. He lived through history that most people only read about in books. He experienced God-filled revivals and powerful worship in the form of burnt offerings. He heard incredible sermons all the days of his life. He was given opportunity to bring change and influence to a nation that affected the world by the manner in which he served the Lord and shared God’s Life with the people.

Yet somehow Joash went through all that unchanged.

He let Jehoiada carry it all for him.

He allowed a lifetime of mighty God-given sermons to fall into fallow ground.

He resisted the influence of the altars that were ignited and ascending every moment of his life while Jehoiada was alive.

In fact, he remained so untouched on the inside that he was completely open to evil counsel and idol worship. His heart was so hard and unformed that he murdered the son of his spiritual father.

It can be easy to assume that Joash was just a “bad-egg” and “thank God I would never be like that.” But in my opinion, apart from the Lamb Himself formed in me, my heart is deceitfully wicked beyond what I can know. I need the Lamb. I need to receive the Word of the Cross. I need to receive the spirit of everything God is sharing with us right now. I need to be changed deep inside and I need that change to be more of Jesus and less of me. I need to hear what the Spirit is crying out

through the prophets and open my heart and bow my knees. I need the Lamb, every day, more than a teaching but as my Life. Oh Lord, may Joash's story move my heart in a way that opens me more to You and rejects all passivity. May I truly and earnestly shelter in place for the Lamb. Amen.