

2 Kings Chapter 12

2 Kings 12:1 "In the seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name [was] Zibiah of Beer-sheba."

So that he reigned twenty one or twenty two years contemporary with Jehu's reign, for Jehu reigned twenty eight years.

"And forty years reigned he in Jerusalem": The same number of years David and Solomon reigned.

"And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba": A city in the tribe of Simeon, in the extreme part of the land of Canaan southward. Her name in the Chaldee dialect is Tabitha, the same with Dorcas in Greek (Acts 9:36).

In the last lesson, we saw the crowning of the 7 year old son of Ahaziah as king. He had been hidden away from the time he was a baby, until he was 7. The wicked queen Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, had ruled from her son's death, after she had all of his descendants killed. Only Jehoash survived. Jehu had killed all the descendants of Ahab and Jezebel in Israel, and had destroyed the worship of Baal. In his 7th year to reign over the ten tribes of Israel, Jehoash (Joash) began to reign in Judah. The reign of Joash was to last 40 years. At first, he was a God fearing king.

2 Kings 12:2 "And Jehoash did [that which was] right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him."

The high "priest, Jehoiada," was Jehoash's counselor and spiritual advisor. Despite the reform during Joash's kingship, it appears that the young king's religious experience was heavily dependent upon the high priest and was decidedly less than a full commitment to the Lord (2 Chron. 24:2). After Jehoiada's death, "Jehoash" found new counselors and friends who turned his heart away from God, so much so that he did not intervene when his new associates put to death Zechariah, Jehoiada's son, for his faith (2 Chron. 24:17-22). Faith must be personal, not just "official."

Now we see why he did right in the sight of the LORD. He had lived 7 of his formative years in the temple with Jehoiada, the high priest. It seems, the high priest continued to guide him after he became king, and until the death of the high priest.

2 Kings 12:3 "But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places."

"The high places" may refer to Baalism (1 Kings 3:2-4; 14:23; 2 Chron. 24: 17-19, 24), or to local sanctuaries. These sites violated the divine mandate of a single sanctuary (Deut. 12:2-7, 13-14). Because Israel had only one God, He was to be worshiped in only one Sanctuary. As with

most kings of Judah, Joash failed to remove these places of worship where, contrary to the Mosaic Law, the people sacrificed and burned incense to the Lord.

The LORD was worshipped in the high places instead of false gods, so it was not as bad as the worship of Baal and the other false gods. God did want them to worship in the temple in Jerusalem, but from time to time that had been impossible. They had gotten into the habit of worshipping in the high places, and it was hard to break the habit.

Verses 4-16: The repair of the temple was a matter of some urgency due to the destructive acts in Athaliah's day (2 Chron. 24:7).

God blessed and honored the king's efforts to put God's house in proper order and "repair ... the house".

2 Kings 12:4 "And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, [even] the money of every one that passeth [the account], the money that every man is set at, [and] all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD,"

Being minded or having it in his heart, to repair the temple (as in 2 Chron. 24:4). Not only because it was the sanctuary of the Lord, though that chiefly, but because it had been a sanctuary to him, where he was hid and preserved six years.

"All the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the Lord": Or rather, "that is to be brought", as De Dieu, and others render it, the particulars of which follow.

"Even the money of everyone that passeth the account": Or that passes among them that are numbered (as in Exodus 30:13). That were upwards of twenty years of age, and bound to pay the half shekel for the ransom of their souls. And it is called the collection or burden Moses laid on them in the wilderness (2 Chron. 24:6).

"The money that every man is set at": The price the priest set upon or estimated a man at, or whomsoever that belonged to him, that he devoted to the Lord, which by the law he was bound to pay for his redemption, and, till that was done, he and they were not his, but the Lord's (of which see Lev.27:1). And here the Targum calls it, the money of the redemption of souls, which is the gift of a man for the redemption of his soul.

"And all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the Lord": Vows and freewill offerings made of their own accord.

(See 2 Chron. 24:5-14).

2 Kings 12:5 "Let the priests take [it] to them, every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found."

“His acquaintance”: This person would be a friend of the priest who either gave offerings or collected the offerings for the priest. However, some interpret the Hebrew term to mean “treasurer.” This understanding views the individual as a member of the temple personnel who assisted the priest with the valuation of sacrifices and offerings brought to the temple.

“Repair the breaches of the house”: During the reign of Athaliah, the temple had suffered major damages and temple articles had been taken for use in the temple of Baal (2 Chron. 24:7). Joash ordered the priest to channel the temple offerings to fund the needed repairs. This was to be in addition to the normal temple expenses.

During the reign of the wicked Queen Athaliah, the breaches had been made and they had never been repaired. The priests seemed not to have taken the initiative in re-building, and Joash thought this should be done. Even though the priests had great influence over him, they still did not have control of him. He was not like a puppet on a string. He had ideas of his own, and he wanted them carried out. The money that came into the house of the LORD was to be used for many purposes at the temple, one of which was the support of the priests. They were keeping all the money and not repairing the breaches.

2 Kings 12:6 "But it was [so, that] in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house."

“Three and twentieth year”: Ca. 813 B.C. Judah seems to have used the non-accession-year system during the reigns of Athaliah and Joash (see note on 13:1), which did not count the first year of the reign but began with the second. This is how we count ages today, starting with the beginning of the second year as one. Joash was 29 years of age.

They seemed to be using the money for everything else, except fixing the breaches in the wall. After he had reigned 23 years, they still had not made the repairs he had told them to. This upset Jehoash.

Verses 7-11: A lagging work schedule caused the “king” to take a more direct hand in matters. The Jehoash “chest” made the offering process more visible and the money was more efficiently put into the hands of those responsible for the repairs. The people responded well (2 Chron. 24:10), and gave freely and willingly (Exodus 25:2).

The plan of Joash did not work. Either the revenue from these sources was inadequate to support the priests and Levites and also to pay for the temple repairs, or the priests for some unknown reason would not fund the temple repairs. Therefore, the priests no longer received the offerings from the people, nor did they fund the temple repairs from the income they had already received.

2 Kings 12:7 "Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the [other] priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no [more] money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house."

The common priests, Jehoiada being high priest.

"And said unto them, why repair ye not the breaches of the house?" In which they appeared to him very dilatory. The reason might be, the people were not forward to pay in their money, and they might not choose to begin the repairs until they had got it all in, or at least what was sufficient to carry them through them.

"Now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance": Suspecting that what they had received they kept for their own use.

"But deliver it for the breaches of the house": Into other hands for that use, and so dismissed them at once from collecting the money, and being concerned in the repairs of the temple.

It appeared that plenty of money had come in for the project, but they had just never begun repairing the breaches of the house. Somehow something had to change to get this project under way. Instead of the money being distributed out from now on, it would be collected and turned over for repairs.

2 Kings 12:8 "And the priests consented to receive no [more] money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house."

And delivered up what they had.

"Neither to repair the breaches of the house": Being very willing to be stop both services, and especially since they seemed to be suspected.

I do not see a reprimand of the priests by the king. It appears, that he talked to them, and they agreed that the money taken in must, must first go to fixing the breaches in the house.

Verses 9-16: Joash instituted a new plan. First, a single collection box was to receive all incoming offerings. When the chest was full, only the royal secretary and High-Priest would be authorized to empty it. Second, from the funds thus generated, men were hired to supervise and pay the carpenters, builders, masons, and stonecutters who worked on the temple repairs. The men involved were so trustworthy that no accounting was taken of them (verse 15).

2 Kings 12:9 "But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money [that was] brought into the house of the LORD."

"Priests that kept the door": These were priests who normally screened the people to keep unclean worshipers from entering the temple (25:18; Jer. 52:24). These priests took the offerings from the worshipers, who then personally watched the priest drop them into the chest.

Now, we see a positive thing done by the high priest. He prepared a chest for their offerings. The chest was near the altar. I would believe it to be near the brazen altar, since it was near the entrance to the house of the LORD. They would hand their tithes and offerings to the priests on duty, and they would put it in the chest.

2 Kings 12:10 "And it was [so], when they saw that [there was] much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the LORD."

Which might easily be guessed at by the number of the people which contributed.

"That the king's and the high priest came up": To the temple; the high priest did not choose to come alone, lest he should be suspected, but to have the king's secretary with him, that the money might be taken out of the chest, and told in the presence of them both: In (2 Chronicles 24:11), instead of the "high priest", it is the "high priest's officer", which the Targum there calls the Sagan of the high priest, or his deputy. Who, perhaps, attended when the high priest could not.

"And they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the Lord": That is, they poured the money out of the chest, or emptied it (as in 2 Chron. 24:11), and counted it, and very likely set down the sum in writing, and put it up in bags, very probably sealed.

The high priest (Jehoiada), and the king's scribe counted the money together and made a record of it, so everyone would be pleased.

2 Kings 12:11 "And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD,"

Who were appointed overseers of the workmen employed in the repairs of the temple. Which overseers were laymen, and not priests, they being discharged from any concern in the repairs. This money "told", Kimchi interprets of its being coined; he supposes money coined and uncoined bullion to be brought, which was put in separate bags. And that, which was not coined, they coined it before they delivered it to the overseers to pay the workmen with.

"And they laid it out to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house of the Lord": Paid them with it, some that wrought in cutting the timber, and others in building with it.

As soon as there was quite a bit of money in the chest, and they had counted it and recorded it, they hired carpenters and other builders to go to work on the breaches in the wall.

2 Kings 12:12 "And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair [it]."

Which they cut out of the mountain, and the masons repaired the stone walls with.

"And to buy timber": Felled in Lebanon.

"And hewed stone": Fitted for building with.

"To repair the breaches of the house of the Lord": Where both timber and stone were wanting.

"And for all that was laid out for the house to repair it": In whatsoever else it needed, as iron and brass to mend it (2 Chron. 24:12).

It seemed to take all of the money they could collect for all of the laborers, and the materials used for building.

2 Kings 12:13 "Howbeit there were not made for the house of the LORD bowls of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money [that was] brought into the house of the LORD:"

Either to hold the blood of the sacrifices, or the drink offerings of wine.

"Snuffers": To trim the lamps; or, as Jarchi and other writers, both Jewish and Christian, musical instruments.

"Basins": Vessels to sprinkle the blood with, as the word signifies.

"Trumpets": Silver ones, to call the assembly, blow over the sacrifices, etc.

"Any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver": For any other use: these were not made.

"Of the money that was brought into the house of the Lord": Yet, (in 2 Chron. 24:14), it is said they were, which is to be reconciled thus. They did not make any of those things at first, until the house was repaired, and the charges of it defrayed. And then of what remained they made vessels for the house, which were wanting, that Athaliah had bestowed on Baalim (2 Chron. 24:7).

In the time of Solomon, all of these things had been in the temple. In fact, there was so much gold used that even the inside walls were covered with gold. The temple had been robbed since then. Rehoboam had used many of these things to buy off a neighboring king. Some of the evil kings, and the evil queen, had not helped keep the temple up. It seemed that funds were short now, and no funds had been set aside to buy these things for use in the temple. The most urgent thing at the moment, was to repair the breaches in the wall.

2 Kings 12:14 "But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD."

They took care that the workmen should first be paid for the repairs of the temple.

The offerings they took in were just enough to pay the workmen.

2 Kings 12:15 "Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully."

That is, the king's secretary and the high priest, or his officer, never called to account the overseers of the workmen, to whom they committed the money to pay them with. And never examined how they laid it out, and for what.

"For they dealt faithfully": They saw they acted such an honest and upright part, and such a high opinion had they of them, that they never examined their accounts, or called for their bills.

There was not any treachery going on pertaining to the money. It was being properly distributed among the workers. The high priest was assured they were dealing fairly.

2 Kings 12:16 "The trespass money and sin money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'."

"Trespass money and sin money": The income from these offerings was distinct from the income mentioned in verse 4 and so was not used in the repair of the temple, but remained the property of the priests (see Lev. 4:1 – 6:7). The temple repairs did not deprive the priests of their income (Lev. 7:7).

The trespass and the sin money was the living of the priests'. They had no other income, only the money deposited in the chest was being used for the repairs.

Verses 17-20: The renewed Aramean pressure under "Hazael" was severe, including not only attacks against Jehoahaz and the northern kingdom (13:1-3), but also the Philistine coast. Even "Jerusalem" came under dire threat. Because Joash's faith had become apostate after Jehoiada's death, God used Hazael to attempt to bring Joash and Judah to repentance (2 Chron. 24:23-24). Joash became wounded in the battle (2 Chron. 24:25), and brought Hazael off with a bribe in order to deliver Jerusalem.

Joash's career did not end as grandly as it began. Once a God-fearing young ruler, he died a disappointment. The writer says only that Joash traded treasure from the Lord's temple to rescue Jerusalem from the attack by Hazael, "king of Syria". But (2 Chron. 24:17-27), says he allowed idol worship and even killed his own son. The Lord allowed the Aramean army to attack Jerusalem as an act of judgment upon His people for forsaking Him (2 Chron. 24:24).

2 Kings 12:17 "Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem."

"Hazael" (see notes on 8:8-15).

"Gath": One of the 5 major Philistine cities (1 Sam. 5:8), located about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem. Gath had previously belonged to Judah (2 Chron. 11:8).

It appears, that the Scripture, above, is a break away from (verse 16). It happens much later. It appears that after the breach was fixed, the priests set about putting the vessels in the temple back as they had been.

2 Chronicles 24:14 "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."

The high priest Jehoiada died before the happening (in verse 17 above).

2 Chronicles 24:15 "But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; a hundred and thirty years old [was he] when he died."

Hazael was the wicked king of Syria. He would take anyone he could.

2 Kings 12:18 "And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold [that was] found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent [it] to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem."

“All the hallowed things”: When Joash’s army was defeated by Hazael and his leading men killed (2 Chron. 24:23-24), he averted further attacks against Jerusalem by sending tribute to the king of Syria. This tribute included gifts donated to the temple in Jerusalem by kings of Judah (1 Kings 15:15, 18).

Fear can cause a person to do terrible things. Jehoash does not have Jehoiada to ask about these things, and makes a bad mistake. The things in the temple belong to God, not to Jehoash. He takes the hallowed things in the temple and buys off the king of Syria. It appears there had been a battle, where many lives had been lost. Jehoash not only gave away the treasures of the temple, but of his own palace as well.

2 Kings 12:19 "And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, [are] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"

“Acts of Joash”: A more complete account of the reign of Joash is found (in 2 Chron. 22:10 – 24:27).

The record book that is mentioned so many times before, is mentioned, again, as where the rest of his exploits are recorded.

2 Kings 12:20 "And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Mollo, which goeth down to Silla."

“A conspiracy”: Some of the officials of Joash conspired against him because he had killed the High-Priest Zechariah, the son of the priest Jehoiada (2 Chron. 24:20-22).

“House of Millo”: Probably a house built on a landfill north of David’s city of Jerusalem and south of the temple mount (2 Chron. 24:25).

A spiritually defeated Joash died in a palace intrigue and was excluded from the royal burial chambers (2 Chron. 24:25).

Joash had been a good king in the beginning. It seemed, as long as he had Jehoiada to guide him, he did just fine. He had become evil after the death of Jehoiada. Millo was a fortress, he went to for safety. His own commanders killed him.

2 Kings 12:21 "For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead."

The variation between the names of the assassins given here and those (in 2 Chronicles 24:26), are merely minor alterations, easily reconcilable on the basis of known manuscript evidence, and writing and spelling practices.

“Amaziah” (see 14:1-22), for the reign of Amaziah.

He was buried in the city of David, not necessarily in the same tomb area. We will find, in a later lesson that Amaziah becomes king, when he kills his dad's murderers. "Amaziah" means whom Jehovah strengthens. We are not told exactly why they killed Joash only that they did. Probably it was to seize power, since he was a very sick man. He reigned 40 years and was 47 when he died. Before we begin the questions, we must realize again, that Joash and Jehoash is the same person.

2 Kings Chapter 12 Questions

1. When did Jehoash begin to reign?
2. How many years did he reign?
3. Where did he reign?
4. Jehoash did that which was _____ in the sight of the LORD.
5. How long did he do that?
6. What was one thing that still went on in worship, which did not please God?
7. Why did they do that, with the temple available?

8. What did Jehoash say to do with the money offerings?
9. Who had made the breaches in the walls?
10. Who had great influence over Joash?
11. How long had Joash been reigning, and the breaches were still not repaired?
12. What question did Jehoash ask them about the breaches?
13. What did the priests consent to do about the money?
14. What did Jehoiada do, to keep the money for the building project?
15. Who counted and recorded the money?
16. Who was the money given to?
17. Why were there no vessels made for service in the temple?
18. Why did they not question the use of the money?
19. Who did the trespass money and the sin money belong to?
20. Who fought against Gath, and took it?
21. Where did he turn to next?
22. How did Joash keep him away from Jerusalem?
23. What had caused Joash to do this?
24. Who killed Joash?
25. Who reigned in his stead?
26. How old was Joash, when he died?