

2 Kings 11-13a – Chapter Study

INTRO

We start out our study tonight with a juicy piece of royal intrigue.

It's a story of cruelty, conspiracy & corruption at the highest levels of government.

V. JEHOASH/JOASH (JUDAH) 11-12

A. Athaliah's Reign of Terror 11:1-3

¹ When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs.

Ahaziah had been king of Israel.

But remember, he was the grandson of Ahab & Jezebel, the hideously wicked king & queen of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Their daughter *Athaliah* had married King Jehoram of Judah.

Their son Ahaziah became king when Jehoram died & he continued the wicked practices of both his parents & grandparents → meaning he installed the abominable worship of Baal.

Because Ahaziah was related by blood to the king of Israel, he joined him in a campaign to retake land the Syrians had taken from Israel east of the Jordan.

But during the campaign, a military coup staged by Jehu, one of Israel's commanders, overthrew Jehoram, the king of Israel.

Through the prophet Elisha, word was sent by God to Jehu telling him to take the throne and to clear the land of all Ahab's descendants.

So he executed both Jehoram of Israel & Ahaziah of Judah.

When word reached Athaliah the Queen Mother that her son the king was dead, she made quick moves to secure the throne herself.

She staged a coup & sent out her servants to kill anyone with a claim to the throne.

This was one nasty gal!

² But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons *who were* being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. ³ So he was hidden with her in the house of the LORD for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Joash is the short form of Jehoash. He was just an infant when his father died & his grandmother Athaliah made her power grab.

Word hadn't reached her yet of the birth of this grandson.

The baby was so small, Joash's sister, was able to steal away with him.

She took refuge in the temple with the priests loyal to God. 6 years passed.

B. Jehoash Crowned 11:4-12

⁴ In the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds—of the bodyguards and the escorts—and brought them into the house of the LORD to him. And he made a covenant with

them and took an oath from them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son.

Jehoiada was the high priest & carried considerable political weight in Jerusalem.

After 6 years of the wicked Athaliah's reign, the people had had enough.

When Jehoiada knew the time was right, Chronicles tells us he quietly called for *all* the leaders of the land to meet with him.

When they assembled, he brought out & presented 7 year old Joash.

⁵ Then he commanded them, saying, "This *is* what you shall do: One-third of you who come on duty on the Sabbath shall be keeping watch over the king's house, ⁶ one-third *shall be* at the gate of Sur, and one-third at the gate behind the escorts. You shall keep the watch of the house, lest it be broken down. ⁷ The two contingents of you who go off duty on the Sabbath shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD for the king. ⁸ But you shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes within range, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king as he goes out and as he comes in."

Jehoiada's plan was to officially crown Joash as king on a day when the City would be busy, probably on a feast day.

Not knowing who would be loyal to Joash & who would support Athaliah,

Jehoiada planned for a large number of troops to protect him.

He stationed them at the 3 key places where any opposition was likely to gather; at the palace, at the main gate leading into the temple, and at the gate leading to the military headquarters.

The troops that would just be getting off duty were to come right on in to the temple itself and form a cordon around Joash.

They were to warn anyone who approached not to come near & if they did, they were to be slain.

⁹ So the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each of them took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. ¹⁰ And the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and shields which *had belonged to King David*, that were in the temple of the LORD.

These were more ceremonial than battle-grade but would still do just fine if it came to violence.

¹¹ Then the escorts stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, all around the king, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, by the altar and the house. ¹² And he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and *gave him* the Testimony; they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

The "Testimony" Jehoiada gave Joash was a copy of the Law of Moses.

This gives us an idea of what this revolt was about.

It was staged by people who recognized Athaliah's reign was contrary to God's

will and that He was calling them to do what they could to right things.
Athaliah's reign as queen was illegal & unjust.
Jehoiada's conspiracy to return the throne to the rightful king was motivated by his loyalty to God.

That he gave Joash a copy of the Law of Moses proves he understood that the *real legitimacy* of Judah's king comes from his keeping God's Word.

C. Jehoiada's Reforms 11:13-21

13 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the escorts and the people, she came to the people in the temple of the LORD. 14 When she looked, there was the king standing by a pillar according to custom; and the leaders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Athaliah tore her clothes and cried out, "Treason! Treason!"

This was a last desperate attempt to hang on to power.

The scene laid out before her was crystal clear – the *real leaders* of Jerusalem & Judah had chosen someone else to rule.

So she played her last card & cried out the one word that just might swing the tide of public support her way.

Treason was a crime punishable by immediate death.

When she cried it out – what followed would tell her instantly if she had a chance or not.

As she immediately realized – her power was totally gone. No one came to her aid.

15 And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the army, and said to them, "Take her outside under guard, and slay with the sword whoever follows her." For the priest had said, "Do not let her be killed in the house of the LORD." 16 So they seized her; and she went by way of the horses' entrance into the king's house, and there she was killed.

No one else is mentioned as dying with her. Everyone forsook her in the end.

Which gives us a good idea of what kind of a person she really was.

17 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people, that they should be the LORD's people, and also between the king and the people.

It's obvious the real mover behind all this was Jehoiada.

I love the way it's recorded for us here.

He first called the people to return to their covenant with God.

THEN, he reiterated the terms of the relationship between the king & the people.

In other words, their relationship with God came first, then their social & civil relationships between one another flowed from that.

The role of government is to regulate & protect social relationships.

Now, a government can draw its wisdom to rule from God or from man.

Any government that draws its wisdom from man is doomed to become corrupt & abusive of its power.

And any government that *is* abusive of its power ISN'T operating by divine

guidance.

The proof the revival Jehoiada began was legit is found in v. 18 -

18 And all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal, and tore it down. They thoroughly broke in pieces its altars and images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.

Everyone knew the worship of Baal was a terrible wrong which they went to correct right now!

But at the same time they tore down Baal, they renewed their devotion to Yahweh by reinstalling His temple with the staff it needed to run properly.

19 Then he took the captains of hundreds, the bodyguards, the escorts, and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and went by way of the gate of the escorts to the king's house. Then he sat on the throne of the kings. 20 So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword *in* the king's house. 21 Jehoash was seven years old when he became king.

While Joash was king, the real influence was being provided by the high priest Jehoiada.

D. Jehoash Rules 12

1. A good king 12:1-3

1 In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba.

2 Jehoash did *what* was right in the sight of the LORD all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

We just cannot underestimate the influence we can have on another person's life – or how another person may influence ours.

You know, as we head into another presidential campaign, we're being bombarded by the various candidate's positions.

Some make a claim to religious faith, while others make none.

We've had a few presidents recently who've claimed to be believers.

But when you consider their decisions & positions & who they surround themselves with as trusted advisors, it makes you wonder what they're ***thinking***.

Many times their positions on issues don't line up with what the Word of God makes so clear.

One of the things I like to do when evaluating a candidate is to find out who's on his/her advisory board.

Who & what is influencing them?

Joash did really well when Jehoiada was at his side, helping him look at things from the divine perspective.

When Jehoiada left the scene, Joash drifted away from that good start.

3 But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

Remember that the high places weren't pagan worship centers so much as local places where people went to sacrifice to God, even though technically, they were only supposed to do that at the temple in Jerusalem.

Even Jehoiada didn't press to eradicate this practice because it was so deeply embedded it seemed impossible.

"And besides," he probably reasoned, "they *are* worshipping Yahweh."

In reality, what we'll see later is that these high places were the spiritual seed bed that brought about Judah's ruin.

They may have seemed harmless, but they weren't.

For they allowed the people to worship God *as they wanted to* instead of how He said to.

And this began the process of them losing sight of the true & living God.

They began to worship a god of their own imagination.

God said the people were to go to the temple to offer their sacrifices because He wanted them to come to the place where the priests would teach them His word and their ideas about Him would be true ones.

By worshiping at whatever hill near their city, they were losing sight of the real God.

And this is what happens to people who reject worship at a bible teaching church & justify their absence by saying they can worship God while hiking, or shopping, or sunbathing.

We ought to worship God 24/7 – no matter where we are or what we're doing.

But to neglect or reject gathering with other believers to worship God and give attention to the study of His word is a formula for spiritual disaster.

You know, I want to say a brief word about the home-church movement that's growing rapidly across the country.

More & more people are bailing on the local church to become a part of home & small groups based in homes, restaurants, where ever.

There's little structure to these groups. They're just groups of people who meet regularly but informally to encourage one another in the walk.

It's very organic, simple, warm – fun; at first.

Advocates of the home church movement say that it's what the early church did.

Well, yes & no!

The early church *did* meet in homes, but at first they also met all together at the temple to listen to the apostles teach on the life of Jesus.

When the church began to spread, of course they in homes – where else were they going to?

Acts tells us when they could all meet together in a rented hall or in a field, they did.

The reason the early church was primarily meeting in homes was because there was little else for them to use.

But when larger places became available they used them.

There was no consciousness among those early Christians that they were a home-church ministry.

That's simply absurd.

Listen history tells us as soon as they were able to, they secured what facilities

they could and all met together.

We shouldn't see the assembling of the local church as an either/or issue. It's both as Acts 2 makes clear.

We meet all together for the teaching of the Word and corporate worship, then we gather in smaller groups to share out lives and collectively use our gifts.

2. Repairing the temple 12:4-16

⁴ And Jehoash [Joash] said to the priests, "All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the LORD—each man's census money, each man's assessment money—and all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the LORD, ⁵ let the priests take *it* themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the damages of the temple, wherever any dilapidation is found."

This was Solomon's glorious temple we're talking about.

After so many years, it had fallen into neglect & disrepair.

The gifts people had been making to the temple had been commandeered by the corrupt kings & used for other purposes.

So there was simply nothing budgeted for upkeep.

Joash returned the money to its rightful use and commanded the priests to get to work on the repairs.

They didn't

⁶ Now it was so, by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, *that* the priests had not repaired the damages of the temple.

Though Joash had given the order nothing got done.

The priests were using the money given to the temple for the current service & didn't think there was enough to fund repairs.

So Joash came up with a plan to fund the work.

⁷ So King Jehoash called Jehoiada the priest and the *other* priests, and said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damages of the temple? Now therefore, do not take *more* money from your constituency, but deliver it for repairing the damages of the temple."⁸ ⁸ And the priests agreed that they would neither receive *more* money from the people, nor repair the damages of the temple.

Since the priests didn't think they could do the job, Joash decided to delegate the work to others.

⁹ Then Jehoiada the priest

More than likely at the suggestion of the king.

took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of the LORD; and the priests who kept the door put there all the money brought into the house of the LORD. ¹⁰ So it was, whenever they saw that *there was* much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up and put it in bags, and counted the money that was found in the house of the LORD. ¹¹ Then they gave the money, which had been

apportioned, into the hands of those who did the work, who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; and they paid it out to the carpenters and builders who worked on the house of the LORD, ¹² and to masons and stonecutters, and for buying timber and hewn stone, to repair the damage of the house of the LORD, and for all that was paid out to repair the temple. ¹³ However there were not made for the house of the LORD basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling-bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or articles of silver, from the money brought into the house of the LORD. ¹⁴ But they gave that to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it. ¹⁵ Moreover they did not require an account from the men into whose hand they delivered the money to be paid to workmen, for they dealt faithfully.

Joash set up a special little bureaucracy to gather, count and commission the temple restoration project.

Now, when the people realized that their gifts were going to be used only for this purpose, they gave in good measure to help restore the temple.

¹⁶ The money from the trespass offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD. It belonged to the priests.

That source of revenue was not part of the restoration project.

It continued to be used for the support of the priests.

3. Buying Hazel off 12:17-18

¹⁷ Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it;

This took place in Joash's later years.

After Jehoiada died, Joash became a terrible apostate & killed Jehoiada's son who dared to rebuke him.

Judah grew weak, which is ever dangerous in a world filled with hungry predator nations like the Syrians.

Gath is over on the Med coast, the opposite side of Israel from where Syria is.

That they could march an army right through the middle of Israel without sweat indicates how weak the northern kingdom had become.

Gath was one of the major Philistines cities that Judah had conquered.

When Israel proved no match for Hazael's might, he decided to try his luck with Judah.

Gath fell so easily, he decided to take a stab at the heart of Judah –Jerusalem.

then Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. ¹⁸ And Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred things that his fathers, Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things, and all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and in the king's house, and sent *them* to Hazael king of Syria. Then he went away from Jerusalem.

Chronicles tells us Hazael's forces attacked & entered Jerusalem where they began slaying the leaders.

Joash quickly offered a ransom of all the gold & silver he could quickly gather.
That was enough to move Hazael to recall his rampaging troops.

4. Death of Jehoash 12:19-21

¹⁹ Now 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? ²⁰ And his servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of the Millo, which goes down to Silla. ²¹ For Jozachar the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, struck him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David. Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

Chronicles tells us when the Syrians attacked Jerusalem, they wounded Joash.

While he lay in bed recovering, the friends of Jehoiada's son who'd publicly rebuked the king and gotten killed for it, rose up & killed him.

VI. JEHOAHAZ (ISRAEL) 13:1-9

¹ In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. ² And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them. ³ Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all their days. ⁴ So Jehoahaz pleaded with the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. ⁵ Then the LORD gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. ⁶ Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin, but walked in them; and the wooden image also remained in Samaria.

A simple story. Jehu dies, his son Jehoahaz reigns & continues the idolatry of his dad.

So God judges them by allowing the Syrians to harass them.

Distressed, Jehoahaz gets no help from his idols so he cries out to God – not in genuine repentance but in a simple plea for deliverance.

Being the merciful God He is God answers & raises up a deliverer.

This was in the form of the Assyrians who right at this time attacked

Damascus, causing the Syrians to break off their attack of Israel to defend their land.

Did this gracious answer of Jehoahaz's prayer result in his repentance? Nope.

The golden calf stayed firmly in place & the huge obscene phallic symbol Jezebel had set up in the Capital of the nation remained.

Now it's curious why this was still there.

Jehu was supposed to have removed all this stuff.

It seems he had done a good job of erasing all evidence of Baal, but he'd left

the images associated with Asherah.
Maybe the reason why was because of the large group of ritual prostitutes connected to her.

⁷ For He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. ⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁹ So Jehoahaz rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Joash his son reigned in his place.

It's quite a shock to see how the might of Israel under Ahab has declined now.
They aren't even a shadow of what they used to be.

VII. JEHOASH (ISRAEL) 13:10-25

A. His Reign & Death 13:10-13

¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash [AKA Joash] the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. ¹¹ And he did evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, but walked in them. ¹² Now the rest of the acts of Joash, all that he did, and his might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ¹³ So Joash rested with his fathers. Then Jeroboam sat on his throne. And Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

We're going to be treated now to a rapid list of kings who reigned in the northern kingdom.

They were all wicked & weak and there's nothing really notable about their rule.