

Lesson 1 – 2 Kings 12

Text: 2 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 24

Main Characters: God, Joash, Jehoiada, Zechariah, Hazael

Key Passages:

- 2 Kings 12:2 – Joash obeyed the Lord all while Jehoiada was alive and instructing him.
- 2 Chronicles 24:17 – After Jehoiada died, Joash was influenced to forsake the Lord.

Main Storyline:

Joash became king over Judah when he was just 7 years old, naturally relying on the assistance of his guardian, Jehoiada the priest. Unfortunately, many of the people still continued in idolatrous worship, sacrificing and burning incense in the high places. Jehoiada taught Joash the ways and laws of the Lord, and Joash followed God as Jehoiada instructed him. When Joash got older, Jehoiada selected two wives for him, and Joash and his wives had many sons and daughters.

While Athaliah was ruling Judah, she had desecrated God's temple and used the holy items in their idolatrous Baal worship. As a result, the temple was badly in need of repair. Joash, seeing the condition of the temple, set his heart on repairing and restoring it. He instructed the priests and Levites to go out into all of the cities of Judah and collect the required and freewill offerings from the people in order to repair the temple. However, the priests and Levites did not follow Joash's instructions.

When Joash realized that the temple was not being repaired as he had instructed, he called Jehoiada and the priests and confronted them. Most likely, the repairs had not been made because they were trying to use the money for regular purposes and had little left for the special purpose of restoring the temple. Joash commanded that a special chest be made with a hole in the lid. The chest was to be placed near the entrance to the temple so that people could contribute to the temple's repair. A proclamation was made throughout Judah to instruct the people to bring money and put it in the chest. The people rejoiced and gave abundantly, allowing the temple to be restored to its original condition (a feat since the temple was about 150 years old). The workmen were not required to keep a detailed account of how the money was being spent because they were completely faithful and honest.

When Jehoiada was 130 years old, he died. He was so honored and respected amongst the people that he was buried in Jerusalem amongst the kings. While he had been alive, Joash and the people had continued to serve the Lord in the temple just as God had commanded.

After Jehoiada died, Joash was approached by some of the other leaders of Judah. Apparently, they requested that idolatry be allowed once again, as from that point on, Joash and the people stopped serving God in the temple and began worshipping idols. God punished Judah and sent prophets to bring them back, but no one would listen. God even sent Jehoiada's son, Zechariah, to rebuke Joash. Joash did not listen and had him stoned. As he was dying, Zechariah called for the Lord to repay Joash's sins.

The next spring, Hazael, king of Syria, came against Judah and killed many of the leaders of Judah and grievously wounded Joash. Even though Judah's army was much stronger than Syria's, Syria was able to force Judah to surrender because God had delivered them into Syria's hands. Joash gave Hazael much of Judah's wealth to convince him to leave, including all the gold from the temple. Later, Joash's own servants conspired against him and killed him. He was not buried with the other kings.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) Faithful teachers are a blessing, but we must eventually grow our own faith (Philippians 2:12).
- 2.) The leaders of a group of people have great influence over them and responsibility to God.
- 3.) The Lord's punishment against His children is for their own instruction (Hebrews 12:6).