

## Good News and Bad News About the Reign of King Joash

### 2 Kings 12:11-21

**2 Kings 12:11-21** - *“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, 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.*

*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. But they gave that to the workmen, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it. 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. 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.*

*Hazael king of Syria went up and fought against Gath, and took it; then Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 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.*

*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?*

*And his servants arose and formed a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of the Millo, which goes down to Silla. 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.”*

### Background Notes

King Joash of Judah began his reign as a good king. He organized a very successful program for repairing the Temple, and we see its conclusion here in the second part of 2 Kings 12. Verse 13 mentions that some of the items of Temple worship weren’t made, but 2 Chronicles 24 says that enough money was left over from the collection that they were able to make these items as well.

Unfortunately, later in his reign Joash departed from the Lord, and the end of his reign was not so blessed. Look back at verse 2: *“Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.”* As long as Jehoiada was around, King Joash did what was right, but when Jehoiada died, Joash turned away from wise counsel. When Hazael of Syria attacked Jerusalem, instead of turning to the Lord and asking for help and deliverance, Joash bought peace by giving Hazael the Temple treasures and treasury, as well as the royal treasury. Instead of turning back to the Lord, he used the Temple treasures to buy off the attack of a pagan king.

In the parallel account in 2 Chronicles 24, we read more details of King Joash's downfall. 2 Chronicles 24:17-22: *"Now after the death of Jehoiada, the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them. Therefore they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served wooden images and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the Lord; and they testified against them, but they would not listen.*

*Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God: 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you.'" So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord. Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son. And as he died, he said, "The Lord look on it, and repay!"*

What a sad end to the reign of Joash. He was one of the good kings of Judah, but in the end he turned away from the Lord. Verse 20 tells us that Joash's servants conspired against him, and murdered him. He was buried in Jerusalem, but it was not an honorable burial. 2 Chronicles 24:25 informs us that he was not buried in the tombs of the kings. Makes you feel like weeping when you read an account like this. Great beginning - but Joash turned away from the Lord in his final days.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. Spirituality is not determined by spiritual gift or spiritual position.

Look at verse 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."* That's what we read about the great workmen Joash hired to repair the Temple during Joash's good years. It's an amazing commentary! This is a description of spiritual men!

No accounts were kept because everyone "dealt faithfully"? Not many churches or Christian ministries would try to operate this way. Suppose we were to put an open basket in the foyer of this church, and the entire bank account of this church was put into that basket. Then at any time, if any one of you needed any money for a ministry of this fellowship, you could just take as much as you think you need! No records kept - no receipts! How many think that the plan would work here? I don't see any hands. What's the matter? No spiritual people here? Well, I think you get the point. That would take great faith!

But the plan worked here, and the Temple was repaired. Why? Because the workers were trustworthy, spiritual people. And notice - it was the workmen and their supervisors who were spiritual. They were not the priests, or the Levites, or the prophets. These men were the carpenters, the masons, the stonecutters. In fact, in the first half of the chapter we saw that the priests were not that faithful in handling funds - but the builders were!

Do you see the doctrinal point? **Spirituality is not determined by spiritual gift or spiritual position!** That was true then, and it's true today.

Some people have the idea that if you're not a pastor, or a church or ministry leader, or you don't have a lot of spiritual gifts, then you can't be truly spiritual. That's not biblical at all. That's not taught in the Bible. Any believer can be spiritual. Being spiritual is allowing the Spirit of God to direct our lives!

Unfortunately, Christians who are church leaders and have lots of spiritual gifts are not necessarily spiritual. They can be carnal or worldly. How sad when we observe the flock having to pray for the spiritual condition of the shepherds. Spirituality is not determined by spiritual gift or spiritual position.

Defining "spirituality" can be confusing. It's important to distinguish between **spirituality** and **maturity**. They are two different concepts. A brand new, immature Christian who doesn't know much about the Bible could be just as "spiritual" as a mature Christian who has been a believer for many years. In fact, a new believer who is joyfully walking with the Lord and letting the Spirit direct his or her life can be *more* spiritual than a mature but worldly believer! Maturity and spirituality *should* go hand in hand - but a mature believer can be carnal or worldly. Spirituality is not determined by spiritual gift or spiritual position.

## **2. Spirituality is dependent on spiritual accountability.**

Verse 2: "*Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.*" But when Jehoiada died, and Joash was no longer accountable to his spiritual father, he went downhill spiritually.

Spirituality accountability is important for spirituality. God has made us to be dependent on one another. This is certainly true in the spiritual realm. Spirituality is dependent on spiritual accountability.

I'm sure you know of spiritual leaders who have become worldly, or fallen morally, because they were not accountable to anyone. And those fallen leaders would be the first to tell you that that lack of accountability was the key to their downfall! There was no one in their church or their ministry to whom they were accountable.

It's important for *all of us* to be spiritually accountable to at least one other believer. Don't try to be an independent Christian! 1 Peter 5:5 says this, "*Likewise, you younger people, submit yourself to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another.*" This is spiritual accountability.

Make sure you're spiritually accountable to other believers, because spirituality is dependent on spiritual accountability.

## **Practical Application**

### **How spiritual are you when no one is looking?**

As long as the high priest Jehoiada was looking, King Joash was faithful to the Lord. But when Jehoiada died, and he was not accountable to his authority, Joash no longer walked with the Lord.

How spiritual are we when no one is looking? Remember when we were kids? As long as our Dads or Moms were around, we were accountable to their standards. What we read and what we watched on TV or what we listened to on the radio was good quality stuff. Right? But when Dad and Mom were not around, did some of us lower the standards on our behavior?

Well, have things changed now that we're Christian adults? How spiritual are we when no one is looking? What TV programs or internet sites do you select when you're alone - that you might not have selected if other Christians are around? What books or magazines do you read when you're alone, that you might not read if another Christian was looking over your shoulder?

Remember, the Lord is always with us. He's "looking over our shoulder" all the time! Do we remember that? How spiritual are we when we think no one is looking?