

The Reign of Ahaziah, King of the southern kingdom of Judah

2 Kings 8:16-29

2 Kings 8:16-24 - *“Now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoshaphat having been king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah. He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.*

In his days Edom revolted against Judah’s authority, and made a king over themselves. So Joram went to Zair, and all his chariots with him. Then he rose by night and attacked the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; and the troops fled to their tents. Thus Edom has been in revolt against Judah’s authority to this day. And Libnah revolted at that time.

Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Joram rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.”

Background Notes for 2 Kings 8:16-24

When the names “Jehoram” and “Ahaziah” are mentioned as kings of the southern kingdom of Judah, you’re probably saying, “Wait a minute! I thought Jehoram and Ahaziah were kings of the northern kingdom of Israel, not kings of Judah!” What’s the answer here? Were they kings of Israel, or kings of Judah?

The answer is: they were kings in **both** kingdoms! Just a little confusing! There was a King Ahaziah and King Joram, or Jehoram, of the northern kingdom of Israel, and there also was a King Joram, or Jehoram, and a King Ahaziah of the southern kingdom of Judah. They came in reverse order. In the northern kingdom of Israel, Ahaziah came first. He was the son of Ahab and Jezebel. When he died, he had no sons to inherit the throne, so his brother Jehoram became the king. In the south, Jehoram came first. He was the son of Jehoshaphat, and when he died his son Ahaziah became king.

As we see from verse 18, the situation became even more complicated, because there was a marriage relationship between these two kingdoms. King Jehoram of Judah married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Her name was Athaliah. Therefore both King Ahaziah and King Jehoram of the northern kingdom of Israel were Athaliah’s brothers, and were brothers-in-law to King Jehoram down in the southern kingdom of Judah!

Doctrinal Point for 2 Kings 8:16-24

God's faithfulness is taught in Judah's history.

Verse 19: *"Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for the sake of His servant, David, as He promised him to give a lamp to him and his sons forever."* In spite of the unfaithfulness that we see in 2 Kings, God remained faithful! Jehoram had opened the doors wide for idolatry to come into Judah, but God had made a promise to King David. In 2 Samuel 7:16, God said: *"And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."* God's promise that the lamp of the Davidic kingdom would never go out was faithfully kept, because Jesus Christ would be in the line of David. God is faithful to His promises!

God is faithful in His promises to us as well. Let's just take one promise as an example. Think of the promise in the last verse of Psalm 23, *"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* What a promise! God is faithful.

Lamentations 3:23, *"Great is thy faithfulness."* God is faithful and God's faithfulness is taught here in Judah's history.

Practical Application for 2 Kings 8:16-24

Who you marry will greatly affect your commitment!

King Jehoram of Judah had a godly grandfather, King Asa, and a godly father, King Jehoshaphat. Both of them were good and godly kings. But look at verse 18: *"And [Jehoram] walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done."* Why? *"For the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the Lord."*

King Jehoram's wife, Athaliah, was the wicked daughter of wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, and she had a much greater effect on King Jehoram than did his godly father and grandfather. Both of those good and godly kings had brought reforms into Judah. King Jehoram, however, brought more idolatry into Judah - because Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, was his wife. Who you marry will greatly affect your commitment!

2 Kings 8:25-29 - *"In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab, for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab."*

Now he went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. Then King Joram went back to Jezreel to recover from the wounds that the Syrians had inflicted on him at

Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.”

Background Notes for 2 Kings 8:25-29

Again in these verses the “King Ahaziah” and “King Jehoram” are confusing, because they were kings in both the northern and southern kingdoms. In verses 25-26, we see that the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, was named Ahaziah. Ahaziah’s mother, then, was Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and the granddaughter of Omri.

In verse 28, King Ahaziah of Judah joined with King Jehoram of Israel, Ahab’s son, and went to war against Hazael, king of Syria. King Jehoram of Israel was wounded in battle, and went back to Jezreel to recover. King Ahaziah of Judah went to Jezreel to see how King Jehoram was doing. Now remember the relationships: King Jehoram of Israel was uncle to King Ahaziah of Judah. So Ahaziah went to Jezreel to see how his uncle was doing. When we get to 2 Kings 9 we’ll see that Jehu will kill both of them!

Doctrinal Point for 2 Kings 8:25-29

God’s grace is seen in Judah’s history.

Where is God’s grace seen in this chapter? It’s seen **in the genealogy!**

It’s often pointed out that we can see the grace of God in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. If you trace all the complex relationships in His genealogy, you will certainly see the grace of God! For example, the incestuous relationship between Judah and Tamar is in the genealogy of Christ. Rahab, the Canaanite prostitute, is in the genealogy of Christ. Ruth, the outsider from the pagan nation of Moab, is in the genealogy of Christ. And the adulterous relationship between King David and Bathsheba is found in the genealogy of Christ.

Did you ever realize that wicked King Ahab and wicked Queen Jezebel also tie into the genealogy of Christ? We see that right here: King Jehoram of Judah married Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Athaliah and King Jehoram were the parents of Ahaziah of Judah, and Ahaziah is found in the line of Jesus Christ, as one of the kings of Judah!

So God’s amazing grace is seen in Judah’s history! We mentioned earlier that **God’s faithfulness** is seen in Judah’s history, and **God’s grace** is seen in Judah’s history as well.

Practical Application for 2 Kings 8:25-29

Make your children's spiritual and moral inheritance a top priority!

Although Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was a good and godly king, he did not make his spiritual and moral inheritance a top priority. Jehoshaphat actually engineered the marriage between his son Jehoram and Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel! Why? For political reasons!

2 Chronicles 18:1 says, "*Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance and by marriage, he allied himself with Ahab.*" The text says that "he allied himself" - so that alliance was done purposefully. And just look at the results. His son, Jehoram, did not walk in the ways of the Lord - because of that political marriage with the family of wicked King Ahab. And as we've just seen here, Jehoram's son, King Ahaziah, did not walk in the ways of the Lord either. What a sad heritage! And it all goes back to Jehoshaphat not making his children's spiritual and moral inheritance a top priority.

Some of you listening to this Talk don't have children, so how does this apply to you? Well, many of you will have children in the future. (Maybe in the not-too-distant future!) Make sure your children's spiritual and moral inheritance is a top priority. And in the meantime, you can be influential in the lives of children by helping to teach the children in your church, or in your extended family. You can help to provide those children with a spiritual heritage.

I know of several family situations in which the children and grandchildren of godly couples no longer follow the Lord. Why? Because those couples did not make their children's spiritual and moral inheritance their top priority. In some of those cases the parents' time was so involved in ministry. Being involved in the ministry is very important, but it should not cause you to neglect your children's spiritual and moral inheritance.

Make your children's spiritual and moral inheritance a top priority!