

# Fact Sheet for “Joash”

## 2 Chronicles 24:1-22

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I remember the story of the boy king Joash of Judah from my growing-up years in the church. It is one of the great stories taught in CEF today. But if you take your lens and adjust it to have more of a wide angle view you will find that this story sits in a context that has multiple applications for today. I'm going to widen our view to four generations, beginning with Joash's great-grandfather. I'm going to cherry-pick some verses and summarize others. As we progress we will look at several applications for today.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Generation: Joash's Great Grandfather

Joash's great grandfather was Jehoshaphat. There was a verse I read when we were considering Jehoshaphat. **Read 2 Chronicles 18:1.**

What happened was that Jehoshaphat married off his son Jehoram to Athaliah the daughter of Ahab.<sup>1</sup> Ahab was a very bad king of Israel (1 Kings 16:30-33). Jehoshaphat is recognized in the Bible as one of the good kings of Judah, but he compromised his dedication to God on several occasions by making alliances with two of the kings of Israel who did not follow the God of the Bible. This was one such instance. By making this alliance he set in motion the events of the next three generations. What decisions are you making for your children? Don't get me wrong. Each one stands before the Lord for his or her own decisions, but there are some things we can do as parents to prime the pump for success or failure. Jehoshaphat also designated Jehoram to be the next king because he was the firstborn.<sup>2</sup> Jehoshaphat designated who would be the next king on the basis of birth order instead of character. What do we honor in our own children? What do we honor in the church?

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation: Jehoram & His Wife Athaliah

**Read 2 Chronicles 21:4.** His character should have been evident to Jehoshaphat long before.

**Read 2 Chronicles 21:6-7.** There is a second thread running through these chapters other than what is happening with these four kings. It is what God is doing behind the scenes based on their dedication to Himself, or their lack of it. Here the *only* reason Jehoram had a son who would be the next king was because of God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promise to David. God honors those who honor Him!

One of the towns in Judah Libnah (lib-naw') now revolted from Jehoram's rule because he had forsaken the Lord.<sup>3</sup> God throws rocks in the path of those who forsake Him. **Read 2 Chronicles 21:12-15.** The Lord then stirred up the anger of the Philistines and the Arabians against him who carried away his possessions, his wives, and all his sons except Ahaziah. Then the Lord struck him with this disease, and he died in great agony. "And he departed with no one's regret."<sup>4</sup> Even with this prophecy there is no indication that Jehoram viewed God's word as true or even changed his decisions in the slightest. God will balance the scales one day on everyone's life.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation: Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram and Athaliah

**Read 2 Chronicles 22:1.** Again, the only reason God allowed Ahaziah to live was because of God's faithfulness to the promise made to David. **Read 2 Chronicles 22:3-4.** Athaliah now had influenced the decisions of two generations.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron 22:2.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. 21:3.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron 21:10.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Chron. 21:16-20.

The king in the northern kingdom Israel at this time was Joram. God had sent Elijah to Jehu, the commander of Joram's army<sup>5</sup>, to anoint him (*Jehu*) as the next king of Israel. Elijah also directed him to kill every one of Ahab's male descendants anywhere in Israel.<sup>6</sup> Now Ahaziah was visiting Joram because Joram was sick.<sup>7</sup> Jehu found them both together and killed them. Don't even begin to think that Ahaziah was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. This too was from God's hand. But Ahaziah had no one able to rule the kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

**Read 2 Chronicles 22:10.** Athaliah acted in accordance with her character. Try to read people's character, not only their words. But she missed one infant son, Joash. The wife of Jehoida the priest hid him in the house of God for six years.<sup>9</sup> Why did Athaliah miss one son? Again, it was because of God's covenant with David. Jehoida's wife, and by extension Jehoida, had very different characters.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Generation: Joash

In the seventh year, with extraordinary measures to protect the boy, Jehoiada crowned him king in the Lord's house. **Read 2 Chronicles 23:11.** Presenting the king with a copy of the Law was according to the Law (Deuteronomy 17:18-20). What a great beginning! Athaliah heard the noise, went into the house of the Lord, saw what was going on and cried, "Treason! Treason!" Jehoida then commanded that she be taken outside and put to death. In politics it always seems that those who have the most to answer for do their best to paint their opponent as the villain.

**Read 2 Chronicles 23:16** At this point it is understandable that Jehoiada is the one making the covenant, as Joash is only seven. This does speak of Jehoiada's dedication to God also. His dedication was woven deeply throughout his character. The people then tore down the house of Baal, and broke his altars and images to pieces. Worship in the Lord's house was renewed. The people rejoiced and the city was quiet.

Now there is a verse that has both good and bad aspects. **Read 2 Chronicles 24:2.** Why not all the days of Joash? As Joash got older he decided to restore the house of the Lord.

**Read 2 Chronicles 24:6** This is the same tax referred to in Matthew 17:24-27 with the coin in the mouth of the fish. **Read 2 Chronicles 24:7.** Joash commanded that a chest be built. The people dropped their tax into it and the temple was restored. **Read 2 Chronicles 24:15-19.** Joash's dedication to God was not rooted in his own character but in the dedication of Jehoida to the Lord. We cannot make decisions for anyone else. The real question is, "How can we help others develop a strong dedication to the Lord in their own lives?" This may call for pain and struggle. Consider Abraham for instance. Dedication to the Lord may flow from their strong heart's desire. Consider David for instance. Even Zechariah, Jehoida's son, prophesied against them, but they stoned him to death in the temple court.

#### **Read 2 Chronicles 24:22-25.**

1. How dedicated to the Lord we really are flows out of our character. It does not depend on others, our circumstances, or an exciting sermon we have heard. It starts and ends in our own heart. Where is your dedication to the Lord rooted?

2. God will honor and protect those whose heart is His. This will not protect us from all pain but will bring us through that pain. We can learn greater faith. On the other hand God will judge those whose heart is not completely His. Expect the problems to arise.

3. Do your best to help the next generation grow in their dedication to the Lord. Don't put rocks in their path. Don't do everything for them. Don't excuse their poor decisions. Always be forgiving in your relationship with them.

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<sup>5</sup> 2 Kings 9:5.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Kings 9:8.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Chron. 22:6.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Chron 22:9.

<sup>9</sup> 2 Chron. 22:11-12.