



Daily Verse and Comment

2 Chronicles 24:1-2

(1) Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah; she was from Beersheba. (2) Joash did what was right in the eyes of the LORD all the years of Jehoiada the priest.

New International Version

[II Chronicles 22:10](#) reads, “Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of the house of Judah.” Athaliah, daughter of Israel's King Ahab and Jezebel and thus the granddaughter of Omri ([II Chronicles 22:2](#)), was the wife of Jehoram, king of Judah. Once her son had died by the hand of [Jehu](#), she staged a coup, killing all of Ahaziah's heirs and taking the throne. She reigned for six years.

But Jehoshabeath, who was the daughter of Jehoram and (perhaps) Athaliah, took Joash, her youngest nephew and still an infant, and hid him from Athaliah's henchmen, saving his life ([II Chronicles 22:12](#)). Evidently, when she saw the carnage taking place, she ran into the nursery, picked up Joash, and put him in one of her own rooms with a nurse. In short order, he was spirited away to the Temple, where he lived in secret for the next six years ([II Chronicles 22:12](#)). Jehoshabeath could do this because she had made an excellent marriage to Jehoiada, one of the best high priests in Israelite history.

In the life of Joash, Jehoiada proved a powerful influence for good. Joash reigned for forty years, but unfortunately, Jehoiada did not live through its entirety. Despite being the front man as the heir of David, Joash did not really have it in him to be king—but Jehoiada did. We see this to be true in the next verses:

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 . . . ([II Chronicles 24:17-18](#))

The wording in the first part of the last sentence implies that these Judahite leaders abandoned the way of life represented by the Temple. We would say that they “left the church.” In other words, the nation's entire political leadership apostatized, using weak Joash to return to the paganism they had enjoyed under Joash's grandfather, father, and grandmother.

We could call Joash a “fellow traveler.” He was a leaner, a clinging vine, who did not have the resources within himself to forge his own path. Once Jehoiada died, whenever the pressure of leadership fell on him, he had no one to lean on, and he faltered and declined. Spiritually, he died.

Without Jehoiada, Joash bent whichever way the wind blew. His peers in the realm found him easy to influence, as he would follow the crowd. His character reflected the group of courtiers around him at any given moment. When Jehoiada was with him, his beneficial influence made Joash compliant and a good king. But when he was with a bad crowd, men like the idolatrous leaders of Judah, he followed them like a lost puppy, too afraid to buck his peers. Finally, he would not [repent](#) when God warned him that he was going astray. Joash's fate was assassination and the disgrace of not being buried with the kings ([II Chronicles 24:25](#)).

We can see Joash's character as merely programmed but not internalized. We might also describe it as reflective of those around him rather than genuinely his. [Faith](#) must be grounded within us and personally held. We cannot go through life on someone else's coattails. As [Ezekiel 14:14](#) teaches, even Noah, Job, and Daniel, three of the most righteous, faithful men in all of history, could save only themselves.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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