

2 Kings Chapter 12 Commentary

2Ki 12:1 ¶ In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. 2 And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him."

Jehoash and Joash are the same person. Queen Athaliah and Jehu began to reign at almost the same time, and Jehoiada the priest crowned Jehoash in the seventh year of Athaliah's reign and slew her. Thus, it was the seventh year of the reign of Jehu when Jehoash began to reign.

We see here what bringing a child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord does, because Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of God, under the instruction of Jehoiada the priest. We shall see that Jehoash turns away from God, listens to the people, and stops listening to Jehoiada. This proves that Jehoash was not reading the testimony of the Lord daily, given to him when he was crowned king over Judah, as directed by God.

What does this tell us about our lives as a child of God today? We see the prophetic picture of the New Testament Church and its status here in time. What do you mean? We shall see that Jehoash will do right in the sight of the LORD when he is following the instructions of the high priest. If the New Testament Church is following the instructions of its High Priest, Jesus the Christ, there will be peace, prosperity, and lives bringing forth good Spiritual fruit. What happens if we turn our backs on God and start listening to man? We become guilty of idolatry, and our lives are no longer bringing forth good fruit of the Spirit. And God will regard our actions as evil in His sight.

We learn here that it is important to do that which is right in the sight of the LORD. LORD, all caps, is the Hebrew word Jehovah, and means the self-existent God, or the very essence of God. Lord, with only the first letter capitalized, means sovereign as a king or ruler, which is why we call Jesus, Lord. This reminds us that whether LORD or Lord is used in reference to God, we are still to recognize that our LORD is the eternal God, and in the new birth we have the essence of the LORD placed within us, and we become His representatives here on earth. We also recognize our Lord is our sovereign King, as we acknowledge that Jesus is our King.

3 "But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places."

We see that idolatry is not completely wiped out in Judah, as it was not wiped out in Israel, which is a mistake. Why? Because God cannot behold sin with the least degree of allowance, and God will not share His due glory with any other. Idolatry is like cancer in the body, if it is not completely removed, it will spread throughout the body and bring death.

What were high places? High places were often exactly that: a place upon the top of a hill, or some other high place in elevation, where the people raised altars to many different gods and idols, which is strictly forbidden by God for Israel, seen in the very first commandment: ***Ex 20:3; 2 "I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."***

This is a warning to the New Testament Church, and to individual church bodies: be very careful that we do not let idolatry slip, or creep, into the worship of God. This was a problem when the New Testament Church was first established and still is today. Whenever, you see a church body begin to accept things into the worship service, and into church fellowship, which are expressly condemned by the Word of God, you are seeing idolatry entering that fellowship, which will in time bring God's judicial judgments upon said fellowships.

This is why Jehoash did right in the sight of the LORD while under the tutelage of Jehoiada the high priest. He was following ***"thus saith the LORD."*** It is why we read and study God's written testimony of Jesus Christ, the King James Bible, so we know what is ***"thus saith the LORD."*** It is why we make the choice every day to deny self and serve our King and High Priest, Jesus the Christ. Thank you, Jesus, for your eternal redemption of our sins and for the eternal life you have given us, Hallelujah! Amen!

4 ¶ "And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, even the money of every one that passeth the account, the money that every man is set at, and all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD, 5 Let the priests take it to them, every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found."

When Joash was anointed king over Judah, the beginning of a reformation was set in motion in Judah. Jehoash, not Jehoiada, sees the need to repair the deteriorating temple of God to restore pride to worship God, and to restore the glory of the temple and the name of God. The fragmented temple is a picture of Israel, still involved in idolatrous worship, which is demonstrated by every breach, and broken part, of the temple and its furnishings.

King Jehoash calls the priests together and instructs them to take the money of the dedicated things, and the freewill offerings, and repair the breaches of the house of the Lord. Jehoiada the high priest, who was so studious in teaching the testimony of God, and tutoring the king therein, and serving in the temple in his God given duties, of which the maintenance of the temple was not one, so he nor the other priests did the work.

However, Jehoiada and the priests were at fault in receiving all the money coming into the temple. They did not separate the part that God designated for the upkeep of the temple, from that which God assigned to priests personally, which will be seen in verse 16 below. This reminds us of the scripture in **1Ti 6:10** *"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."*

Why would the upkeep of the temple be important? Because it is the house of the Lord, and the Lord requires all glory due to His name. The decay of the temple shows the decay of the people's faith in God. We have put self ahead of God and this is idolatry, as seen in **Hag 1:4** *"Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?"* God was admonishing them for fixing their own homes, while letting the house of God continue to deteriorate. How are things at your house of worship, which is the temple of your body? If you live in a fine mansion and your house of worship is a run-down shack: have you put yourself of God first. Remember, the temple of the Lord was the finest building of the day.

This is a picture of our lives as unfaithful disciples of Jesus Christ. How? Every breach in the walls, every broken or missing part of the temple, is a picture of our fractured service and our unfaithfulness to our Saviour. What do you mean? Is your countenance shining brightly, with no candle under a bushel? Are there things in your life that put your wants and wishes ahead of *"Thus saith the Lord?"* How about the thoughts and intents of your heart? Are they all in line with *"Thus saith the Lord?"* Every failure to fully worship God in Spirit and Truth is a breach in the wall of our temple, or a missing object used in worship, and God is not getting His due glory.

In your life, as a child of God, you are to keep your house, the temple of your body, in complete repair. What do you mean? If there are breaches where the enemy has broken down a wall, broken down a door, and etc. then it is the enemy in you, which you put ahead of God, you need to tear out the damaged part and replace it with new, so that the light of Christ in you shines brightly to those around you and brings to God His due glory. Consider what we are told in **2Ti 2:19-22**; **19** *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. 22 ¶ Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."* Purging ourselves of wood and earth (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life) is keeping the temple of God, your body, in good repair. To give an example; if the ox is not in the ditch, and I choose to spend the day shopping or fishing, instead of assembling with the saints of God, then I have put self ahead of God's commandments, and my temple is in need of repair.

6 "But it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house. 7 Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no more money of your

acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house. **8 And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house."**

When the priests did not follow the king's instructions, he calls them to task, and said "**Why repair ye not the breaches of the house?**" He tells them to no longer receive money, from those who bring gifts to the temple, and take that money and repair the house of the Lord. The priests agree not to take any more money, but they do not agree to repair the breaches of the house of God.

Why would the priest not consent to repair the breaches of the house of the Lord? Technically, God had dedicated a portion of the funds that came into the temple to be used for the maintenance of the temple and the needed things thereof. This was the duty of certain of the Levites. There was a portion of the money that was specifically designated by God for the priests that did the services of the temple, for the sustenance of them and their families. We shall see this in verse 16 below. The maintenance of the temple was not a duty of the sacrificial priests, but of certain of the certain Levites as prescribed by God. The sacrificial priests were not willing to take on duties that others were responsible for, and for which they had not the skills to perform.

The priests agree to stop receiving the money that was not theirs as prescribed by God. What do you mean? It is obvious that they like receiving money, but they do not like dedicating the money they receive to repair the house of the Lord, as God had commanded long ago. This shows how little regard the sacrificial priests have for the name of the Lord, by coveting all the money coming into the temple.

Examine your own life and see where your loyalty lies. If we are lazy and covetous, we are in a bad situation, which needs to be rectified. Remember we are told in the bible **Lu 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."** In other words, in examining our lives as children of God: who are we serving? Also, if we are blessed to see a breach in our house that needs repairing: are we lazy about doing it? Or say, well I will work on that later, so it won't become a habit, and therefore become a breach in the temple of my body? I am sorry to tell you: it is already a breach. Or do we make haste to follow our King's command, and make immediate restoration?

9 "But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD. 10 And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the LORD. 11 And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD, 12 And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it."

We do see that Jehoiada, who is the high priest, is now motivated by the king's rebuke. He puts a chest by the altar and has the keepers of the door put all the money in that chest. The high priest has the king's scribe to come and count the money and make a record of it. Then the money is given into the hands of those who did the work, who had oversight of the house of God. I think that we need to recognize that the priests were schooled in the things of the law commandments and not in being workers of wood, brass, gold, copper, steel, and other materials. Therefore, just as in the building of the temple, the best tradesmen of each work were employed to do the work, and the same procedure is to be followed in making repairs to the house of God. Otherwise, one who is not skilled in doing something is not going to do as good a job as one who is skilled, and the breach repair will be obvious.

At this point we interject the reason, for the breaches in the temple, and the need to repair them, seen in **2Ch 24:7-10; 7 "For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim. 8 And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD. 9 And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. 10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end."** We see that Jehoiada starts out with the chest inside the temple, near the

altar of sacrifice, but later moves it outside the door to the tabernacle, which was more convenient for people who were not making sacrifices, but simply wanted to give to the restoration of the temple.

We had the experience of being involved in a debate once in the old church we attended. The debate was whether it was right to have trustees who would be given the oversight of keeping the building and grounds in good repair, thus relieving the deacons of this duty to deal with spiritual items. The Lord led me to this scripture and revealed that this is exactly what those who had the oversight of the house of God were. I shared this with the pastor, and he shared it with the church body which ended the debate, and the church appointed trustees to that position. Today, this duty usually falls upon the deacons of the church bodies, simply because there aren't enough members to fill such a need.

Jehoiada, and the king's scribe, give the money to the people with the oversight, and they distribute it to the workers who did the repairs, to pay for their labor and for the purchase of materials needed for the repairs. Thus, the king's commandment was carried forth.

We see that the priests were negligent to pass the money on, to where it was supposed to go by the king's commandment. Thus, Jehoiada, with the further motivation of the king's scribe, and after the rebuke of the king, did that which was right, which accomplished the repair of the breaches of the house of God. The warning to us, as children of God, is that we should not be negligent in keeping our own lives in good repair before God, and the lives of the organized church body to which we belong.

13 "Howbeit there were not made for the house of the LORD bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD: 14 But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD. 15 Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully."

We are told here that they did not make the bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, which were tools of service for the priests to make sacrifices to God. However, we are told in **2Ch 24:14 And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.** Thus, we find the vessels were made after all.

There is a warning for us here also. It is necessary to keep the exterior, and the interior of the house of God in full repair, as well as the things needed to properly carry out the services of our Lord. This leads us back to the earlier reference of purging ourselves of ungodliness, that we may be fruitful vessels in the hand of our God, and in our service to the Lord.

We notice also that the workers and those who handled the money were people of integrity, who did not overcharge or waste the funds entrusted to them. We can make application of this integrity; in how we handle the Word of God. We should always use the Word of God in faithfulness to God. We are not to twist the words of God to suit our own selves, which is a picture of the priests not properly handling the funds coming into the house of God, until order was restored by the king, through the high priest. Neither should we neglect to follow the commandment of our King Jesus, nor of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, as the priests disobeyed their king. For our King, and High Priest, has certainly set in order, the proper way for the New Testament Church to worship God. This is defined by singing hymns of praise, praying, and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, from a pure heart, in Spirit and Truth, which will bring glory and honor to the name of our God. Neither are we to neglect to love the Lord with all the heart, mind, soul, and body, and love our neighbors as ourselves, especially our brethren in Christ.

16 "The trespass money and sin money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'."

This money was dedicated for the priests to provide them sustenance in life, as seen in **Le 5:14-16; 14 ¶ "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 15 If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering: 16 And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part**

thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him." All the other funds were to be dedicated to the house of God.

Among the Primitive Baptist, there are many pastors who do not receive a salary from the church they pastor. Some by choice, since God has already met their needs, and some of necessity, to not be burdensome to small and poor congregations. However, this does not relieve the congregations from their obligation to provide love offerings to their pastor, so that the expenses, he expends on behalf of serving the church, are compensated for. We see an example of this in ***1Co 9:9-12; 9 "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ."*** Paul is simply explaining to the Corinthians, there are those who are not preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, who are among you to fleece you for monetary benefits. I have refused such monetary benefits, to which I am scripturally authorized to receive from you, that I may not appear to be as one of these false preachers, who are doing the devil's work, and fleecing the flock of God in pretense of preaching the gospel.

17 ¶ "Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 18 And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem."

Gath was a city to the west of Jerusalem and a little bit south of Jerusalem. It was almost due west of Bethlehem. It was taken from the Philistines during the reign of king David and had remained in the possession of Israel until this event takes place. When Hazael took the city of Gath, he set himself to go to Jerusalem and take it also. Jehoash took everything that was of monetary value in the temple, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael. Hazael accepted the gift and did not go to Jerusalem to besiege it, at that time. We point out that the things of the house of God were not the king's to give. Instead of giving away the things of the house of God, Jehoash should have went to God in prayer, asking God what to do, and to deliver them from Hazael, for the sake of God's name and God's chosen holy city, Jerusalem.

Jehoiada, the high priest has died some time before this happens. Jehoash has revolted against God, disregarded all the advice of Jehoiada the high priest, and rejected the testimony of God, killed the sons of Jehoiada the high priest, and turned to the will of the flesh, which is why this invasion is happening, seen in ***2Ch 24:17-22; 17 "Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. 18 And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass. 19 Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear. 20 And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you. 21 And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. 22 Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it. 23 And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus. 24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So, they executed judgment against Joash."*** This is why God sent Hazael to take the city of Gath. Jehoash bribed his way out of Hazael's attack on Jerusalem, but Hazael comes back about a year later and takes Jerusalem. You see: Jehoash made a big mistake, because he did not turn to God for help but trusted in the arm of flesh, and riches of the world. Thus, we see that God's judicial

wrath upon Jehoash, for forsaking God, and for murdering the sons of Jehoiada, is carried out, when he is slain by his own servants.

What a sad thought. Joash began to be king, under the tutelage of Jehoiada the high priest, and was given a copy of the testimony of God when he was anointed king. As soon as Jehoiada dies, Joash neglects to read the word of God daily, (if he was reading it at all) and is persuaded by the princesses of the land to turn away from God to idolatry. For one who had such a great beginning, it is very sad that he comes to so tragic an end.

There is the picture here that children of God are not to be persuaded by the things and the reasoning of the world, the devil, but always trusting in the promises of God in the bible. Remember the warning to the children of God seen in **Re 2:10 *be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.***"

19 "And 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? 20 And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash (*Jehoash*) in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla. 21 For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead."

We see the end of Joash with better light in **2Ch 24:23-25; 23 "And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus. 24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host (Israelites) into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So, they executed judgment against Joash. 25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchers of the kings."**

We see here that God not only sent Hazael the Syrian to destroy the work of Joash and Jerusalem, but God also struck Joash with great diseases because of his rejection of God, by his embracing the will of the people, and plunging headlong into idolatry. Since Amaziah his son reigned in his stead, it is apparent that Judah had no problem with the lineage of king David continuing to be on the throne of Judah, which is continuing of God's promise to king David.

They did not bury Joash with the kings, because of the disgrace of his last few years as king over Judah. What a sad picture to review for one who had a great beginning with his heart seemingly set upon serving God, and then to turn from God to idolatry. His ending tells us: the reason he was a good king, at the start, was he followed the instruction of Jehoiada. When Jehoiada dies, he shows his true heart and falls in sin. A great warning to us to be very careful how we live out our lives as children of God. The fear of the Lord should reign in our hearts, so that we may be as Paul said in **1Co 9:27 "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."** Praise God for the eternal remission of our sins, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and the gift of eternal life in the new birth. Hallelujah! Amen!