

=KINGS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 8

Joash

AIM: to teach my pupils the tragedy of Joash.

POINT OF CONTACT: Review the kings thus far, along with the outstanding thing about each one. Remember, we are trying to impress upon the pupils one outstanding thing about each king. Review these with the pupils.

Since Joash was crowned when he was seven years of age, it might be interesting to crown one of the pupils in the class. You can make a little crown out of cardboard, sprinkle it with glitter, and crown one of the pupils. After the crowning is done, then you could explain that Joash was only seven years of age when he was crowned king. This means he would have been in the primary department had he been in our Sunday school classes.

INTRODUCTION: King Jehoram had died with a terrible disease. His son, Ahaziah, ascended to the throne following Jehoram. He walked in the ways of Ahab, and he had a wicked mother named Athaliah, who influenced him to do wickedly. When Ahaziah was killed, Athaliah wanted to reign, and she did reign. She destroyed all of the seed royal of the house of Judah, and she herself reigned for six years. She was a very wicked woman. However, a relative had taken Joash, one of the sons of Ahaziah, and hidden him in the house of God for six years. He was influenced greatly by the priest, Jehoiada, and later became king through a rebellion led by Jehoiada during which he overthrew Athaliah. Let us notice some things about Joash which we learned in II Chronicles 22-24.

- I. HIS FATHER LISTENED TO HIS WICKED MOTHER AND TO OTHER WICKED COUNSELORS. Read II Chronicles 22:3, 4. This is interesting. So many kings of the Bible fell because they took bad counsel. It is important that we take counsel but that we take counsel from those who give it wisely and who are spiritual people.
- II. THE FATHER OF JOASH WALKED IN THE WAYS OF AHAB. See II Chronicles 22:8, 9. This also is very interesting. His grandfather, Jehoshaphat, had been a godly man who walked in the ways of the Lord; but he associated and fellowshipped with Ahab's household. Hence, Jehoshaphat's son married Ahab's daughter; and now even his grandson is walking in the ways of Ahab. His grandson is still paying for the fact that Grandpa ran with the wrong crowd.
- III. ATHALIAH WAS A WOMAN OUT OF PLACE. See II Chronicles 22:10. Athaliah was a wicked woman. One of the reasons why she was wicked was that she was out of place. God never intended for a woman to be in such a position. (Teacher, stress here the plan for womanhood in the Bible. A woman is to be a wife and a mother, a keeper at home, etc.)
- IV. GOD HAD SOMETHING FOR JOASH TO DO. Notice II Chronicles 22:11, 12. When Athaliah killed all the seed royal of the house of Judah, Joash was marvelously spared by a relative named Jehoshabeath. Because of this miraculous thing, God no doubt had something for Joash to do. He also has something for you to do. (Teacher, stress this to every child—that God has something for him to do.)
- V. JOASH WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN KING HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR A FAITHFUL LADY WHO TAUGHT HIM AND CARED FOR HIM. Read II Chronicles 22:11. Jehoshabeath was influential in the life of Joash, though she was not his mother or father. (Teacher, this behooves you and me to do our best to influence the lives of young people. Who knows? There may be a king in your class! There may be a great preacher in your class! There may be a great worker for God sitting in your class! Let us do our best to influence them for the right.)
- VI. JOASH WAS HIDDEN IN THE HOUSE OF GOD FOR SIX YEARS. This is a vital point, and it no doubt influenced him to be a good king. Read carefully II Chronicles 22:12. (Teacher, stress here the importance of staying in the house of God. Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, choirs,

youth programs, children's activities, etc. are all important and vital.) Joash was hidden in the house of God. This gave him a tremendous start.

- VII. JOASH BECAME KING WHEN HE WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD. See II Chronicles 24:1. This was made possible by the priest, Jehoiada, who led an insurrection against Athaliah.
- VIII. JOASH BEGAN BY DOING WHAT WAS RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. Notice II Chronicles 24:2. Notice in this verse why he did this. Notice the words, "all the days of Jehoiada the priest." In other words, as long as he had the right church and the right pastor, Joash was what he ought to be. (Stress here the importance of the right church and the right pastor. People who say that just any church is all right are certainly in error. You will notice in later verses that after the death of Jehoiada, Joash hearkened to other prophets and priests, but they led him astray. Just "any religion" is not right. This is so important to stress.)
- IX. HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A CHILD WITH NEITHER A GODLY MOTHER NOR A GODLY FATHER WHO BECAME SUCCESSFUL AND BECAME A GODLY PERSON. This should be used to encourage the lives of young people who come to our church, but whose parents do not attend. They can still do something for God if we influence them properly.
- X. JOASH MADE ONE BIG MISTAKE. Notice II Chronicles 24:15-21. When Jehoiada died, Joash outgrew God. He got "too big for his britches," as we would say. He decided not to hearken to Jehoiada's son, Zechariah, who advised him the same way as his father. Joash now is big enough not to need God. See verse 21. How sad this is! Would God we could realize the way to continue success is the same way to gain success! He became a great king because he listened to the prophet of God and because he followed God's will. He became a failure because he turned his back on what made him a success.
- XI. JOASH PAID FOR IT AT THE HANDS OF THE SYRIANS. Read II Chronicles 24:23, 24. God used the Syrians to punish him. The Syrians were more wicked, of course, than God's people, but God often uses wicked people to destroy His own. This is the chastening hand of God. (Teacher, warn the pupils here that God will punish sin.)
- XII. HIS INFLUENCE IN FUTURE GENERATIONS WAS POOR. In II Chronicles 24:25, notice the words, "they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings." How sad this is! With such a good start, with such a good pastor, with such a good early life, with such a good kingdom for a while, this man let success go to his head and became a failure. How sad!