

THE REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JEHOASH

BIBLE TEXT : II Kings 13:1-25; 14:9-16

LESSON 328 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Ecclesiastes 9: 10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

2 Kings 13:1-25

¹ In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned seventeen years.*

² And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

³ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, *all their days.*

⁴ And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

⁵ (And the LORD gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime.)

⁶ Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, *but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.)*

⁷ Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing.

⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are they not written in*

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Jehoahaz, King of Israel

1. Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years over Israel, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord, II Kings 13:1-3.
2. God delivered Israel from Syrians because Jehoahaz sought God's aid, II Kings 13:4-9

II Reign of Jehoash

1. Jehoash's reign over Israel was similar to that of his father in that he did evil in the sight of the Lord, II Kings 13:10-13.
2. Jehoash was told by Elisha that God would deliver Israel from the hands of Syria, II Kings 13:14-21.
3. God delivered Israel because of His covenant with their fathers, II Kings 13:22-25.
4. There was war between Judah and Israel, and Israel won, II Kings 14:9-16.

NOTES:

House Divided

As our Sunday School lessons lead on into the study of the Books of Kings and Chronicles, it should be remembered that nothing in the Word of God is superfluous or unnecessary. God's plan is carried out from one generation to another despite the schemes of men to have it otherwise. God's will is accomplished either because of men's willingness to do His will or in spite of their unwillingness. Much of the study of the Books of Kings and Chronicles is a record of men who did not serve God, whose lives were evil, but yet who were vitally concerned in some manner regarding God's plan of salvation.

We learn from these Books of the Bible that Israel was more often than not engulfed in national vice and sin, and that the true worship of God was kept alive by only a faithful few. God had rent in twain the united kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel because they had forsaken Him. (1 Kings 11:30-40 ³⁰ And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: ³¹ And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: ³² (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) ³³ Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. ³⁴ Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: ³⁵ But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. ³⁶ And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. ³⁷ And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. ³⁸ And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my

the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

⁹ And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

¹⁰ In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned sixteen years.*

¹¹ And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: *but* he walked therein.

¹² And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

¹³ And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

¹⁴ Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

¹⁵ And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

¹⁶ And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand *upon it*: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

¹⁷ And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed *them*.

ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. ³⁹ And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. ⁴⁰ Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.) Ten of the tribes of Israel had revolted against the rule of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. The result was that the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were all that were left for him to rule. From that time forward, Israel was a house divided against itself. Hundreds of years later when Jesus was on earth, He warned Israel of the danger of their sin and the consequence of disunity and tribal hatreds and jealousies. He said: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" (Matthew 12:25, 26).

It was God's purpose from the beginning of Israel's existence as a nation that they should be a light to the Gentiles. As we read the divine record of Israel, we see that God's mercy always spared a remnant when judgement came upon them. God said in Jeremiah 30:11: "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." However, God's promise that the nation will survive does not mean that each individual soul of the Jews will be saved. Each man must repent in order to be saved. Israel was to play a most vital part in God's plan of salvation. God desired Israel to be joined with Him in the work of redemption, by their preaching the Gospel to a needy world. Herein lies much of the reason that God's benevolence has been poured out upon Israel through the years and generations despite their many backslidings, as a nation, from the worship of God.

Jehoahaz and Jehoash

The New Testament requirements are that the elders of the church and others who are in authority be of good report. (**Philippians 4:8 ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. ¹ Timothy 3:7 ⁷ Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil**) In the time of Jehoahaz and Jehoash, the Church and the state were one, and God expected the kings of Israel to be an example to the people in abiding by the Law of Moses. This they very obviously did not do. "Like father, like son" seems to have been true of Jehoahaz and Jehoash. The divine record states the same of them both. "He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom" (II Kings 13:2,11). The Word of God is true; and it was true when the Spirit of the Lord wrote the following: "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness" (Proverbs 16:12).

If God had left Israel to follow their own ways and the ways of their kings, Israel would have been overwhelmed by the savage conquests of Syria. We know this to be true from our text, which states, "But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz."

¹⁸ And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them*. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

¹⁹ And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it*: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice.

²⁰ And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

²¹ And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men*; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

²² But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

²³ And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

²⁴ So Hazael king of Syria died; and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead.

²⁵ And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

2 Kings 14:9-16

⁹ And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that *was* in

Covenant with God

A very significant thing is found in one verse of our text, which explains God's dealings with Israel in spite of their sins. We read: "The LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet."

Only because of the great covenant God had made with the fathers of Israel was the nation somewhat spared from the cruelties of their enemies. It was not because of their kings, for their lives were evil. It was not because of the majority of the people of the nation, for, as a whole, the people followed their kings. It was because of the faithful few — the little remnant who obeyed God's precepts — and because of His covenant, that God helped Israel against their enemies.

The true children of God were not ignorant of these things. The Prophet Isaiah said on one occasion, while bewailing the sinfulness of Israel: "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:9). At another time Isaiah, when expressing the mind of God, said: "As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all" (Isaiah 65:8).

It is seldom that even the most ungodly are without some moment in their lives when they have called on God. Despite the misspent life of Jehoahaz, there was a time when he called on God and God answered his prayer. (**2 Kings 13:4** ⁴ **And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.**) Unfortunately, such spasmodic and occasional times of recognising God are soon forgotten in a life as evil as was that of Jehoahaz. We have no record that his son Jehoash ever called on God. However, it seems that Jehoash saw the wonderful power of God in Elisha and was greatly touched at Elisha's sickness and death.

Just how much influence Elisha had had with Jehoash is not known. It probably was not much, because Jehoash was an evil man all the days of his life. He was acquainted with Elisha personally and must have had a certain respect and admiration for the prophet of God. No doubt Elisha had prayed much and often for the salvation of Jehoash, but to no avail. Jehoash well may have felt misgivings for his future without the prayers of Elisha. It is not unusual for sinners to covet the prayers of the people of God in their behalf, while still refusing to serve God themselves.

Upon being told by Elisha that God would smite the Syrians, Jehoash was told to shoot an arrow, which he did. Elisha told him this was the arrow of deliverance from the Syrians. But when he was told to smite the ground with his arrows he smote only three times. Elisha was wroth with him because he smote the ground only three times, and thereby would be permitted to strike the Syrians only three times instead of more.

Jehoash's lack of enthusiasm in smiting the ground with the arrows of God's deliverance was tragic. One would have thought he would have hated his enemies sufficiently to have been very vehement in expressing his thought toward them. His lack of enthusiasm might be likened to some who feebly hope to receive something from the Lord. They pray several times, but soon lose heart and enthusiasm. God desires those who come to Him to

Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that *was* in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

¹⁰ Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this*, and tarry at home: for why shouldest thou meddle to *thy* hurt, that thou shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee?

¹¹ But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Bethshemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah.

¹² And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to their tents.

¹³ And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Bethshemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.

¹⁴ And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

¹⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

¹⁶ And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

come with fervency of desire. Only those who diligently seek Him will receive anything from God. We shall at best get only partial victories, as did Jehoash, if we put only a halfhearted effort into our petitioning.

Halfhearted service will not gain victories for God, either. Our mission in life is to keep our own heart "with all diligence," and to help our fellow men. Whether in the service of music and song, in intercessory prayer for the welfare of others, in the preaching of the Word, in helping the sick and the needy, or whatever you do, "do it heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23). God sent His Word through Jeremiah: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully [or negligently]."

QUESTIONS

1. What kind of kings were Jehoahaz and Jehoash?
2. Why was Israel divided into two groups?
3. Why did God help Israel to fight against the Syrians?
4. How do we know that Jehoahaz ever prayed to God?
5. Did Jehoash believe in God?
6. Why did Jehoash feel bad when Elisha was sick unto death?
7. Do you think Jehoash missed Elisha after his death? Why?
8. Do you think that either Jehoahaz or Jehoash ever received eternal life? Why?