

2 Kings 11-12/2 Chronicles 23-24 & Joel

Quick Review

-visit the website for studies that you have missed

-Last week Joshua covered the first 10 chapters of 2 Kings (and their corresponding chapters in Chronicles 21 & 22)

-a few things to have in mind as we look at today's text:

-wicked king Ahab has (later his wife Jezebel will also meet a terrible fate) died & son Ahaziah has been crowned king but is seriously injured and sends messengers to inquire of baal if he will die

-Elijah the prophet of God (a 'nuisance' to Ahaziah's parents) confronts Ahaziah for seeking baal ("Is there no God in Israel to answer your question?" 2 Kings 1:16) and tells him he will die

-Ahaziah (son of Ahab) does die and since he has no son, his brother Joram becomes king of Israel (Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat is king of Judah)

-Elijah is then dramatically taken to heaven and Elisha carries the mantle of prophet of God

-both Joram and Jehoram are wicked, not following God (Joram and Jehoram names can become confusing)

*you are probably familiar with this pattern in the kings of Israel and Judah, some of them starting off well and finishing poorly, very few starting and ending well and most of them being entirely wicked

***see chart of wicked and good kings**

<https://chronologicalbibleteaching.com/blog/posts/divided-kingdom-era-chart>

-2 Kings 8:19 tells us that God does not destroy Jehoram/Judah because he (God) keeps His promise to David that his descendants would continue to rule

-Jehoram (Judah) is followed by his son Ahaziah (so son of Jehoram) (note: this is in Judah, but Ahaziah's grandmother, Athaliah, was granddaughter of King Omri of Israel, Ahab's father)

-and both Joram (Israel) and Ahaziah are killed by Jehu (son of Jehoshaphat and commander of Ahab's army) who then becomes king of Israel, kills Jezebel and all of Ahab's sons (70), a large group of Ahaziah's relatives (42) and the priests of Baal

-this happens in the most “appropriate place:” Naboth’s vineyard, what started this in the first place (Ahab wanted it, Jezebel killed for it and God pronounced the death penalty on their whole family)

-Sadly, Jehu did not finish well and his son Jehoahaz becomes the next king of Israel

-meanwhile, over in Judah, Queen Athaliah (mother of the now dead Ahaziah) begins to rule

-This is where we pick up today, in 2 Kings 11 / 2 Chronicles 23

2 Kings 11

-Chapter 11 starts off with Athaliah finding out her son (Ahaziah) was dead and going on a rampage to destroy the rest of the royal family

-wait, hold on...what is happening here?

-Athaliah was the daughter of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and she was married to Jehoram

-An avid worshipper of Baal, she rivaled the wickedness of the kings who came before and after her

-after the death of her husband Jehoram, her son Ahaziah was crowned king at age 22, but as we just reviewed, he is killed by Jehu (wrong place at the wrong time), commander of his grandpa’s army

-It’s important to note that Ahaziah was just as wicked as his father and that his mother was one of his counselors in wickedness

-When Athaliah learns that her son is dead, she (it is believed) seized the opportunity to take the throne by murdering Ahaziah’s sons

-These are HER OWN GRANDSONS

-But Athaliah’s daughter (Ahaziah’s sister) Jehosheba rescued his infant son and hid him...she was married to Jehoida the priest so the baby remained hidden in the Temple of God for 6 years while his grandmother ruled

-Athaliah (the only female monarch to sit on David’s throne in biblical history) ruled 6 years and established Baal worship even further in Judah...

-she installed priests of Baal and built altars to Baal IN the Temple of the Lord - **READ 2 Chronicles 24:7**

-in the 7th year of Athaliah’s reign, the priest, Jehoida decided it was time to act

-2 Chronicles 23:1 tells us he “**summoned his courage**” and placed Levites and guards (armed with weapons from the Temple that had been acquired years before by David) around the Temple while he publicly crowned Joash as the rightful king

-as Joash was anointed “the people clapped their hands and shouted, ‘**Long live the king!**’” 2 Kings 11:12

-Athaliah heard, realized what was happening and ran out screaming “**treason!**”

-Jehoida the priest commanded the troops to capture and execute her, which they did

- Interestingly, the name Athaliah means either “God is exalted” or “dealt violently with by God.” Queen Athaliah did not exalt God with her life; instead, God dealt violently with her.

-And that day, 7 year old Joash became king under the direction of the high priest who instructed him in the Law

-Under Jehoida’s guidance, Joash tore down the temple of Baal, smashed altars and images of Baal, and killed the priests of Baal

-vs. 20 tells us “all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was calm, because Athaliah had been slain”

-Joash, vowing to serve the Lord, then began to repair the Temple

-Though Joash started well, 2 Chronicles 24:15-27 tells us that when Jehoida died (at age 130) Joash began to backslide and actually turned to idolatry (his faith was tied to someone else and not securely to the Lord)

-God sent the prophet Zechariah (son of Jehoida and cousin of Joash) to warn Joash, (2 Chron 22:11) but instead of listening, Joash had Zechariah stoned in the temple court

-Jesus later referred to this murder in Matt. 23:34-35

-Joash’s story ends with King Hazael of Aram (Syria) coming to attack Jerusalem

-**the two accounts (Kings and Chronicles) give varying details**

-remember Chronicles is a ‘look back’ for what Israel has learned

-Kings tells us that Joash tries to bribe the Aramean king with articles of wealth from the Temple of the Lord, causing the king to call off the attack and ending with Joash being assassinated by his officers/trusted advisers

-the chronicler sheds more light

-vv. 23-24 of chapter 24 tell us that “although the Arameans attacked with only a small army, the Lord helped them conquer the much larger army of Judah. **“the people of Judah had abandoned the Lord...so judgment was carried out against Joash”**

-v. 25 goes on to say that the Aramean king left Joash severely wounded and Joash’s own advisers/officials plotted to kill him for murdering Zechariah (the son of Jehoida the priest) ******(Latin says sons) and that they assassinated him while he lay in bed

Joel

***Now we move over to the book of Joel**

This may seem like an odd transition, but the timeline you have (of the kings and prophets) places Joel right here, during Joash’ reign

-Joel is a “minor” prophet (doesn’t mean less important, just less recorded) and the book of Joel likely written between 835 and 800 BC (Joash reigned from 835 to 796)

-We are going to keep a 30,000 foot view here and hit a few key ideas/themes

-The book of Joel begins by describing a devastating locust plague with (depending on the translation) 4 types of locusts described

-Some have argued that this prophesy was entirely futuristic, describing a literal army coming either for the hearers or for us too

-While some of course assert that the plague was literal, likely having just happened, and being used to warn of coming judgment unless there is repentance

-(most believe this was written around 845 just after a devastating locust plague)

-Locust plagues were not uncommon, but this one is prophesied to be particularly devastating

- This invasion of locusts destroys everything—the fields of grain, the vineyards, the gardens and the trees

-We do not have four different kinds of insects here, though there are some 90 different species of locusts (all able to destroy a nation), instead we have a description of the locusts in four different stages of growth

-cutting

-swarming

-hopping

-stripping

-these 4 stages of locusts describe the loss of the ENTIRE plant, leaves, stem, base and root....the root represents the future of that plant

- Again, Joel is using the locusts to symbolically describe divine judgment coming against an unrepentant people

-Joel 1 then moves into a call for repentance (because sin brought on this plague)

 Weep like a bride dressed in black mourning death of her husband

 The priests mourn nothing to offer at the Temple of the Lord

 Everything is ruined/destroyed

The call is given to:

 announce a time of fasting

 cry out the Lord in the Temple

-Chapter 2 moves into a description of a coming army....that, symbolically like locusts, will destroy Judah, unless the people repent/it's a warning of coming divine judgment for sin

-this call for repentance is for:

 -hearts to be given to the Lord

 -fasting, weeping, mourning

 -hearts torn in grief

 -a return to the Lord

 -the priests to 'stand in the gap' for the people ('weep between the Temple porch and altar') *by the way, this has always been the job of the priests!

-and if the people will repent, the Lord 3:19 "the LORD will reply"

-He will:

 -send grain, new wine and olive oil

 -(enough to satisfy needs)

 -drive away enemy armies

 -bring prosperity (trees, fruit, grapes etc)

 -threshing floors *piled high*

 -presses *overflowing* with wine and oil

-The LORD promises to REPAY what was stolen

-and then comes the promise of the Spirit (see Joel 2:28-32) which highlights the outpouring the Spirit that is later referenced by Peter in Acts 2.

-Peter does not claim this is the fulfillment of Joel's prophesy, but he seems to be referencing "this is the same Spirit that Joel told us about"

Following the promised outpouring of the Spirit comes

-judgement against enemy nations

-and promised blessing for God's people who will again have the LORD in their midst experiencing both forgiveness and peace

-The book of Joel is essentially broken into two parts:

-**part 1:** (chapters 1 and 2a) using the locust attack as a reference and metaphor, Joel write of an impending human attack and calls for repentance

-**part 2:** (chapters 2a-3) the promise of restoration and the outpouring of the Spirit

-To bring this to a close, I want to talk *devotionally* ...this locust plague describes the loss of everything, including future (hopes and dreams) because of sin. But if we turn to the LORD and repent, He will repay what has been stolen....this can be in this life, but is certainly in the life to come

-God's repayment system is one of abundance: *piled high* and *overflowing*

-He promises His Spirit, his forgiveness and His peace