

THE REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JEHOASH

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

LESSON 328 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deuteronomy 32:29):

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

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Evil Influence

Jehoahaz did "evil in the sight of the LORD." He was king over Israel for 17 years but those years were not pleasant. When one does not obey God, he cannot have real happiness. Jehoahaz not only brought distress into his own life but he also caused trouble in the lives of the Children of Israel over whom he reigned. Each person, by the life he lives, influences those about him. Even in the schoolroom, a child who is bad causes trouble for those about him, but a good child makes life more pleasant.

A Pattern

Often a person has an ideal after whom he patterns his life. He chooses another person whom he wants to be like. Children, especially, imitate older folk and do just as they do. No doubt you have seen small children who say bad words because they heard their older brother or sister saying them. Some children who have seen mean people on television, in the movies, in magazines, or even in real life, have copied their wrong deeds. By so doing they have caused harm to themselves, to others, and have caused damage to property.

The Bible tells us to "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright" (Psalm 37:37). That means that we should pattern our lives after godly people. But, above all, we should pattern after Christ Himself, for He is our Example and we should follow His steps. (**1 Peter 2:21** ²¹ **For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:.)**)

Instead of imitating a godly king, Jehoahaz followed the sins of Jeroboam who had the reputation of causing Israel to sin. Nineteen times in the Bible the words are repeated concerning Jeroboam: "Who made Israel to sin." This was the man whom Jehoahaz followed.

A Poor Example

Jehoahaz's father was Jehu, the man who destroyed the worshippers of Baal, as God commanded. Although Jehu obeyed God in this one thing, yet he "took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart" (II Kings 10:31). Jehoahaz's father followed the evil example of Jeroboam. Because Jehu did not depart from worshipping the golden calves, God permitted Hazael, king of Syria, to conquer the Children of Israel. One would think that Jehoahaz would learn a lesson from the sad experience of his father. One would think that he would reign in a different manner in order to have God's blessing rather than God's judgement. Jehoahaz committed the same sins as his father committed – he followed the sins of Jeroboam. Jehoahaz suffered the same punishment from God as his father suffered — he was continually oppressed by the Syrians.

Continuing in Sin

The Bible teaches that God's judgement rests upon those who sin. It also states that "when the wicked man turneth away from

his might, *are* they not written in 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,

his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" (Ezekiel 18:27). But Jehoahaz did not turn from his evil ways. Because of Jehoahaz's sins God was against the Israelites. Jehoahaz and his people suffered for their sins.

Today the same is true. If people do not turn from their sins, the judgement of God will come upon them. If they pray to God and ask forgiveness, He will save them and cancel the judgement. They will find mercy when they confess their sins and forsake them (**Proverbs 28:13** ¹³ **He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy**). When they continue in their sins, they are not saved and will suffer eternal punishment. Even while they are still living they suffer for their sins.

Judgement

This was a part of the judgement of God upon Jehoahaz and the Children of Israel: "The LORD . . . delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael." All the days of their lives, these two Syrian kings oppressed the Children of Israel. They destroyed most of the horsemen and chariots. They never permitted the army of Israel to become very large. They destroyed the soldiers, and "made them like the dust by threshing"; these words are used to show that the army was almost done away with. We are told that in those days the threshing of grain was done on a very hard surface so there was little dust stirred up and only a small amount of sand with the grain that was threshed. To be "made . . . like the dust by threshing" meant that the army was very little, almost nothing. It was reduced and weakened by the enemy. Such an army did not oppose the enemy much and did not bring victory to the Israelites.

Seeking God

In his oppression Jehoahaz sought God for help. He neither asked forgiveness for his sins nor did he forsake them. Jehoahaz asked for help because he and his people were victims of the Syrians. The Lord looked down in compassion upon the Children of Israel who were oppressed. Because God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He answered Jehoahaz's prayer. He had promised to be their God and their children's God. He had said that He would give to them the Land of Canaan for an "everlasting possession." He had agreed to bless them so long as they kept His covenant and obeyed. (**Genesis 17:1-9** ¹ **And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.** ² **And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.** ³ **And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,** ⁴ **As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.** ⁵ **Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.** ⁶ **And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.** ⁷ **And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.** ⁸ **And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.** ⁹ **And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.)**

Prayer Answered

How did God answer Jehoahaz's prayer? He sent help to the

till thou have consumed *them*.

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,

Children of Israel. It was not in the form of a great national hero or by one certain battle. Deliverance came after a number of years and by the hand of Jehoash who recovered the cities of Israel, which had been captured by the Syrians, and by Jehoash's son, Jeroboam, who restored the boundaries of Israel. God did not "blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam" (II Kings 14:27).

Why did Jehoahaz seek the help of God? One would think that he would seek the help of the golden calves which he worshiped and served. But they were just idols and could do nothing for him. By seeking God, his people were spared from being completely destroyed. God gave them one more opportunity to repent and turn to the worship of the only true and living God.

Protection and Help

Often today people are spared from harm and sudden death because of the prayers of their relatives who are Christians. God spares them for a reason — that they might repent, be saved, and serve Him. Many times God has answered the prayer of those who are unsaved. Having one's prayer answered should increase his faith and show him his responsibility in thanking and serving God.

We read that God will come near to us when we go to Him in prayer. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). The Psalmist said: "It is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (Psalm 73:28).

But Jehoahaz, by worshipping idols, continued in sin before God. His son, who became king after him, also did evil in the sight of God. "He departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein."

Jehoahaz's son, who became king of Israel after him, was named Jehoash, also known as Joash. There was another man by the name of Joash. He was the son of Ahaziah the king of Judah. We have studied about Joash, the boy-king of Judah (Lesson 319). Jehoahaz's son we shall refer to as Jehoash.

Elisha

In those days, Elisha was the Lord's prophet. In the last days of his life he was sick. Jehoash the king of Israel went to visit him. The king went to show his respect for the Lord's prophet, and to express his deep sorrow for Elisha's sickness. Jehoash quoted Elisha's own words. He had spoken them when Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into Heaven (II Kings 2:11,12). "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." No doubt these words meant that the prophet, by prayer and by words of advice, had done more for the Children of Israel than had been done by their armies. As Elisha gave this credit to Elijah, so Jehoash was giving the same compliment to Elisha. Although Jehoash worshipped idols, he acknowledged that Elisha, the prophet of the Lord, had been responsible for the victories of Israel. The king showed that he had faith in the prayers and words of Elisha.

A Bow and Arrow

Before Elisha's death, he gave a blessing to Jehoash. It happened in this manner: Elisha told Jehoash to shoot through an open window eastward with a bow and arrow. Elisha placed his hands upon the hands of the king as he drew the bow. Elisha's hands were weakened by sickness but they were strengthened by the Lord. Elisha told the king to shoot. As the arrow went flying through the air, Elisha said that this was the "arrow of the LORD's deliverance."

saying, The thistle that *was* in 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.

Halfhearted

Elisha also told Jehoash to strike the ground with the remaining arrows. Without much enthusiasm Jehoash tapped the ground only three times. Elisha scolded him because of his halfhearted manner. Jehoash was told that he would have had complete victory over the Syrians if he had struck the ground five or six times. As it was, he would win in only three battles against the Syrians. After the death of Elisha, the words of his prophecy came to pass. Many times Jehoash went to battle against Benhadad, son of Hazael king of Syria. Only three times Jehoash was the victor, according to the words of the prophet of the Lord.

Jehoash did not have the zeal and courage to see life's problems and battles through to a finish. He was like some people today who pray a few times for a certain blessing or experience from God, and then give up. They do not persevere in prayer until an answer is assured. Or they are like those who sit at home or waste time in idle talk with other boys and girls when they might be improving their opportunities for service in the Gospel work, perhaps by playing a musical instrument, singing, witnessing for Jesus, praying, helping the sick and the needy, perfecting themselves in some skill so that they might be useful in the work of the church.

Lifted Up

Another incident came in the reign of Jehoash, when God used him to bring judgement upon Amaziah, king of Judah. Amaziah "did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart." Amaziah went to war against the Edomites, and won the battle. When he returned home, he took with him the idols of the children of Seir. He did not take them home as souvenirs. He set them up to be his gods. He bowed down to them, and burned incense to those idols, which had not been able to deliver their worshippers out of Amaziah's hand.

Amaziah's own heart lifted him up to boast. He seemed to forget the words of a man of God who told him to "be strong for the battle: . . . for God hath power to help, and to cast down" (II Chronicles 25:8).

QUESTIONS

1. How were Jehoahaz and Jehoash related?
2. Whom did they take for an example to follow?
3. Why did Jehoahaz seek God?
4. Why did God answer his prayer?
5. Who had done more for the Children of Israel than their own chariots and horsemen?
6. Why did Jehoash visit Elisha?
7. What were the words of prophecy spoken by Elisha to Jehoash?
8. Tell what happened to the dead man who was cast into Elisha's sepulchre.
9. When did Amaziah's heart lift him up to boast?
10. Why was Jehoash victorious over Amaziah?