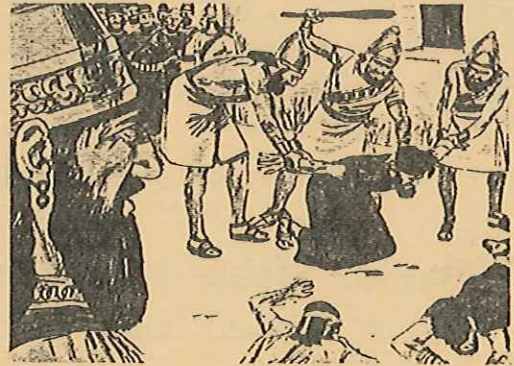


## Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah & Joash

### Jehoram is Influenced by Athaliah

After good King Jehoshaphat died, Jehoram his son became the next king of Judah. Jehoram was 32 years old when he became king and he ruled over Judah for 8 years. Remember that Jehoshaphat made the mistake of marrying his son, Jehoram, to Ahab and Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah. As soon as Jehoram became king, Athaliah influenced him to kill all six of his brothers and some of the other leaders. Jehoram disobeyed God because he was married to Ahab's daughter. He lived like King Ahab and the other bad kings of Israel. Jehoram built places to worship false gods, and he led the people of Judah away from Yahweh.



***We must learn from Jehoram how important it is to find a husband or wife, or good friends in the Truth who love God. If our best friends don't want to serve God, they may influence us to do bad things like Athaliah did to Jehoram. When our best friends love God, they will help us and encourage us to do the right things everyday. Let's pray to God and ask Him to help us find good friends who love God and want to keep His commandments.***

Elijah the prophet sent a letter to Jehoram because of all the bad things he did. Elijah reminded Jehoram that he was not living like Jehoshaphat (his dad) and Asa (his grandpa). Because of all the evil things Jehoram was doing, Elijah told him that God was about to punish Jehoram and the people of Judah.

So God caused the Philistines and the Arabs to attack Judah. They took away most of Jehoram's wealth, his sons and wives. Only Jehoram's youngest son, Ahaziah, was left. Then God gave Jehoram a disease in his intestines that could not be cured. After two years his intestines fell out and he died in terrible pain. No one was even sad when Jehoram died because he was such an evil king.

### Ahaziah is Influenced by Athaliah

Since Ahaziah was the only son of Jehoram left alive, he became the next king. Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king and he only reigned one year. He disobeyed God because he was influenced by Athaliah (his mom), the daughter of Ahab. Athaliah's bad advice even caused Ahaziah's own death!





TOO LATE, JEHORAM SEES THAT JEHU HAS COME TO OVERTHROW THE KINGDOM. HE TRIES TO ESCAPE, BUT JEHU'S ARROW STRIKES HIM DOWN.



She encouraged Ahaziah to join with Joram king of Israel (Ahab's son) so that together they could fight the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead. The Syrians wounded Joram so he returned to Jezreel to recover. Ahaziah stopped by Jezreel to visit Joram, but while he was there God sent Jehu the son of Nimshi to wipe out the influence of Ahab's family. Jehu killed Jezebel, Joram, Ahaziah and many of their relatives. God wanted to stop the bad influence that Ahab's family

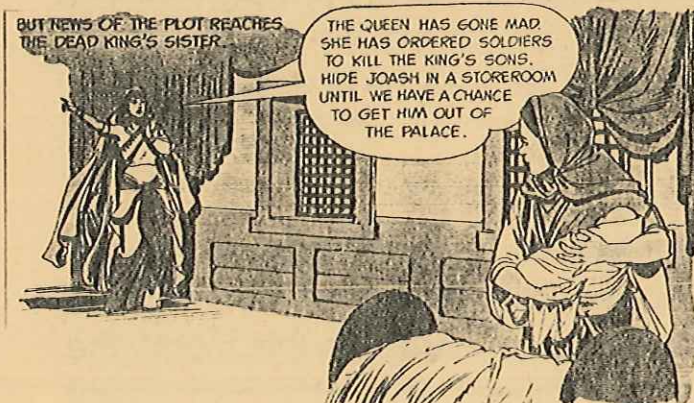
was having both in Israel and in Judah.

### Athaliah Steals the Throne

When Athaliah heard that Jehu had killed her son (Ahaziah), she quickly killed all the royal family in Judah so she would be the only one left to reign. She thought her plan worked, but she didn't know that Jehosheba (Ahaziah's sister) took one of Ahaziah's sons, named Joash. Joash was only a one year old baby at the time so she hid him in a special room in the temple. Jehosheba could sneak into the temple with Joash because she was married to Jehoiada, the high priest! We can learn from Jehosheba to be willing to do things for others and work for God even when it is not easy. She actually risked her life to save baby Joash.

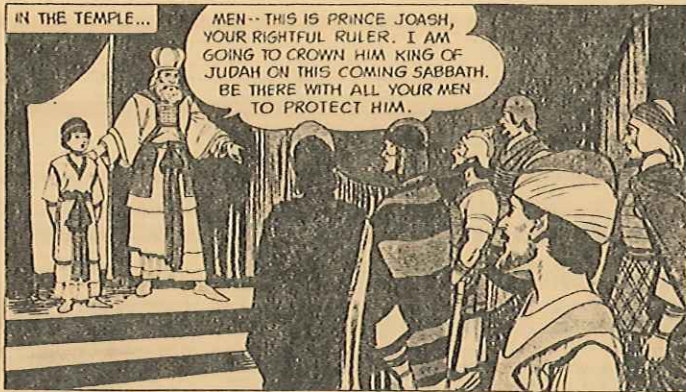


Joash was hidden in the temple for six years while he grew up to be a young boy. During those six years while Joash was hiding in the temple, Athaliah took over the kingdom of Judah and reigned as queen. She did terrible



things in Judah. She used Yahweh's special vessels in the temple to worship Baal and Asherah. Many of the people of Judah hated her rule, but they didn't know that anyone else was still alive from the royal family to be their king.





IN THE TEMPLE...

MEN-- THIS IS PRINCE JOASH, YOUR RIGHTFUL RULER. I AM GOING TO CROWN HIM KING OF JUDAH ON THIS COMING SABBATH. BE THERE WITH ALL YOUR MEN TO PROTECT HIM.

## Jehoiada Overthrows Athaliah

After Athaliah reigned six years as queen, Jehoiada the priest decided Joash was old enough to be presented to the people. Joash was only seven years old, but the people needed him to be king. *Joash is a good reminder to us that God can*

*use us to work for him even when we are young. Let's look for things we can do in our Sunday School, ecclesia and family to serve God even while we are still young.*

Jehoiada organized some of the Levites, priests and people of Judah to get rid of Athaliah. Everyone hated Athaliah so much that they did exactly what Jehoiada told them to do. Jehoiada got some of the spears and shields that had belonged to David out of the temple. He armed his men and spread them all over the temple area. Then Jehoiada and his sons brought out Joash, put the king's crown on his head, anointed him with oil and shouted, "Long live the king!" When Athaliah saw what had happened, she tore her clothes to show how upset she was and shouted, "Traitors! Traitors!" Jehoiada sent some of his men to get her and kill her.



GOD SAVE THE KING!

LONG LIVE THE KING OF JUDAH!

GOD SAVE THE KING!

TREASON! TREASON! STOP THIS AT ONCE!

Jehoiada had the people and Joash make an agreement to be Yahweh's special people. All the people were so excited that they tore down the temple of Baal, smashed the altars and idols there, and killed the priest of Baal. Jehoiada



STOP! TAKE HER OUT OF THE TEMPLE!

QUEEN ATHALIAH IS FORCED FROM THE TEMPLE, AND PUT TO DEATH.

IN THE TEMPLE THE CORONATION OF KING JOASH CONTINUES...

DO YOU PROMISE TO OBEY GOD'S LAW AND RULE YOUR PEOPLE ACCORDING TO HIS WORD?

I PROMISE!

then chose good priests to work in God's temple to offer sacrifices and teach the people about Yahweh their God. All the people of Judah were very happy and Jerusalem had peace because Athaliah was finally dead! *We can learn an important lesson from the people of Jehoiada's day. When everyone helps out, God will help us so we can overcome evil together!*



## Joash Reigns as King

Joash was only 7 years old when he became king and he reigned 40 years. He did what was right as long as Jehoiada the priest was alive to help him. Joash worked for many years to fix up the temple and make sure it was used properly. But then Jehoiada died! Jehoiada was 130 years old when he died. He faithfully served Yahweh all his life. The people liked him so much that they buried him in Jerusalem with the kings of Judah. *Jehoiada is a great example of how many years of faithful service to God can have a good affect on other people. He remained faithful to his God all his life. Let's try our best to be like Jehoiada so we can help others and ourselves to be in the kingdom.*

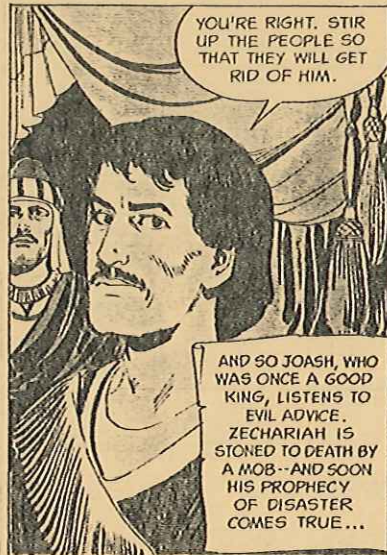
After Jehoiada died, the officers of Judah gave Joash bad advice. They

AS SOON AS ZECHARIAH LEAVES, THE WORSHIPERS OF BAAL GIVE THEIR ADVICE.

ZECHARIAH IS A TROUBLE-MAKER. HE SHOULD BE PUT TO DEATH BEFORE HE TURNS ALL JUDAH AGAINST YOU.



YOU'RE RIGHT. STIR UP THE PEOPLE SO THAT THEY WILL GET RID OF HIM.



AND SO JOASH, WHO WAS ONCE A GOOD KING, LISTENS TO EVIL ADVICE. ZECHARIAH IS STONED TO DEATH BY A MOB - AND SOON HIS PROPHECY OF DISASTER COMES TRUE...

convinced Joash to stop worshipping in the temple of Yahweh. They made Asherah idols and other idols to worship. God became angry with Joash and the people of Judah. He sent prophets to warn them, but the people refused to listen!

One day, the Spirit of God entered Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest. He told Joash and the people that because they had left Yahweh, Yahweh was going to

leave them! Joash was so mad that he commanded the people to kill Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada. So the people threw stones at Zechariah in the temple courtyard until he died. King Joash did not remember all the kindness that Jehoiada had shown to him. *Let's learn a lesson from King Joash's mistake. We should always try to remember the kind things other people do for us so that we can be kind to them. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)*

Later that year, a small Syrian army attacked Jerusalem and wounded Joash. His own officers made a plan to kill him because Joash had ordered Zechariah to be killed. They killed Joash in his own bed. When Joash was buried, he was buried in Jerusalem, but not with the other kings of Judah. Joash's son, Amaziah, became the next king of Judah.