

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 2 KINGS 12

2 KINGS 11:21-12:3 - REIGN OF JOASH (AKA JEHOASH)

2 KINGS 12:4-8 - MONEY FOR THE PRIESTS & TEMPLE REPAIRS

THIS IS A GOOD INDICATION OF THE HEART OF JOASH (JEHOASH). HE WANTS TO MAKE SURE THAT THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD IS REPAIRED AND STEWARDED WELL. HE COMMANDS THAT SOME OF THE MONEY THAT THE NATION WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEMPLE (EX: FREE WILL OFFERINGS, TITHES OR PAYING VOWS) WOULD GO TO THE TEMPLE REPAIRS AND UPKEEP. THIS MONEY ALSO WAS TO GO TO THE PRIESTS FOR THEIR NEEDS.

HOWEVER, AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME, THE HOUSE OF THE LORD IS STILL IN DISARRAY. THIS "HONOR" SYSTEM WASN'T WORKING.

WE LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS RECORD FROM THE PARALLEL STORY IN 2 CHRONICLES 24.

2 CHRONICLES 24:4-7 - JOASH'S ZEAL TO REPAIR THE HOUSE

V. 5 - "BUT THE LEVITES DID NOT ACT QUICKLY"

2 KINGS 12:9 - JEHOIADA'S NEW SYSTEM

ONCE THEY SET UP A SYSTEM TO COLLECT AND SEPARATE THE MONEY, IT WORKED OUT TREMENDOUSLY WELL.

2 CHRONICLES 24:8-12 - THE NEW SYSTEM WORKS GREAT

2 KINGS 12:10-16 - THE MONEY USED TO PAY THE LABORERS

THE MONEY COLLECTED GOES TO PAY THE MEN WORKING ON THE TEMPLE REPAIRS AND ONLY AFTER THEY ARE PAID WILL ADDITIONAL MONEY GO TO THE PRIESTS. THESE LABORERS WERE FAITHFUL AND TRUSTWORTHY MEN AND AS A RESULT "DID NOT REQUIRE AN ACCOUNTING" (V. 15). THE PRIESTS NEEDED AN ACCOUNTING BUT THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS DIDN'T! FAITHFULNESS IS SHOWN IN DAILY TASKS IN OUR LIVES, AND NOT JUST IN OVERTLY SPIRITUAL MOMENTS.

UP TO THIS POINT, THE WRITER OF 2 KINGS INDICATES THAT THE FIRST THINGS TO BE REPAIRED WERE THE STRUCTURAL NEEDS OF THE TEMPLE, AND NOT THE "SACRED ITEMS" LISTED IN V. 13. HOWEVER, 2 CHRONICLES WILL FINISH THE WORK WITH THESE ITEMS BEING MADE.

2 CHRONICLES 24:13-14 - SACRED ITEMS RESTORED

2 CHRONICLES 24:15-16 - JEHOIADA DIES

JEHOIADA WAS A FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST. THROUGH THE DEVOTION OF HIM AND HIS WIFE, THEY ENSURED THE DAVIDIC DYNASTY CONTINUED WITH THEIR RESCUE AND RAISING OF JOASH (2 KINGS 11). HE RENEWED THE COVENANT WITH THE PEOPLE AND THE KING AND LASTLY OVERSAW

THE RESTORATION OF THE TEMPLE AND THE NATIONAL WORSHIP OF YAHWEH. HE WAS 130 WHEN HE DIED AND WAS HONORED AT DEATH WITH A BURIAL IN THE PLACE OF THE KINGS.

2 CHRONICLES 24:17-19 - THE NATION RETURNS TO IDOLS

IT IS CLEAR FROM THESE VERSES THAT THE PEOPLE'S COMMITMENT TO THE LORD WAS DEPENDANT ON JEHOIADA, RATHER THAN JOASH. SOON AFTER HIS DEATH, THE NATION RETURNS TO IDOLS. JUST LIKE IN THE DAYS BEFORE, GOD WOULD SEND PROPHETS TO CALL THE PEOPLE BACK TO HIM AND REBUKE THEIR RULERS. ONE OF THE PROPHETS CALLED AT THIS TIME WAS JEHOIADA'S SON...

2 CHRONICLES 24:20-22 - ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY

ZECHARIAH'S MESSAGE WAS ONE OF JUDGEMENT UPON THE PEOPLE. HE SAID "BECAUSE YOU HAVE FORSAKEN THE LORD, HE HAS ALSO FORSAKEN YOU" (V. 20). THIS CAUSED RAGE TO RISE IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE, AND IN PARTICULAR IN THE HEART OF THE KING. JOASH, THE BOY PRINCE SPARED AND RAISED BY JEHOIADA, CALLS FOR HIS SON TO BE STONED.

WHEN QUEEN ATHALIAH WAS TO BE KILLED, THE PEOPLE BROUGHT HER OUT OF THE TEMPLE SO AS TO NOT DEFILE THE HOLINESS OF THE COURTS. THAT IDEA CAME FROM JEHOIADA, THE HIGH PRIEST. AND NOW, IN THAT SAME PLACE HIS OWN SON IS MURDERED BY THE PEOPLE.

ALL OF THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE "JOASH THE KING DID NOT REMEMBER THE KINDNESS WHICH...JEHOIADA HAD SHOWN HIM" (V. 22). MORE ON THIS LATER.

SO NOW WE ARE LEFT WITH JUDAH, UNDER THE REIGN OF KING JOASH, "FORSAKEN BY THE LORD" BECAUSE THEY HAD FORSAKEN HIM AND HIS COMMANDMENTS. HOW IS LIFE IN THE NATION WITHOUT THE LORD'S PROTECTION? THE ARAMEANS SHOW UP ON THE SCENE JUST IN TIME TO SHOW US.

2 KINGS 12:17-18 - JOASH PAYS OFF HAZAEL, KING OF ARAM

JOASH (JEHOASH) HAD RESTORED THE SACRED AND PRECIOUS ITEMS OF THE TEMPLE, BUT HE USES THEM TO PAY OFF HAZAEL RATHER THAN WORSHIP THE LORD.

2 CHRONICLES 24:23-27 - BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

WHILE IT APPEARS THAT JOASH IS INITIALLY ABLE TO "PAY OFF" THE ARAMEANS, THIS DOESN'T WORK FOR LONG. THEY APPARENTLY RETURN (OR NEVER REALLY RETREAT) AND DEFEAT JUDAH.

MAKE NO MISTAKE, THIS ARAMEAN VICTORY IS NOT A COINCIDENCE. THIS IS GOD'S DOING. 2 CHRONICLES 24:22 TELLS US THAT THIS HAPPENED IN RESPONSE TO ZECHARIAH'S DYING PRAYER "MAY THE LORD SEE AND AVENGE..." AND VERSE 24 DECLARES:

2 CHRONICLES 24:24-25 (NLT) - 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, THE GOD OF THEIR ANCESTORS, SO JUDGMENT WAS CARRIED OUT AGAINST JOASH. 25 THE ARAMEANS WITHDREW, LEAVING JOASH SEVERELY WOUNDED. BUT HIS OWN OFFICIALS PLOTTED TO KILL HIM FOR MURDERING THE SON OF JEHOIADA THE PRIEST. THEY ASSASSINATED HIM AS HE LAY IN BED. THEN HE WAS BURIED IN THE CITY OF DAVID, BUT NOT IN THE ROYAL CEMETERY.

V. 24 - A "SMALL NUMBER OF MEN" ARE ABLE TO DEFEAT A "VERY GREAT ARMY" BECAUSE THE LORD HAD FORSAKEN THE SUPPOSED "VERY GREAT ARMY". YET AGAIN THE PEOPLE OF GOD LEARN THAT THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES THEM "GREAT" IS THEIR "GREAT GOD". WITHOUT HIM JUDAH WAS NOTHING. WITHOUT HIM ISRAEL WAS NOTHING. WITHOUT HIM WE ARE NOTHING.

JOASH WAS UNFAITHFUL TO THE LORD AFTER JEHOIADA'S DEATH. AS A RESULT HE IS NOT BURIED IN THE KING'S TOMB. IF YOU REMEMBER, PERHAPS HIS ROYAL TOMB, THE PLACE OF HONOR, IS ALREADY OCCUPIED BY THE ONE WHO REALLY LEAD GOD'S PEOPLE - JEHOIADA (V. 16).

TWO THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT FROM THIS STORY, WOVEN BETWEEN 2 KINGS 12 AND 2 CHRONICLES 24.

1 - GIVE TO GOD FIRST. THE ACTIONS OF THE TEMPLE REPAIRS AND THE COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE MONEY IS A GOOD LESSON FOR US ABOUT OUR OFFERING (TITHING, ETC) TO GOD AND THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR FINANCES AND RESOURCES. IT IS AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE TO GIVE TO THE LORD AND HIS WORK FROM THE "FRUITS" OF OUR LABORS. YET WE CAN OFTEN BE FACED WITH THE TEMPTATION TO FIRST TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES AND GIVE TO THE LORD WHAT IS LEFT OVER FROM THAT. WHETHER OUR MONEY OR OUR ENERGIES, THIS TEMPTATION IS REAL.

THE PRIESTS WERE GIVEN THE MONEY FOR THE TEMPLE REPAIRS AND YET THEIR FIRST TOOK CARE OF THEIR OWN NEEDS AND PLANNED TO LEAVE THE REST FOR GOD'S WORK. YET THIS ISN'T HOW THINGS WORK. IF WE CARE FOR OUR OWN NEEDS FIRST AND THEN GIVE TO GOD WHAT IS "LEFTOVER" WE WILL LIKELY REPEAT WHAT WE READ IN THIS STORY. WE CAN ALWAYS FIND SOMEWAY TO USE OUR MONEY OR RESOURCES ON OURSELVES. THAT IS WHY I BELIEVE WE SHOULD GIVE TO GOD FIRST AND THEN LEAVE THE REST FOR OUR NEEDS. TIME AND TIME AGAIN IN MY OWN LIFE I HAVE SEEN THAT WHEN I PRACTICE GENEROSITY AND GIVING THIS WAY, GOD TAKES CARE OF MY NEEDS BEYOND WHAT I THINK I HAVE "LEFT." THE PRIEST SHOULD HAVE GIVEN TO GOD FIRST AND QUICKLY AND THE LORD'S HOUSE WOULD HAVE BEEN CARED FOR - AND THEIR NEEDS WOULD HAVE BEEN MET TOO. IF WE DO IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND, WE MAY FIND OURSELVES FED AND CLOTHED WHILE GOD'S WORK LEFT IN NEED OF REPAIR.

2 - REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD AND OTHERS HAVE DONE FOR YOU. JOASH MURDERS ZECHARIAH BECAUSE HE FORGOT THE KINDNESS OF HIS FATHER. HE HAD NOT RECOUNTED DAILY AND OFTEN THE GOODNESS OF GOD IN HIS LIFE. WHEN WE DO NOT REMAIN THANKFUL, GRATEFUL AND MINDFUL OF HOW GOD HAS PROVIDED FOR US, DELIVERED US, CARED FOR US AND LOVES US, WE WILL BE TEMPTED TO GO PLACES IN OUR HEART AND MIND WE SHOULD NOT GO. IT MAY SEEM LIKE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN BEING THANKFUL AND MURDERING SOMEONE (AS JOASH DID TO ZECHARIAH) ARE FAR. AND THEY ARE. BUT THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT THE REASON JOASH WAS EVEN ABLE TO REACH THAT POINT OF SIN WAS BECAUSE "JOASH THE KING DID NOT REMEMBER THE KINDNESS WHICH HIS FATHER JEHOIADA HAD SHOWN HIM (2 CHRON 24:22)." DON'T ASSUME BECAUSE YOU AREN'T MURDERING SOMEONE THAT YOU AREN'T IN DANGER OF SINNING AGAINST THE LORD BECAUSE YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN HIS KINDNESS TOWARDS YOU.

THE SAME IS TRUE ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE. WHEN WE FORGET TO BE GRATEFUL FOR OUR SPOUSES AND CHILDREN, OUR FAMILY, OUR CHURCH, OUR JOBS, ETC...WE CAN BECOME HARD HEARTED TOWARDS THEM. SURE THESE RELATIONSHIPS AREN'T PERFECT AND OUR PERSPECTIVE ON THEM DON'T ALWAYS INCLUDE RAINBOWS AND UNICORNS...BUT AS SOON AS WE STOP BEING THANKFUL AND REMEMBER HOW GOD HAS BLESSED US, THE HARDNESS OF OUR HEARTS WILL LEAD TO HURTFUL WORDS, COLDNESS, BITTERNESS, AND UNGODLY DREAMS OF OTHER AND BETTER SCENARIOS. YOU MAY NOT STONE SOMEONE THIS AFTERNOON, BUT WHAT ROAD WILL YOUR LACK OF GRATITUDE LEAD YOU?

IT IS A GOOD PRACTICE (AND WOULD HAVE SERVED JOASH WELL) TO TELL OURSELVES TO REMEMBER THE THINGS WE HAVE TO BE THANKFUL FOR. I THINK THAT IS WHAT DAVID WAS TELLING HIMSELF TO DO WHEN HE WROTE:

PSALM 103:2 - BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NONE OF HIS BENEFITS;

PSALM 103:2 (NLT) - LET ALL THAT I AM PRAISE THE LORD; MAY I NEVER FORGET THE GOOD THINGS HE DOES FOR ME.