

Kings and Prophets 14-10-17b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Kings chapter 12, and this is gonna be a wonderful, uplifting, and largely disappointing chapter. Because, look at the title. Joash, your Bible may say Jehoash, you know it's the same thing, yeho and yo.

They're the same. And you find them intermingled. So we're gonna call him Joash just for my own sanity.

Joash repairs the temple. What a great thing. Now, what do you think happened to the temple during the time of Athaliah? Roof began to leak, hinges began to creak, things began to suffer from lack of maintenance and lack of attention, lack of the daily ministrations of the Levitical priests, whose job it is to keep that thing like new.

They have been driven from the scene. They don't wanna go next door to Athaliah's house and try to do anything. There's nobody coming anymore.

They're all elsewhere. So it has almost literally gone to the dogs. And now that Joash isn't living there anymore, he's moved over to the king's palace where he belongs.

He's going to get it fixed up. You can imagine him growing up as a little boy saying, this place is creepy. It's dank, it leaks, it's dark.

They don't have enough torches. It's falling down. And he knows exactly what it's like in there.

So it tells us in verse two of chapter 12, 2 Kings 12, two. Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. Where does the priest work? Where is his place of business? The temple.

So what do you think the priority's gonna be once the king gets his hands on the royal budget? A little whisper in the ear from Jehoiada, you know, remember that dank, dark place where you started growing up? Well, why don't we fix that thing? So he did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him, but the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. And Joash said to the priests, all the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the Lord, each man's census money, each man's assessment money, all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord.

These, by the way, are three different technical budget line items. These are three different income streams that came into the via worship. This is sort of the taxation system and the monetary tracking, the income for the government.

And as I said, there is an intermingling between the monarchy and the priesthood. But these dedicated gifts that are brought in to the house of the Lord, that's a particular category of gift. And that money is tracked separately from the second one, each man's census money.

You remember the census money. Remember when David numbered the people and the plague, that's how you ended up with the temple where it is here, the threshing field of Arona, because there was a temple tax. Remember when Jesus told Peter, Peter says, what are we gonna do about the tax? Jesus said, go catch a fish.

You'll find a coin in his mouth, pay it for you and for me. This is that census tax. This is a separate stream, separate income stream.

The money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord, these are the voluntary freewill gifts. And you would imagine that in days of spiritual lassitude and spiritual apathy, this would be almost non-existent, but it is a separate line item. These gifts are tracked separately.

In the church, this is the only line item. We don't have a census tax. We don't have an obligatory payment to be made for any reason.

This line item right here, the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring to the house of the Lord. You remember the verse in the New Testament, right? Let each one set by as he sees fit, not grudgingly or out of necessity, as each man purposes in his own heart, so let him give. As each man purposes in his own heart, so let him give.

The money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord. Let the priest, verse five, take themselves each from his constituency. Remember the priesthood is scattered through Israel.

They don't have land of their own. So there's some living with different clans in Judah. Each from his constituency, let them repair the damages of the temple wherever any dilapidation is found.

Now it was so by the 23rd year of King Joash. In the 23rd year of King Joash, how old is Joash? In the 23rd year of a king that started reigning when he was seven, how old is he? See, you can just get a little mathematics for free here. He's 30, he's about 30 years of age.

He's about 30 years of age. And he's concerned with the status of what's going on at the temple. We have another king who is concerned with the status of things at the temple when he is about 30 years of age.

So he looked around, he started this initiative not long after he became king, maybe he's eight or nine or early on. And they've been running this system now until he is 30. Let's say 20 years this has been going on.

And what is the result? The priest had not repaired the damages of the temple. Now this ought to just leap off the page of your Bible. Doesn't it leap? You see it leaping? Leaps off the page, doesn't it? Look at that.

The priests had not repaired the damages of the temple. These guys didn't even have a job until Jehoiada got the monarchy back on track and got a legitimate Davidic heir on the throne. He gives them one job and they utterly fail.

Now, why did they fail? Well, go back to verse three. What had happened? It had become traditional. It was like Thanksgiving.

It was like Christmas. It was like Halloween. It was like the 4th of July that people would do these high places worship rituals of their own devising.

It was that the family would go up and picnic and they would do this stuff and it became ingrained in the culture. It happened for so long without any opposition or any resistance that it had become as customary as the king standing by the pillar. A decent analogy to this would be slavery in this country right after it was formed.

In the days of George Washington and James Brown, and George Madison, and John Adams, and John Quincy Adams, and Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson, around that time, late 17, early 1800s, many of these men who had a hand in crafting the founding documents of this country, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, we hold these truths to be self-evident, all men are created equal, endowed by their creator with inalienable rights, and all around them are enslaved people, not just blacks, although quite a few of them were from Africa, but also Native Americans that were enslaved, people from other places that were under burden and had become enslaved. And now modern historians go back and they say, I'm just shocked, I am just shocked, I can hardly hold my history book to see that Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the words in his own fancy penmanship about all men being created equal, owned slaves. George Washington, the father of our country, owned slaves.

These are the guys, the only guy that's really got a decent historical record on slavery out of all of the founding fathers is Alexander Hamilton. He and Lafayette, the two of them were militant, they, Lafayette wanted, tried to start a country to put freed slaves in, because here's the problem, and it pertains to our study. It's one thing to have an ideal and say, ideally, we just wouldn't have slavery anymore.

George Washington becomes president, you've got the colonies there, you're an independent nation, well, the first thing we're going to do is get rid of slavery. Well, that sounds great, but you've got tens of thousands of people who know no other existence, have no other way of life. If you release them and you cannot afford to pay them, that's the reason you have them as slaves, is you don't have the capital to hire people to do this at a decent wage.

You can't just say, well, as of Tuesday, you're all free and I will start paying you \$7 an hour to do the same work that I've been just giving you room and board to do up till now. So what do you do? They would have to release them. You must go.

I cannot afford to pay you. You're free, go have a good time as free people. Well, they would

starve.

Families would starve. They have no means of support. They have no skills.

They have no trade. They have no niche in the economy. Where are they going to live? They can't live on the plantation.

Plantation doesn't own them anymore. Plantation can't pay them. They don't have any money to pay rent.

There's no economic basis. What are you going to do? It sounds so grand to say, oh, the founding fathers should have immediately freed the slaves. There had been slavery in this country for 200 years before the country was founded.

So what are you going to do with all of these? It sounds great, but the practical nature of it is very difficult. Well, king after king after king, when he came to the throne, maybe he's a faithful king. He loves God.

And he says, you know, we need to get back to that biblical form of worship where people come to Jerusalem and worship at the temple where the Shekinah is enshrined in the Holy of Holies. And we have a Levitical priesthood to follow the law of Moses in running these sacrifices and this worship. But it was so entrenched and so beloved by the people, they couldn't get it done.

And so the king said, this is the thinking. This is what they thought. This is what they figured.

Do you think Jehoiada wouldn't want to get rid of worship on the high places and boost business down at the temple where he and all of his relatives and all of the rest of the priests are functioning? He would love to do that. But Jehoiada is a very practical man from observation looking at him. He is very practical in the way he brings out the king.

He's very practical in the way he ensures the fate of Athaliah. He thinks ahead and he does things that are very, he would make a great senior enlisted man making sure all of the I's are dotted and T's are crossed in getting things done. But in terms of serving God and following God, hearing God's voice, having provision from God to make things happen, the power of God being inserted, do you see any power of God, has there been any demonstration of God's power anywhere in Joash's survival and enthronement? Did God do any part of this? Who gets the credit for all this? Jehoiada gets the credit.

He didn't consult with God, he didn't appeal to God. These are the days when God intervenes. This is the days when God appears in flames of fire and takes the tops off of mountains and raises the dead and blinds whole armies and all of this stuff has been happening.

Jehoiada just manufactures this deliverance out of his own whole cloth and it is such a typical thing in Israel. And because of the lack of that divine spark, look at this. Look at this, verse 3 explains verse 6, because they did not have the courage, because they didn't go to God and get

rid of this high place problem, the temple thing ain't happening.

It's not happening. The two are connected. It's the place of worship and nobody's coming down and paying enough money and giving these free will gifts and so on.

The priests are apathetic. They don't think it's ever going to happen. They're not putting anything into it.

Why? Because they didn't have the courage to go to God and get the high places eradicated. If God sent a couple of strategically located lightning strikes on the high places, that would end that. Well, I don't care if we did have Thanksgiving last year, we're not having it this year because God roasted the turkey and incinerated it with a bolt of fire from heaven.

You know, I know we had the Christmas tree last year, but God blew the thing up and I don't think I want to hang another Christmas tree this year, right? But in the human realm in which Jehoiada is functioning and operating, he doesn't see a solution to the high place problem. This isn't really Joash, this is Jehoiada. Jehoiada is the thinker and the doer in this reign for the first 20 odd years.

And actually throughout his life until he dies, he's the guy making things happen and he is not the prophet of God. And he is not the kind of king, Joash is not the kind of king that he could have been because he's under the shadow of Jehoiada. So by the 23rd year of his reign, nothing's been done for the house of God.

And why is that? People are content to do the high place thing. And Jehoiada slash Joash have not had the gumption to go to God and say, Lord, we know that worship should be taking place in your house. Give us an answer on this high place fascination that the people have.

Do you think the Lord's arm is too short and he couldn't do this? His ear is heavy and he couldn't hear that prayer? This is entirely a failure in the realm of contact with God. And I think people tend to miss this because it says, Joash did what was right in the sight of the Lord. Listen to me carefully.

It is not enough to simply do what is right in the sight of the Lord. A lot of us congratulate ourselves. Well, I don't do what's wrong in the sight of the Lord.

The things I do are right in the sight of the Lord. That is not enough. If you want to be approved by God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed.

It's not a matter of, well, everything I did was right in the sight of the Lord. It takes drive, it takes initiative, it takes a compulsion, a burning, flaming desire to be the best and do the best and serve God to the utmost. Not just, look, I didn't do anything wrong.

I did what was right in the sight of the Lord. It's not enough. And that's Joash's problem.

So after 23 years, he finally, 23 years later, I mean, how long does it take to figure out if the

temple is being repaired or not? 23, you know how old we were 23 years ago? Take your current age and subtract 23 and think how long a time that is. That's how long it took Joash to realize, you know, the plan ain't working. Now how much of a burning zeal for the Lord and the house of the Lord does Joash have that two and a half decades later he says, you know, I don't really see much by way of 23 years.

That's pathetic. Look at the Lord Jesus right after he starts his ministry and goes down to the temple and sees the money changers and all the den of thieves stuff going on down there. What was his zeal like for the house of the Lord? He didn't call a committee meeting.

He didn't consult with a high priest. He fashioned a whip of cords. He drove those people out and he said, you're corrupting my father's house.

You've turned it into a den of thieves. This is supposed to be a house of prayer. A house of prayer.

Where's the prayer here? It's nowhere. But before we get too high on our horse about Joash, think about ourselves. I was sitting there in another context pursuing another goal with other people and it suddenly dawned on me that we were making all these plans and strategizing and who we're going to talk to.

And I thought, you know, we have not prayed about this and we're a ministry. We should be asking God to give us wisdom, asking God to bring us people, asking God to illuminate the path and show us the way and keep us doing things the way he wants them done. And we just dropped everything right there and prayed because we have our, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? We're the temple and there ought to be prayer going on.

We need to be taking these things to God. Got a question? This is what I love to tell atheists and agnostics. These people are always trying to argue with me in my contact with the unbelieving world.

They say, well, you know, I don't find the evidence compelling enough to believe in God, you know. And I say, well, look, what would it take? Well, I suppose if he came down and appeared to me and transported me into the future and showed me that, then I'd probably believe. And I say, well, how would you know that that wasn't a hallucination? Just you've got some bad grits in your supper and, you know, you had a woke up with some kind of an infection in your brain.

How would you know it was really him? And if he did promise you and say, look, here's the glory of the future and why would you believe him? He might be lying. Maybe he's an alien and he's plugged an electrode in your brain. Maybe he's from some distant planet that engineered our DNA and spread it here because of course God couldn't have done it.

It has to be something else. Maybe he's from one of those infinite universes you believe in with no evidence whatsoever. How would you know he's telling the truth? He says, my name is Jesus.

How do you know he's Jesus? See there's no standard of evidence. It's a matter of attitude. It is attitude.

What's our attitude? Do we have an attitude of prayer? God's house is supposed to be a house of prayer. There's been no prayer anywhere in this story thus far. So after 23 years, Joash says, wow, the plan's not working.

So he calls Jehoiada the priest. He's the king. Do you think David would have called the priest and said, come here, Joash, I can understand when he's seven.

Now he's 30, but he calls Joida the priest and the other priests and he says to them, why have you not repaired the damages of the temple? Now therefore, do not take more money from your constituency, but deliver it for repairing the damages of the temple. So the priest agreed they would neither receive more money from the people nor repair the damages of the temple. And this is kind of convoluted.

What it basically says is, instead of those previous revenue streams that they were going to divert, he says, look, all the money that comes in is going to go to repairs and nothing else. You say, well, just those streams, you know, we've got all this other money, but those mysteriously dried up and we haven't gotten any money for the repairs. He says, look, we're putting a box in the temple courtyard and money is going to go into it and that money, I'm going to look and make sure there's money in it and that money is going to be spent on the repairs.

So the priest agreed they would not take any more money for priestly functions. They were, well, we used up everything and there was nothing left over for the repair. So Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, set it beside the altar on the right side as one comes into the house of the Lord.

Notice as one comes in. This is a contemporaneous account. It's on the right side as one comes.

Who needs this detail if you're writing 200 years after the fact, post-exile? Nobody in their right mind would put this kind of detail in. It's a detail because it was written contemporaneously. He says it's on the right side as you come in.

He doesn't say it was on the right side when you came in. He said as you come in, it's going to be on the right as though it's still there. The priests who kept the door put there all the money brought into the house of the Lord.

Notice, all the money. So it was, whenever they saw there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest came up and put it in bags, counted the money that was found in the house of the Lord. They gave the money which had been apportioned into the hands of those who did the work, who had the oversight of the house of the Lord, and they paid it out to the carpenters and builders who worked on the house of the Lord, and to masons and stone cutters for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the damage of the house of the Lord and for all that was paid out to repair the temple.

However, there were not made for the house of the Lord basins of silver, trimmers, sprinkling bowls, trumpets, any articles of gold or articles of silver from the money brought in to the house of the Lord, but they gave that to the workmen. This is the previous budget allocation. The priests were saying, well, you know, we had to get a new set of shovels and we didn't have any left over for repairs.

And Joash said, look, you're going to have to do without no more shovels, no more candlesticks, no more basins of silver, no more sprinkling bowls. You get by on the bowls you've got. Quit buying that stuff.

Quit buying the furniture and shore up the walls, fix the hinges, repair the infrastructure of the building itself. Quit buying furniture for a house that is falling down. It took him 23 years to figure this out, but he finally did.

They did not require an account, verse 15, from the workmen into whose hand they delivered the money to be paid, for they dealt faithfully. How do you know if they're dealing faithfully if you don't count the money? This is the party line. This is the royal propaganda.

We don't do any accounting because these men are faithful. As soon as you declare somebody faithful, they will probably immediately become an embezzler. How do you know where this money is? They didn't say, well, we gave you 20 shekels to rebuild this gate.

How much did the gate cost? How much did you pay your workmen? They had no accounting because the men are judged faithful, so they just don't even ask them. This is foolishness, foolishness. There is embezzling that takes place in large churches that have big budgets.

There's skimming that goes on. There is all kinds of nefarious. This is another instance of the priesthood making the call instead of the king.

The authority in the soul that says, I may be as harmless as a dove, but I'm going to be as wise as a serpent. This is God's money. These people, listen to me now, where is this money coming from? People are shearing sheep and growing crops and making products and bringing gifts and offerings to the temple.

You're not going to make an accounting of money that people have given to God and ensure that your stewardship is sound, that you are managing that money well. It's insane. The Bible will report things without remark, and you have to judge it on other bases.

The Lord Jesus knew about accounting, didn't He? Remember the parable of the talents, the parable of the pounds? You should have put this money on account with a banker, and I would have a return. There is an accounting. The priests are accountable.

David was held accountable when he didn't collect that census tax. They may not be keeping an accounting down here, but God's got accounting angels. Remember the marking angel? He runs around with an ink horn, and he's keeping track.

There are books written in heaven. It's nuts to hand bags of money to workmen and just assume that they're, well, they're working on the temple. How could they do anything but? It's nuts.

This is not a commendation. It's just a recorded fact. They assumed the men were faithful.

The money from the trespass offerings and the money, this is verse 16, from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the Lord. It belonged to the priests. Well, suffice it to say that this is throwing a new policy at a problem.

It doesn't say it worked, does it? Does it say, and behold, the temple of the Lord shined like new. Behold, the temple of the Lord was fully repaired, and Shekinah descended again. It doesn't even say it worked.

It just says after 23 years, he said, well, this policy's not working. I'm going to make a different policy. And that's it.

It doesn't say anything about it working. Instead, how pleased is God with all of this? Hazael, king of Syria, went up and fought against Gath and took it. Then Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem.

Who's the first guy with a sword that God is sending by way of judgment? If Joash is doing such a good job, doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord and repairing the temple, why is God sending Hazael with a big sword to attack Jerusalem? Is this the reward you get for doing a good job? No. This is what you get when you're messing up. Joash, king of Judah, took all the sacred things that his fathers Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred things, all the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the Lord and in the king's house.

He took the king's treasuries and God's treasuries and sent it all to Hazael, king of Syria. Bought him off. Bought him off with God's money.

I'm fixing to go get my seminary notes and transfer Joash from the good king list to the very misguided king list. So far, he hasn't done anything noteworthy. He's spinning his wheels, but the temple's not fixed.

He just gave away all of that unaccounted money that was in God's house. I wonder if he counted it before he gave it to Hazael. Now, the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah.

His servants arose and formed a conspiracy and killed Joash in the house of Mollo, which goes down to Silla. He got killed at the landfill. He got killed at the city dump.

They dragged the king to the dump and killed him. That's what the Mollo is. The Mollo is the dump.

This is not the normal fate of faithful, obedient kings, is it? The way you go out is largely significant in Old Testament days. Yozakar, the son of Shimeoth, and Jehozabad, the son of Shomer, his servants, struck him. He died.

They buried him with his fathers in the city of David and Amaziah, his son, reigned in his place. Never got rid of the high places. Never got the temple fixed.

One of the things that we discover in chronicles is what happened to Joash after Jehoiada died. If you go to 2 Chronicles chapter 24, we'll close by looking at this real quick. You have that same account in 24, they gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the Lord.

I'm looking at verse 12 of 2 Chronicles 24, 2 Chronicles 24, 12. They gave money to those who did the work of the service of the house of the Lord. They hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord.

Those who worked in iron and bronze to restore the house of the Lord. The workmen labored and the work was completed by them. And they restored the house of God to its original condition and reinforced it.

When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king in Jehoiada. They made from it articles for the house of the Lord, articles for serving and offering spoons and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada.

But verse 15, Jehoiada grew old and was full of days and he died. He was 130 years old when he died. They buried him in the city of David among the kings because he had done good in Israel both toward God and his house.

This was a rare honor to be buried in the area of the kings. You see this in Egypt sometimes. A guy that was a famous high priest or whatever, they would put him near the pharaohs.

After the death of Jehoiada, the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king and the king listened to them. Therefore they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers and served wooden images and idols. Then the spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, the priest, who stood above the people and said to them, Thus says God, why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he also has forsaken you.

So they conspired against him, and the commandment of the Lord was that he should be banished. So they took the hand of the king, they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord. Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son. And as he... Notice who got stoned, who got killed? At whose behest? Who's killing who here? Did you catch that? The spirit of God comes upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada.

He is now standing up and offering a prophetic utterance. He's functioning as a prophet. This is what's been missing.

Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you. So they conspired against him, against Zechariah. And at the command of the king, they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the Lord.

Jehoiada wouldn't kill Athaliah there. But Joash, quote good king Joash, has Zechariah stoned in the court of the house of the Lord. Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father, his adopted father if you will, had done, but killed his son.

And as he died, he said, the Lord look on it and repay. This is Zechariah. May the Lord look on it and repay.

So it happened in the spring of the year, the army of Syria came up against. So now you see how hollow this repair effort is. Chronicles tells us that they did actually get the building finished.

But how real is that repair? You repair the building, what about the actual worship? What about the service of God? What about serving God with a whole heart as his father David had done? He's not anywhere near it. He's got the stiffening presence of Jehoiada, but when Jehoiada dies, he goes completely off the rails. He has no spiritual life of his own.

And here's the second principle for the night. The first one is how important it is to make sure that we organize our thinking, recognize the function of our priesthood and our spiritual responsibilities, but also recognize that we have to have perspective on all of the assignments that God has given us. There is communication of the word of God.

That's what the prophet was for. Under the ministry of God's spirit, he communicated the word of God. That has to be there.

You can't just say, well, I'm a priest and I've got it all figured out. The word of the Lord has to be there. We cultivate it by prayer.

We ask and we seek and we knock. And we also have that kingly function in the sense that we have got to make executive decisions in our life, and sometimes we have to subordinate the priestly function. I would have loved to sit around and listen to Bible class all day long when I was young, six, seven, eight Bible classes a day.

That would have been great, but it would have been foolish. It would have been a wonderful exercise of my priesthood, but my life is based on the word of God. It's bigger than that.

In the same way that Israel, why didn't God just say, well, you're a kingdom of priests and I'm not kidding. You're all priests. I just want you to sit around sacrificing all day long.

We're not going to fight any wars. We're not going to have any economy. We're not going to have any agriculture.

Everybody's a priest. You can't do that. Priesthood is one function and it's a limited function and it is balanced and it complements and invigorates all of the rest of life.

God did not put us here on this earth to simply sit around and worship. It's an important function. But we have an executive responsibility in our soul and we've got to allocate the right amount of emphasis and the right amount of time to our priesthood.

And it does not trump everything else in life. It doesn't. We go before the Lord and ensure that we are doing what we are supposed to do, but life is more than priesthood.

So he gets the Masons to repair the house of the Lord. Who knows how much graft and embezzling and loss of the funds went on from those free will gifts because they didn't keep accounting. But when Jehoiada grows old and dies, Joash becomes a murderer and murders Jehoiada's own son.

Now there is a picture here and this is our closing thought. You honor the father, but you slay the son. You honor the father, but you slay the son.

Why? You don't like what he says about what you're doing. There's another foreshadowing of things to come in Israel. In these same hills of Judah will come a time when people who are all zealous for serving the father, but as the presence of the father dwindles and vanishes away because of the loss of genuine covenant relationship with God, when the son shows up and tries to call them to account, slay him.

The Joash kind of righteousness is what got Israel in trouble and put Christ on the cross. That's not the kind of righteousness we want to have. I am sure that Joash was very proud of himself and had all kinds of plaques on the wall for fixing the temple, but garnishing the outside of the temple isn't the same as serving the God who dwells in the temple.

That's genuine priesthood and that's genuine executive authority, kingship. So it's a sobering example. There's a way that seems right to us, but when in doubt, there's nothing like asking God.

There is no case where if you have a genuine seeking heart and you go to God and say, I really need an answer, He's not going to answer. That's our privilege. Whatever you ask, Jesus said, in my name, my father is listening up there.

That's what it means to pray in Jesus' name. That puts us in the throne room. That puts us in there as family.

Ask and it shall be given. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened.

There's no record of Joash ever doing that. And the prop of this faithful priest with his

limitations isn't enough to save the king. In the same way that the priesthood in Israel, the Pharisees, the scribes, the religious structure that grew up in Israel was not enough to save the nation.

When the Son came and made His proclamation, they couldn't wait to kill Him. Well, this brings us to the reign of Amaziah. And with Amaziah, we're going to see a really interesting return to the themes that we have been reviewing in our hiatus and stepping back and looking at symbolic value of things that are included in stories.

And it's going to be a great thing to have that in our arsenal as we look at the account of Amaziah's reign. But let's close here for tonight in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word.

Thank You for its convicting and rebuking and correcting power. Thank You for its power, undiminished across the centuries and the millennia, the same power that is embodied in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit and His ministry of impressing Your truth on our hearts in a way that is meaningful and challenging and motivating.

We pray that the things that we have seen tonight will become a source of strength in our souls, that there will be light on our path, that as we pray and seek Your face, You will reveal Your specific will to us in things small and large, and that in all things our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified as we invest the time that remains to us in this life in seeking to grow in grace and knowledge and be prepared for service in the times ahead and the ages to come. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.