Joash- The Boy Who Became King



Scripture Reference: 2 Kings 11-12

Suggested Theme: Keep trusting in God, even when bad things happen.

Memory Verse: “Let us hold firmly to the hope that we have confessed. We can trust God to do what he promised.” Hebrews 10:23, ICB

Story Overview:

When evil Athaliah heard that her son, King Ahaziah (6th king of Judah), had been killed, she declared herself Queen of Judah. She was so evil that she killed her own grandchildren so that they would not try to be kings or queens in her place. Baby Joash was hidden in the temple by his aunt, so he was not killed. Jehoiada, the priest, cared for Joash and taught him about God. When Joash was seven years old, Jehoiada led the people in crowning Joash as the new king in Athaliah’s place. During his reign, Joash organised the work of the temple and had it repaired to its former glory. Sadly, in his later years Joash turned away from God.

Background Study:

At this point, the politics of Israel and Judah intertwine. Athaliah (the daughter of Israel’s King Ahab and Queen Jezebel) married Jehoram (son of Judah’s King Jehoshaphat) to cement a treaty (2 Chronicles 18:1). Athaliah and Jehoram’s son was Ahaziah. Ahaziah became the sixth king of Judah and ruled for one year.

Meanwhile, the political scene heated up in Israel. Elisha anointed Jehu, an army commander, as the new king of Israel. Jehu proceeded to destroy the royal family of Israel. 2 Kings 10:1-17 records how he brutally wiped out all of old King Ahab’s descendants (including Ahab’s widow, Jezebel – 2 Kings 9:30-37). He also killed all of the prophets of Baal in Israel (2 Kings 10:18-35). He killed Joram (king of Israel) and Ahaziah (king of Judah) – 2 Kings 9:14-29.

When King Ahaziah was killed, one of his sons should have become King of Judah. Instead, Ahaziah’s mother decided that she should be queen. She tried to kill all of her own children and grandchildren so that they would not take the throne away from her. She almost succeeded in killing them all.

You might remember how God had promised King David, years before, that his descendant (later revealed as Jesus Christ) would someday save the world. Athaliah’s husband, Jehoram, was a descendant of King David. If Athaliah had succeeded in her plan to kill all of her husband’s descendants, then she would have killed all of King David’s descendants and made the Lord’s promise impossible to fulfill.

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

At this point, we read about Joash and the two distinct parts of his story. Joash's early life is one of victory and devotion to God. The last part of his life is sad and a life away from God.

The Early Life of King Joash:

One of the daughters of King Jehoram (Jehosheba) saw that her baby nephew, Joash, was going to be killed along with the other princes. Jehosheba saved the baby and hid him in the temple where her husband served as a priest (2 Chronicles 22:11). Little Joash was the only male member of the royal family who was not killed.

Jehoiada knew that Joash must eventually be crowned king because he was the last of the Davidic seed line. He waited patiently and continued instructing Joash about the Lord and being king. When Joash was seven years old, Jehoiada knew the time was right. The old armour belonging to King David was still stored in the temple. Jehoiada gave the old armour to the army guards and told them to guard the new boy king carefully. He then crowned Joash in front of all the people and presented him with a copy of the covenant (2 Kings 11:12).

The people of Judah were thrilled to see the proper ruler finally wear the throne. They had not liked Athaliah – from the palace of Israel – usurping the throne. She was put to death. Jehoiada renewed the people's dedication to God, and the temple of Baal was destroyed. The palace was then returned to Joash, who sat on his rightful throne (2 Kings 11:17-21).

Joash was king for forty years. One of his major accomplishments was to repair the temple. This was the temple Solomon had built more than a hundred years before. While Queen Athaliah ruled, the temple was neglected and damaged. Its treasures had been stolen and used in the worship of Baal (2 Chronicles 24:7). The priests and Levites had not fulfilled their duties in caring for the temple. The king organised them and ordered a collection to be taken up to repair the temple.

The Later Life of King Joash:

Sadly, Joash's life took a turn at the end. Read about this in 2 Kings 12:19-21 and 2 Chronicles 24:17-27. When Jehoida (the priest who had been like a father to him) died, Joash began to take bad advice from his officials and began to allow idol worship in the kingdom once again. Jehoida's son, Zechariah, prophesied against this, but the officials plotted against him and stoned him. King Joash allowed this to happen. After this, the small Aramean army invaded Judah and plundered it. King Joash, the one who had once led his people back to God, now led them to destruction. He was murdered in his bed by his servants and was not even buried in the place where kings were buried. Ironically and in contrast, Jehoida (a priest and not a king) had received the honour of being buried where the kings were buried (2 Chronicles 24:15-16).

Background Information on the Divided Kingdom

Way to Introduce the Story:

For younger children, hide a small baby doll. Let the children find the doll. For older children, you might try the following game: Blindfold the "searcher." When the searcher cannot see, appoint a "baby." When you say, "Where's the baby?" all children should mill around the room, making animal sounds. Only the "baby" will make baby sounds (coo or cry, for instance) When you say, "Find the baby!" everyone should freeze in place and be silent. The "searcher" removes the blindfold and tries to guess which child is the baby. Play a few rounds of this and then talk about the noises a baby makes and how difficult it would be to hide a baby. "In today's story, we will learn about a time when a kind woman hid a baby to save his life!"

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

The Story:

Ahaziah became the king of Judah. He was a very bad king. He did not love God or try to obey God's laws. One of the reasons that King Ahaziah was so bad was that his mother, Queen Athaliah, had taught him to be bad when he was a little boy. Whenever Ahaziah did bad things, his mother said, "Good boy, Ahaziah, I like it when you do bad and mean things. Try to do some more bad things!"

After only one year as king, Ahaziah was killed. Everyone thought one of his sons would become king next, as was supposed to happen when a king died.

Instead, the king's mother, Athaliah, wanted to rule the country of Judah. She did not want any of her grandsons to become kings. Athaliah was so bad that she ordered all of Ahaziah's children to be killed so that she could be the Queen of Judah.

One of the king's sons was named Joash. Prince Joash was just a little baby. When Prince Joash's aunt, Jehosheba, found out that Athaliah wanted to kill the king's sons, she quickly took Prince Joash away and hid him so that the Queen could not find him. Jehosheba took the prince to the Temple of the Lord, where her husband was a priest. They kept the baby there for seven years. Prince Joash was safe in the temple.

For seven years, Queen Athaliah ruled Judah. She was a very bad and mean queen. She worshipped idols and tried to get everyone else to worship idols, too. Queen Athaliah's sons took some of the special furniture from the Temple of the Lord and used it to worship idols. The people of Judah did not like Athaliah. They wished that she were not the Queen.

Meanwhile, Joash was growing. He was not a baby anymore. Joash was a good little boy, and he tried to obey God. The High Priest in the temple taught Joash all about God. The High Priest knew that Athaliah should not be the ruler over Judah—Joash should! The priest wanted Judah to have a good king. He wanted Joash to be king someday. He taught Joash everything he would need to know when he became king.

When Joash was only seven years old, the time came for him to become king. The High Priest waited until Queen Athaliah was not around. Then he gathered the people together, anointed Joash, and put a crown on his head. He gave Joash a book with God's laws written in it.

The people were very happy when they saw that Joash was now the king. They began shouting, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

There was so much cheering that Queen Athaliah heard it. She ran to see what had happened. Queen Athaliah started yelling, "Treason! Treason!" but the people ignored her. They knew that Joash was the true ruler of Israel. Queen Athaliah was put to death so that she could never try to hurt the young King Joash again.

When King Joash grew up, he was a very good king. He always tried to obey the Lord, was good to the people, and ruled for forty years. One very important thing that King Joash did was to repair the Temple of the Lord. The temple was dirty and broken down. King Joash ordered that the priests collect money and workers be hired to fix it back up.

Joash was a good king for most of his life. But, sadly, the story of King Joash does not have a happy ending. Joash stopped trusting in God.

The High Priest, Jehoida, always gave Joash good advice and encouraged him to follow God's commands. When Jehoida died, King Joash began to take bad advice from his officials. The people had followed King Joash when he was good, but now they began to follow him when he was bad. They began to worship idols again. At the end of his life, this once-great-king was killed by his own servants.

top

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

View this slideshow and download it from the original source:
https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/king-joash/

top

Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

Review:

- What did Queen Athaliah teach her son when he was a little boy? (To be bad)
- When her son died, what did Athaliah do? (She made herself Queen)
- Why did Queen Athaliah try to kill her own grandchildren? (So they would not try to become kings or queens instead of her)
- What was the name of the one royal baby boy who lived? (Joash)
- Where did Joash's aunt hide him? (In the temple)
- What did Joash's uncle, a priest, teach him? (About the Lord God and how to be a king)
- How old was Joash when he became king? (Seven years old)
- What did King Joash do to the temple of the Lord? (Repaired and restored it)
- Did Joash continue to trust God when he got older? (No)
- What did you learn about God from this story?

Reflection:

- What question do you have for God about this story?
- What part of this story is most interesting to you?
- What do you think Joash's life was like as he secretly lived in the temple from a baby to age seven?
- How do you think Joash felt when he became king at age seven?
- Do you think you would be a good king at Joash's age?
- Have you been taught about God since you were a baby? How do you learn about God?
- If you want to learn more about God and His Word, what can you do? Who can you ask for help?
- How can a grownup obey God?

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a lifelong friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

Song Suggestions:

- He's Still Working on Me Song
- Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World Song
- My God is So Big Song
- Books of the Old Testament Song
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

top

Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Arrange to help repair or clean something in the church building, like Joash had the temple repaired.
- List the duties of a king and discuss how hard they would be for a seven-year-old boy.
- Hide a doll and let the children find it.
- Play like you are a baby (suck thumb, hold blanket and bottle, etc.) and tell the story from Joash's point of view.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Make any crown craft.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

top

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/

Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page and puzzle worksheets (Calvary Curriculum)
- Craft: Instructions for a simple paper crown (DLTK)
- Craft: Video instructions (2 minutes and 18 seconds) to make a very basic crown out of paper (Youtube: Papermade)

top

Date
2026/10/31

©2011-2026 Mission Bible Class, used by permission. Not to be sold. Find more free lessons at https://missionbibleclass.org/