

## 2 Kings Lesson 13

### 2 Kings Chapter 13

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Memory verses for this week: ***1Ti 5:8*** *But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

**Introduction:** In chapter 12, we studied about the reign of King Joash. He took the throne at the age of 7, and did many things right in his reign including the repair of the temple which had been neglected by the priests. As long as Jehoiada the priest lived, Joash did well as Jehoiada was like a father unto the king. Later in his reign, God brought chastisement on him and he was killed in a conspiracy of his servants and his son Amaziah took the throne.

In this chapter of II Kings, it presents the history of Jehoahaz over Israel followed by the reign of his son, Jehoash (or Joash). The events surrounding the death of Elisha are then recorded.

### I. The Reign of Jehoahaz over Israel

***2Ki 13:1*** *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.*

***2Ki 13:2*** *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.*

***2Ki 13:3*** *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.*

The next king of the northern kingdom is referenced against the tenure of the king of Judah. In the twenty-third year of Joash, Jehoahaz, king of Judah, ascended the throne of Israel. As noted, he was the son of Jehu. This was the same year that Joash renovated the Temple in Jerusalem.

***2Ki 12:6*** *But it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.*

John Gill makes these observations.

“Whereas Joash began to reign in the seventh year of Jehu, and Jehu reigned but twenty eight years, (II Kings 10:36 and II Kings 12:1), this could be but the

twenty first of Joash; to reconcile which it must be observed, that it was at the beginning of the seventh year of Jehu that Joash began to reign, and at the beginning of the twenty third of Joash that Jehoahaz began to reign, as the Jewish commentators observe.”

As noted, there is no contradiction in biblical details. Unfortunately, Jehoahaz did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD. He followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin. The sins of Jeroboam were the golden calves placed at Bethel and Dan.

Jehoahaz did not repent, therefore, God delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all *their* days. God in mercy chastened his people to draw them back to Himself. In this case, it was through economic depression brought about by a hostile neighbor, Syria.

*2Ki 13:4 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.*

*2Ki 13:5 (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.*

*2Ki 13:6 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.)*

To his credit, Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. Because of the chastening of God through the Syrians, Jehoahaz for the first time in his life besought the Lord. Implicit is a repentant spirit and God in His mercy heard the prayer of Jehoahaz.

These next two verses in 5 and 6 are parenthetical as indicated.

*“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”.*

The word translated as saviour (*evy yashà*) can also have the idea of a ‘deliverer.’ Though not explicitly noted, that deliverer is Jehoahaz’ son, Jehoash, as noted in verse 25. God gave deliverance to His people and they dwelt in peace as in their early days. Sadly, however, the northern kingdom still persisted in allowing the golden calves at Dan and Bethel as well as a pagan grove at Samaria.

*2Ki 13:7 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.*

*2Ki 13:8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

*2Ki 13:9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.*

The text here in verse 7 returns to where its main thought left off from verse 4. The thought is how the king of Syria, during his oppression of Israel, had left them with only fifty cavalymen, ten chariots, and a meager army of 10,000 infantrymen. At God's allowance, Syria had virtually destroyed Israel leaving them like the dusty chaff of wheat threshing. There is a great contrast between the saved man and the lost in Psalms chapter 1.

*Psa 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

*Psa 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

*Psa 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

*Psa 1:4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

In verse 8, we read of the reign of Jehoahaz over the northern kingdom. It is summarized noting that his son, Joash (or Jehoash) ascended the throne after his death.

In the Pulpit Commentary, it said this about the death of Jehoahaz.

**And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers;** and they buried him in Samaria. The kings of Israel from the time of Omri were buried in the capital, Samaria, as those of Judah were in Jerusalem. It is uncertain whether they had one common mausoleum, like the kings of Judah ([2Ch 28:27](#)), but it is most probable that they had. To rest with their fathers in the same royal sepulcher was to be duly honored at their death; to be excluded from it was a disgrace. **And Joash his son reigned in his stead.**

## **II. The Reign of Jehoash**

*2Ki 13:10 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.*

*2Ki 13:11 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.*

*2Ki 13:12 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?*

*2Ki 13:13 And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.*

The reign of Jehoash over the northern kingdom is unpleasantly described. Because the sitting king in Judah at this time was also named Joash, the sacred writer calls the king of Israel Jehoash though he also was known as Joash as well. Like his forefathers, he also refused to remove the golden calves, the sin of Jeroboam, from Israel. Like his predecessors, he too walked in that abomination.

In verse 12, the epitaph of Jehoash is here noted. The *Joash* mentioned here is *Jehoash* of the northern kingdom. Upon his death, his son Jeroboam II, ascended the throne of the northern kingdom.

### III. The Life of Elisha and his Last Days

*2Ki 13:14 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.*

We now return to the story of the last days of the prophet Elisha. In hearing of the mortal illness of Elisha, Joash, the king of Israel, came to him and wept. His reference to him as the father and the “chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof” hearkens back to the day when Elisha had witnessed Elijah’s translation to heaven. Word of that no doubt had reached Joash.

*2Ki 2:11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*  
*2Ki 2:12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.*

Though certainly not living for the Lord, Joash still perceived the spiritual blessing and power of God in His prophet. Elisha’s death would be the loss of a national resource and Joash knew it.

Matthew Henry said this about Elisha.

Elisha fell sick, 2Ki 13:14. Observe, (1.) He lived long; for it was now about sixty years since he was first called to be a prophet. It was a great mercy to Israel, and especially to the sons of the prophets, that he was continued so long a burning and shining light. Elijah finished his testimony in a fourth part of that time. God’s prophets have their day set them, some longer, others shorter, as Infinite Wisdom sees fit.

(2.) All the latter part of his time, from the anointing of Jehu, which was forty-five years before Joash began his reign, we find no mention made of him, or of any thing he did, till we find him here upon his death-bed. He might be useful to the last, and yet not so famous as he had sometimes been. The time of his flourishing was less than the time of his living. Let not old people complain of

obscurity, but rather be well pleased with retirement.

(3.) The spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, and yet he was not sent for to heaven in a fiery chariot, as Elijah was, but went the common road out of the world, and was *visited with the visitation of all men*. If God honour some above others, who yet are not inferior to them in gifts or graces, who shall find fault? *May he not do what he will with his own?*

*2Ki 13:15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.*

*2Ki 13:16 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.*

*2Ki 13:17 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, till thou have consumed them.*

As Elisha lay sick unto death, he said to Joash the king, 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, till thou have consumed them”*. In a graphic object lesson, Elisha placed his hands upon those of Joash as he shot an arrow to the east as directed.

He then announced that by Jehovah, Israel would be delivered from the Syrian oppression as was noted in verse 4. The mention of Israel smiting the Syrian at Aphek very well may have the thought of Syria being smitten as at Aphek when Ahab routed the Syrians years earlier. The following context will support this thought.

*1Ki 20:26 And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Benhadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.*

*1Ki 20:27 And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.*

*1Ki 20:28 And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.*

*1Ki 20:29 And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day.*

*1Ki 20:30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men that were left. And Benhadad fled, and came into the city, into an inner chamber.*

As will be noted at the end of this chapter, Israel under Joash (Jehoash) did defeat Syria three times.

*2Ki 13:25 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.*

*2Ki 13:18 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.*

*2Ki 13:19 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.*

Elisha then directed Joash to “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”. The object lesson should have been clear to Joash from the preceding comments of Elisha. So when he was directed to smite the ground, he did just that. However, Elisha rebuked him for not doing more, indicating that he could have defeated Syrian to an even greater extent.

*2Ki 13:20 And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.*

*2Ki 13:21 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.*

Elisha died was buried. Jewish tradition holds that Elisha was buried at Samaria. In any event wherever he was buried, record is made of God’s miraculous work through Elisha even after he was dead.

John Gill says that according to Jewish chronology, he died in the tenth year of Joash and he prophesied more than sixty years.

The raid of the Moabites was in the spring which was the beginning of the new year in the land of Israel. Though there is no scriptural record thereof, Jewish tradition claims that the man revived was Shallum the husband of Huldah the prophetess who purportedly lived many years thereafter.

*2Ki 13:22 But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.*

*2Ki 13:23 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.*

*2Ki 13:24 So Hazael king of Syria died; and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead.*

*2Ki 13:25 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.*

The chapter is summarized in these last four verses. Though God had allowed and even sent the Syrians to militarily and economically oppress Israel for their sin, nevertheless, He was gracious to them. In His compassion and faithfulness to His covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God did not allow Israel to be destroyed.

God always keeps His Word. Israel suffered from their sin, but God preserved them nevertheless. Hazael, Israel's long time antagonist died. His son Benhadad ascended the throne and would also cause much trouble for God's people.

As prophesied, 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 Joash did beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy made in 13:5 as well as 13:17, and specifically 13:18.

Though used as an instrument of chastening by God, the Syrians were eventually defeated by Israel at God's allowance.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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