SECOND KINGS

Chapter 12

*Joash Repairs the Temple*

**In the seventh year of Jehu, Joash became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother’s name was Zibiah; she was from Beersheba. 2 Joash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord all the years Jehoiada the priest instructed him. 3 The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. 4 Joash said to the priests, “Collect all the money that is brought as sacred offerings to the temple of the Lord—the money collected in the census, the money received from personal vows and the money brought voluntarily to the temple. 5 Let every priest receive the money from one of the treasurers, and let it be used to repair whatever damage is found in the temple.” 6 But by the twenty-third year of King Joash the priests still had not repaired the temple. 7 Therefore King Joash summoned Jehoiada the priest and the other priests and asked them, “Why aren’t you repairing the damage done to the temple? Take no more money from your treasurers, but hand it over for repairing the temple.” 8 The priests agreed that they would not collect any more money from the people and that they would not repair the temple themselves. 9 Jehoiada the priest took a chest and bored a hole in its lid. He placed it beside the altar, on the right side as one enters the temple of the Lord. The priests who guarded the entrance put into the chest all the money that was brought to the temple of the Lord. 10 Whenever they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest, the royal secretary and the high priest came, counted the money that had been brought into the temple of the Lord and put it into bags. 11 When the amount had been determined, they gave the money to the men appointed to supervise the work on the temple. With it they paid those who worked on the temple of the Lord—the carpenters and builders, 12 the masons and stonecutters. They purchased timber and dressed stone for the repair of the temple of the Lord, and met all the other expenses of restoring the temple. 13 The money brought into the temple was not spent for making silver basins, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, trumpets or any other articles of gold or silver for the temple of the Lord; 14 it was paid to the workmen, who used it to repair the temple. 15 They did not require an accounting from those to whom they gave the money to pay the workers, because they acted with complete honesty. 16 The money from the guilt offerings and sin offerings was not brought into the temple of the Lord; it belonged to the priests. 17 About this time Hazael king of Aram went up and attacked Gath and captured it. Then he turned to attack Jerusalem. 18 But Joash king of Judah took all the sacred objects dedicated by his fathers—Jehoshaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah, the kings of Judah—and the gifts he himself had dedicated and all the gold found in the treasuries of the temple of the Lord and of the royal palace, and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram, who then withdrew from Jerusalem. 19 As for the other events of the reign of Joash, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? 20 His officials conspired against him and assassinated him at Beth Millo, on the road down to Silla. 21 The officials who murdered him were Jozabad son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer. He died and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. And Amaziah his son succeeded him as king.**

**12:1** *seventh year of Jehu.* 835 b.c. (see note on 10:36). *forty years.* 835–796.

**12:2** *all the years Jehoiada the priest instructed him.* After Jehoiada died, Joash turned away from the Lord (see 2Ch 24:17–27).

**12:3** *high places … were not removed.* These were high places where the Lord was worshiped rather than pagan deities (see note on 1Ki 15:14). They were nevertheless potential sources for the entrance of pagan practices into Israel’s worship (see note on 1Ki 3:2).

**12:4** *money … brought as sacred offerings to the temple.* The money was derived from three different sources: 1. *money collected in the census.* At the age of 20, Israelite youths were required to register for military service and to make an offering of half a shekel (see note on 5:26) for use in the service of the central sanctuary (see Ex 30:11–16; 38:25–26; Nu 2:32). 2. *money received from personal vows.* Various types of vows and their equivalence in monetary assessments are described in Lev 27:1–25. 3. *money brought voluntarily to the temple.* For voluntary offerings see Lev 22:18–23; Dt 16:10.

**12:5** *treasurers.* Temple functionaries who handled financial matters for the priests relative to the people’s sacrifices and offerings. *whatever damage is found in the temple.* Construction of the temple had been completed 124 years before the beginning of the reign of Joash (see notes on v. 1; 1Ki 6:38). In addition to deterioration due to age, it had fallen into disrepair and abuse during the rule of Athaliah (see 2Ch 24:7).

**12:6** *twenty-third year of King Joash.* Joash may have instituted his plan for restoration of the temple a few years before the 23rd year of his reign. Now at age 30 he asserts his royal authority and takes charge of the temple repairs.

**12:7** *Take no more money from your treasurers.* The proceeds from the sources of revenue mentioned in v. 4 were no longer to be given to the priests.

**12:8** *priests agreed.* Apparently a compromise was reached: The priests would no longer take the money received from the people, but neither would they pay for the temple repairs from the money they had already received.

**12:9** *priests who guarded the entrance.* Three high-ranking priests charged with protecting the temple from unlawful (profane) entry (see 25:18; Jer 52:24). *put into the chest all the money.* When the people were assured that all their offerings would be used for the temple restoration, they responded with greater generosity. See 22:3–7 for continuation (or renewal) of this practice in the reign of Josiah.

**12:10** *royal secretary.* See note on 2Sa 8:17. Joash arranges for direct royal supervision of the temple’s monetary affairs.

**12:11** *men appointed.* The whole matter is taken out of the hands of the priests.

**12:13** *articles of gold or silver for the temple.* All the money was initially designated for the restoration of the temple. When the restoration was completed, additional funds were used for the acquisition of silver and gold articles for use in the temple service (see 2Ch 24:14).

**12:16** *money from the guilt offerings and sin offerings.* See Lev 5:16; 6:5; Nu 5:7–10 for references to priestly income in connection with the bringing of a guilt offering. There is no Pentateuchal reference to priestly income in connection with the bringing of a sin offering (but see Lev 7:7). (CSB)

**12:17** *About this time.* These events must have taken place toward the end of Joash’s reign. From 2Ch 24:17–24 it is clear that the Aramean attack was occasioned by Joash’s turning away from the Lord after Jehoiada’s death. Joash’s apostasy reached its climax in the stoning of Jehoiada’s son Zechariah (2Ch 24:22). Probably because of Joash’s earlier zeal for the temple, the author of Kings did not choose to relate these matters. (CSB)

*Hazael.* See 8:7–15; 10:32–33; 13:3, 22. (CSB)

*Gath.* One of the major Philistine cities (see Jos 13:3) that David had conquered (1Ch 18:1) and that continued to be subject to Judah during the reign of Rehoboam (2Ch 11:8). In the latter years of the reign of Joash of Judah (835–796 b.c.) and during the reign of Jehoahaz of Israel (814–798; see 13:3, 7), the Arameans had virtually overrun the northern kingdom, enabling them to advance against the Philistines and the kingdom of Judah with little resistance. (CSB)

*he turned to attack Jerusalem.* See 2Ch 24:23–24. (CSB)

**12:18** *sacred objects … gold … he sent them to Hazael.* Years earlier, Asa had sought to secure assistance from the Arameans with a similar gift (see 1Ki 15:18). (CSB)

**12:19** *annals of the kings of Judah.* See note on 1Ki 14:29. A fuller account of the reign of Joash is also found in 2Ch 22:10–24:27. (CSB)

**12:20** *conspired against him.* The conspiracy was aroused in response to Joash’s murder of Zechariah son of Jehoiada (see 2Ch 24:25). (CSB)

*Beth Millo.* Beth means “house”; for the meaning of Millo see note on Jdg 9:6. Here the reference may be to a building (perhaps a kind of barracks) built on the “Millo” in the old City of David (see 2Sa 5:9 and note; 1Ki 11:27). Perhaps the king was staying there temporarily with his troops at the time of his assassination; Chronicles says he was killed “in his bed” (2Ch 24:25). (CSB)

*Silla.* Perhaps refers to a steep descent from the City of David down into the Kidron Valley. (CSB)

**12:21** *officials.* Sons of Ammonite and Moabite mothers (2Ch 24:26), suggesting that they may have been mercenary military officers whose services could have been bought by others. (CSB)

*buried with his fathers.* But see 2Ch 24:25. (CSB)

*Amaziah his son succeeded him.* For the reign of Amaziah see 14:1–22. (CSB)