

SECOND KINGS

Chapter 14

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

In the second year of Joash the son of Joahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign. 2 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. 3 And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not like David his father. He did in all things as Joash his father had done. 4 But the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. 5 And as soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand, he struck down his servants who had struck down the king his father. 6 But he did not put to death the children of the murderers, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, where the LORD commanded, "Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. But each one shall die for his own sin." 7 He struck down ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and took Sela by storm, and called it Joktheel, which is its name to this day. 8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face." 9 And Jehoash king of Israel sent word to Amaziah king of Judah, "A thistle on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' and a wild beast of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thistle. 10 You have indeed struck down Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Be content with your glory, and stay at home, for why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?" 11 But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. 12 And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his home. 13 And Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem for four hundred cubits, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. 14 And he seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, also hostages, and he returned to Samaria. 15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash that he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 16 And Jehoash slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam his son reigned in his place. 17 Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. 18 Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? 19 And they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish and put him to death there. 20 And they brought him on horses; and he was buried in Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. 21 And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. 22 He built Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king slept with his fathers.

14:1 *second year of Jehoash.* 796 B.C. (CSB)

History of Southern Kingdom, which ended at 12:21 with the note that Amaziah succeeded Joash, his assassinated father, now resumes. (TLSB)

14:2 *twenty-nine years.* 796–767. Amaziah's 29-year reign included a 24-year co-regency with his son Azariah (see notes on v. 21; 15:1–2). (CSB)

14:3 *not like David his father.* Amaziah did not remain completely free from involvement with the worship of pagan deities (see 2Ch 25:14–16). His loyalty to the Lord fell short of that of Asa and Jehoshaphat before him (see 1Ki 15:11, 14; 22:43; see also 1Ki 9:4; 11:4). (CSB)

Kingdom would continue to erode. (TLSB)

14:6 *Book of the Law.* The Five Books of Moses are treated as a unit. (TLSB)

14:7 *struck down ten thousand Edomites.* Amaziah was able to regain temporarily (see 2Ch 28:17) some of Judah’s control over the Edomites, which had been lost during the reign of Jehoram (see 8:20–22). (CSB)

They had “revolted from the rule of Judah” some 50 years before, during the time of Joram of Judah (8:20–22). By defeating the Edomites, Amaziah opened the trade routes south to Elath on the Gulf of Aqaba (v 22; cf 1Ki 9:26–28 for Solomon’s use of this port). (TLSB)

Valley of Salt. The same battlefield on which David had defeated the Edomites (see 2Sa 8:13; 1Ch 18:12; Ps 60 title), generally identified with the Arabah directly south of the Dead Sea. (CSB)

Marshy region near the Salt Sea. (TLSB)

Sela. Means “rock”; often regarded as the Edomite stronghold presently known as Petra (a Greek word meaning “rock”; see Jdg 1:36; Isa 16:1; 42:11; Ob 3). (CSB)

Lit, “rock,” later known by its Gk name “Petra.” (TLSB)

Joktheel. Probably meaning “vanquished by God.” (TLSB)

to this day. Until the time of the writing of the account of Amaziah’s reign used by the author. (CSB)

Time when Edomite campaign was recorded, which author of Kings cites. (TLSB)

14:8 *look one another in the face.* A challenge amounting to a declaration of war. Perhaps it was provoked by the hostile actions of mercenary troops from the northern kingdom after their dismissal from the Judahite army (see 2Ch 25:10, 13) and by the refusal of Jehoash to establish a marriage alliance with Amaziah (see v. 9). (CSB)

Meet face-to-face, perhaps for the sake of a political marriage and treaty. (TLSB)

14:9 *Jehoash ... sent word.* For his reply Jehoash used a fable (see Jdg 9:8–15) in which he represented himself as a strong cedar and Amaziah as an insignificant thistle that could easily be trampled underfoot. (CSB)

A thistle. Similar fable was told by Jotham (cf Jgs 9:8–15) (TLSB)

cedar. Representing Jehoash of Israel, who magnifies himself against Amaziah. (TLSB)

14:10 Jehoash’s response likely indicates that Amaziah’s request included assertion of rights to the throne of Israel. (TLSB)

14:11 *would not listen.* See 2Ch 25:20. (CSB)

Beth Shemesh. A town about 15 miles west of Jerusalem near the border between Judah and Dan (see Jos 15:10; 1Sa 6:9). (CSB)

14:12 *every man fled.* A full retreat. (TLSB)

14:13 *Jehoash ... captured Amaziah.* It is likely that Amaziah was taken back to the northern kingdom as a prisoner, where he remained until being released to return to Judah after the death of Jehoash. (CSB)

Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. The Corner Gate (see Jer 31:38; Zec 14:10) was at the northwest corner of the wall around Jerusalem. The Ephraim Gate was on the north side of Jerusalem (see Ne 12:39), 600 feet east of the Corner Gate. This northwestern section of the wall of Jerusalem was the point at which the city was most vulnerable to attack. (CSB)

On north side of Jerusalem; opening on a road to Ephraim. (TLSB)

Corner Gate. At northwest corner of Jerusalem's wall. (TLSB)

14:14 *gold and silver and all the vessels...found in the house of the Lord.* The value of the plundered articles was probably not great, because Joash had previously stripped the temple and palace to pay tribute to Hazael of Damascus (see 12:17–18). (CSB)

Plundering the temple showed disregard for the Lord. (TLSB)

also hostages. The hostages were probably intended to secure additional payments of tribute in view of the meager war booty. (CSB)

Lit, “sons of the pledges,” held for ransom. (TLSB)

14:17 *lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash.* Jehoash died in 782 B.C. and Amaziah in 767. (CSB)

14:19 *made a conspiracy against him.* 2Ch 25:27 connects the conspiracy against Amaziah with his turning away from the Lord, but it did not serve the purpose of the author of Kings to note this. (CSB)

Conspirators are never identified but likely included leaders of Judah who disapproved of Amaziah's disastrous policy. (Amaziah was not said to have the counsel of God's prophets.) Since kings were not impeached, assassination was a common means for changing policy. (TLSB)

Lachish. A fortress city in southern Judah 15 miles west of Hebron, presently known as Tell ed-Duweir (see 18:14; 2Ch 11:9). (CSB)

14:20 Apparently, the conspirators arranged for a respectful state funeral. (TLSB)

14:21 *Then all the people of Judah took Azariah.* Or “Now all the people of Judah had taken Azariah, when he was.” (CSB)

made him king instead of his father Amaziah. It is likely that this occurred after Amaziah had been taken prisoner by Jehoash (see v. 13). Thus Azariah's reign substantially overlapped that of his father Amaziah. (CSB)

Although Amaziah and his father were victims of assassination, the Davidic dynasty continued. In the Northern Kingdom, assassinations led to new ruling houses. (TLSB)

14:22 *built Elath and restored it to Judah.* Azariah extended the subjection of the Edomites begun by his father (see v. 7) and reestablished Israelite control over the important port city on the Gulf of Aqaba (see 1Ki 9:26). (CSB)

14:1–22 Amaziah serves the Lord, yet he overestimates his power and tries to gain influence in the kingdom of Israel, which defeats him. Faith is not a guarantee of success. Pride leads to downfall. Enact your plans with reflection on God’s Word, with prayer, and with wisdom from God. The Lord watches over those who are His and welcomes them by faith as noble children of His everlasting kingdom. • Lord, grant me the wisdom of Your Word, along with bold faith, that I may serve You with peace of mind and enduring hope. Amen. (TLSB)

Jeroboam II Reigns in Israel

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria, and he reigned forty-one years. **24** And he did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin. **25** He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher. **26** For the LORD saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter, for there was none left, bond or free, and there was none to help Israel. **27** But the LORD had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. **28** Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, how he fought, and how he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in Israel, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? **29** And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, the kings of Israel, and Zechariah his son reigned in his place.

14:23–29 Only seven verses are devoted to the long and politically noteworthy reign of Jeroboam II. (TLSB)

14:23 *fifteenth year of Amaziah.* 782 B.C. This was the beginning of Jeroboam’s sole reign. He had previously served as co-regent with his father Jehoash. (CSB)

forty-one years. 793–753 (including the co-regency with his father). (CSB)

14:24 *sins of Jeroboam.* See 1Ki 12:26–32; 13:33–34; 14:16; Am 3:13–14; 4:4–5; 5:4–6; 7:10–17. (CSB)

14:25 *from Lebo Hamath.* Jeroboam II was able to free the northern kingdom from the oppression it had suffered at the hands of Hazael and Ben-Hadad (see 10:32; 12:17; 13:3, 22, 25). He also extended Israelite political control over the Arameans of Damascus, an undertaking that had been begun by his father Jehoash (see 13:25). Assyrian pressure on the Arameans, including attacks on Damascus by Shalmaneser IV in 773 B.C. and Ashur-Dan III in 772, had weakened the Arameans enough to enable Jeroboam II to gain the upper hand over them. Meanwhile, Assyria also became too weak to suppress Jeroboam’s expansion. (CSB)

Sea of the Arabah. According to Am 6:14 the southern limit of Jeroboam's kingdom in Transjordan was the "valley of the Arabah"—probably to be connected with the Valley of Salt. If so, Jeroboam had also subdued Moab and the Ammonites. (CSB)

During Jeroboam II's reign, both Syria and Assyria were too weak to prevent the extension of his domain as far north as Lebo-hamath and as far south as the Sea of the Arabah (Salt Sea). The prosperity that followed this expansion brought moral degeneracy, social evils, and religious corruption, which in turn called forth vehement denunciations and dire threats of punishment by the prophets Amos (Am 2:6–8) and Hosea (Hos 4:1–2). (TLSB)

the LORD, the God of Israel. The Lord had not given up on the Northern Kingdom but continued to send them true prophets. (TLSB)

Jonah ... the prophet from Gath Hopher. See Jnh 1:1. Gath Hopher was located in the tribe of Zebulun, northeast of Nazareth (see Jos 19:13). This reference to Jonah is of help in dating the ministry of the prophet. (CSB)

The international situation that made possible Jeroboam's rise to power was not an accident of history. The Lord of the nations made it known in advance through the same prophet whom He chose to bring a message of repentance to the Assyrians. *Gath-hephe.* Israelite town north of Nazareth. (TLSB)

14:26 *affliction.* At the hands of the Arameans (see 10:32–33; 13:3–7), the Moabites (13:20) and the Ammonites (Am 1:13). (CSB)

Constant attack from Syria, rivalry with Judah, and internal strife decimated them. (TLSB)

none left, bond or free. Israel so lacked proper leadership that God had to raise up Jeroboam II if the people were to continue. (TLSB)

14:27 *had not said.* The sin of the Israelites had not yet reached its full measure, and the Lord mercifully extended to the nation an additional period of grace in which there was opportunity to repent. Persistence in apostasy, however, would bring certain judgment. (CSB)

14:28 *all he did.* During Jeroboam's reign the northern kingdom enjoyed greater material prosperity than it had at any time since the rule of David and Solomon. Unfortunately, it was also a time of religious formalism and apostasy as well as social injustice (see the books of Amos and Hosea, who prophesied during Jeroboam's reign). (CSB)

Damascus and Hamath. Portions of these kingdoms formerly belonged to Judah. Jeroboam II exercised authority far to the north, reaching back to the glory of David's and Solomon's reigns. (TLSB)

14:29 *Zechariah his son reigned in his place.* For the reign of Zechariah see 15:8–12. (CSB)

14:23–29 The Lord grants Israel an opportunity to reestablish its kingdom through Jeroboam II, as prophesied by Jonah. The Lord again shows remarkable patience for His rebellious people on the basis of His promises and compassion, proclaimed in Dt 32. If members of your family have wandered from the faith they professed before the Church, do not stop praying for them or proclaiming the Word to them. With the Lord there is great compassion, and His promises uphold us. • Lord, grant restoration to those who wander. Grant me patience as I pray for them and wait on You. Amen. (TLSB)