

2 Kings 11-12 : A Good Beginning Doesn't Mean a Good Finish

Outline:

11.1-3 : Athaliah takes power and Joash is saved

11.4-21 : Joash is brought to power and has a good start

12 : Joash's good start doesn't lead to a good conclusion

Context

- It is the divided kingdom period
- The book of kings is primarily dealing with the northern tribes at this stage and has several recurring themes:
 - A focus on the ministries of Elijah and Elisha
 - The need to respect the work of God and His messengers
 - Why the people are sent to captivity
- Athaliah is the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel from the north and marries Jehoshaphat's son in the south, putting her in a position of power
- The southern tribe of Judah is in a downward spiral

Body

11.1-3

- Athaliah's son, the king of Judah, dies
- Athaliah kills all his heirs and tries to maintain power
- Joash, the last heir of Judah is preserved in the temple

11.4-21

- Jehoiada, a priest, helps raise Joash in the temple and plots for an opportunity to take the throne
- Their plot leads to overthrowing Athaliah
- The people, the priesthood, and the king, all reaffirm their covenant with God upon their victory
- The people, following this, begin a streak of doing well

12.1-3

- This section summarizes Joash's reign
- Joash did right, but it specifies that this happens only while Jehoiada is alive.

12.4-21

- Joash wants to repair the temple, and is able to ban people together in this act, again, something good
- The people are threatened by a foreign king, and instead of leaning into their trust in God, Joash folds and the people start to fall away from God with them.

Application

- A good start with good examples doesn't guarantee a good finish
 - Jehoida was a good role model for Joash
 - In 2 Chronicles 24, we're told that Jehoida was a father to Joash. They were close and had a good relationship. Jehoida is also said to be righteous and buried with the kings. It's not his fault that Joash fails, but

clearly Joash did not internalize his example to be a person of good character himself

- Renewal (like the people following the rise of Joash) can be reversed
 - Think of the rocky soil in the gospels, which gladly receives the word, but it is eventually choked out. We can gladly receive the word of God, but put ourselves in an environment that doesn't support it, or not do the work to cultivate that renewal ourselves.
 - Are we just doing it because someone else is telling us to
 - We need to have a heart for God that desires to be with God and move closer to him