

# 2 Kings 13 - Annals of Both Kingdoms: Jehoahaz's Evil Reign in Israel; Jehoash's Evil Reign in Israel; Elisha Dies

II. The divided kingdom from the North-South division until the Assyrian invasion (1 Kings 12:1—2 Kings 17:41)

(19) Jehoahaz's reign in the North (13:1-9)

(20) Jehoash's reign in the North (13:10-25)

## 2 Kings 13

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1 During the twenty-third year of the reign of Ahaziah's son Joash, king of Judah, Jehu's son Jehoahaz began his seventeen year reign in Samaria over Israel.

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.

- The scene shifts once again to the Northern Kingdom...

- "...Jehoahaz" - "Yahweh Has Grasped"

— Jehoahaz began reigning in the 23rd year of Joash's reign in Judah and reigned for 17 years (814-798 BC)

— The 23rd year of Joash would seemingly mean Joash began reigning in 837 BC; actually he began in 835. Different systems of dating began to be used in both Judah and Israel, thus making for a two-year deviation in the chronological system.

— Jehoahaz was Jehu's son and his capital was Samaria

2 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, into which he misled Israel; he did not turn from them.

2 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel sin; he did not turn from them.

2 He did what the LORD considered to be evil, after the pattern of Nebat's son Jeroboam. By doing so, he caused Israel to sin, and he never changed course from it.

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.

3 So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and He continually handed them over to Hazael king of Aram, and to Ben-hadad, the son of Hazael.

3 So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and He gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael.

3 As a result, the LORD's wrath flared up against Israel, so he handed them over to domination by King Hazael of Aram and later into constant domination by Hazael's son Ben-hadad.

**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.

- Jehoahaz followed the sins of Jeroboam throughout his career (Cf. Jehu, 2 Kings 10:29)
- As discipline against Israel for her disobedience to the Mosaic Law, God allowed the Arameans to dominate her
- Jehoahaz reigned during the last years of Hazael's administration and early years of his son Ben-Hadad III's reign

4 Then Jehoahaz appeased the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram oppressed them.

4 Then Jehoahaz entreated the favor of the LORD, and the LORD listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram oppressed them.

4 But Jehoahaz sought the LORD, and the LORD paid attention to him, because the LORD had been watching the oppression that Israel was enduring from the king of Aram.

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.

- Aram's oppression moved Jehoahaz to seek Yahweh's help, which the LORD graciously provided in spite of the king's unfaithfulness

5 And the LORD gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Arameans; and the sons of Israel lived in their tents as previously.

5 The LORD gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Arameans; and the sons of Israel lived in their tents as formerly.

5 The LORD provided Israel with a deliverer, so they escaped the Aramean oppression while the descendants of Israel lived in tents as they had formerly.

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.)

- The LORD provided a deliverer, who was probably King Adad-nirari III of Assyria (811-783 BC), who fought against Damascus (as well as Tyre, Sidon, Media, Edom, and Egypt) and defeated it in 803 BC

— The Arameans consequently turned their attention from attacking Israel to defending themselves against the Assyrians

— Thus Israel escaped Aram's power and the people were able to return to their homes and live in peace. Israel had to pay tribute to Assyria, but the nation was free from Aram's attacks.

6 Nevertheless they did not abandon the sins of the house of Jeroboam, into which he misled Israel; *rather*, they walked in them; and the Asherah also remained standing in Samaria.

6 Nevertheless they did not turn away from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, with which he made Israel sin, but walked in them; and the Asherah also remained standing in Samaria.

6 Nevertheless, they did not change course away from the sins of Jeroboam's household, by which he caused Israel to sin, but continued on that same course, with Asherah poles remaining in place in Samaria.

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.)

- This answer to prayer did not result in the people repenting of their idolatry. Even the Asherah pole, a symbol of the pagan goddess Asherah, Baal's consort, remained conspicuously in Samaria.

7 For he left to Jehoahaz no more of the army than fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand infantry, because the king of Aram had eliminated them and made them like the dust at threshing.

7 For he left to Jehoahaz of the army not more than fifty horsemen and ten chariots and 10,000 footmen, for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing.

7 For the Aramean king had left only 50 cavalry, ten chariots, and 10,000 soldiers out of the army belonging to Jehoahaz, because the king of Aram had destroyed the others, making them like chaff left over after threshing.

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.

- Jehoahaz's army had been decimated by his wars with the Arameans, though some of the Israelite army was lost during the reign of Jehu (Cf. comments on 10:32-36). Dust at

threshing time was blown away and never seen again.

- Another way that God disciplined Israel at this time was by reducing her army through casualties. This reduction began during Jehu's reign (10:32-36) but continued through Jehoahaz's administration.

8 Now *as for* 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?

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?

8 Now the rest of the activities of Jehoahaz, including everything he did and his grandeur, are recorded in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, are they not?

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?

9 And Jehoahaz lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria; and his son Joash became king in his place.

9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria; and Joash his son became king in his place.

9 So Jehoahaz died, as did his ancestors, and he was buried in Samaria while his son Joash replaced him as king.

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

(20) Jehoash's reign in the North (13:10-25)

Jehoash was the third king of Jehu's dynasty to rule over Israel. See note: **The Names Joash and Jehoash** at 2 Kings 11:2)

10 In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, *and he reigned* for sixteen years.

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10 During the thirty-seventh year of the reign of King Joash of Judah, Jehoahaz's son Jehoash began a sixteen year reign as king over Israel in Samaria.

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.

- Once again, two kings with the same name ruled over the Northern and Southern Kingdoms at the same time, though they ruled contemporaneously for only about two

years (798-796 BC). Jehoash of Israel ruled from 798-782 BC, and Jehoash (Joash) of Judah ruled from 835-796 BC. See note on 2 Kings 11:2.

11 He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, into which he misled Israel; *rather*, he walked in them.

11 He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel sin, but he walked in them.

11 He practiced what the LORD considered to be evil, not changing course from all of the sins practiced by Nebat's son Jeroboam by which he caused Israel to sin. Instead, he continued on that same course.

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.

- Jehoash began reigning in Israel in 798 BC and served for a total of 16 years until 782 BC — However, after five years (in 793 BC), Jehoash's son Jeroboam II began to reign as co-regent with him

— The king continued the religious policies of his predecessors and did evil in the eyes of the LORD

12 Now *as for* the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did, and his might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

12 Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did and his might with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

12 The rest of Joash's activities, including everything he did and the vehemence with which he fought against King Amaziah of Judah are recorded in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, are they not?

**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?

- The statement that normally concludes the writer's history of a particular king occurs here early in the story of Jehoash

— These words about Jehoash are repeated almost verbatim in the history of Amaziah of Judah (14:15-16)

- Jehoash's war against Amaziah is described by the writer as a part of the Judean king's reign (14:8-14)

13 So Joash lay down with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

13 So Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

13 So Joash died, as did his ancestors, and Jeroboam assumed his throne after Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

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

- Jeroboam II succeeded Jehoash, but the son actually began reigning as co-regent 11 years before his father's death

**14** When Elisha became sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, **the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!**"

**14** When Elisha became sick with the illness of which he was to die, Joash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!"

**14** When Elisha fell ill with the sickness from which he was about to die, King Joash of Israel came down to see him, wept in his presence, and told him, "My father, Israel's chariots and horsemen!"

**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.

- Elisha the prophet now re-enters the narrative...

- Elisha was suffering from a terminal illness. Out of respect for this man of God, King Jehoash paid him a visit.

— The fact that the king wept over him reveals that although Jehoash followed in the ways of Jeroboam I (v11) he also revered *Yahweh*

— He anticipated the great loss that the death of this servant of God would be to Israel

— He regarded Elisha as superior to himself, calling him "my father" in true humility

- "...the chariots of Israel and its horsemen" - showed that he recognized in Elisha, and behind him in the Lord, the real defense and power of Israel against all her adversaries

— Joash may have wept because he knew he was going to suffer defeat without Elisha as a prophet

— Elisha had used the same expressions himself when Elijah's ministry was terminated by God

The prophet is the man whose prayer is better than chariots and horsemen. Trust in the words of the prophet means that horses and chariots can be abandoned.

15 And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows.

15 Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." So he took a bow and arrows.

15 Elisha told him, "Pick up a bow and some arrows." So he picked up a bow and some arrows.

**15** And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.  
- Elisha gave the king a prophecy of Israel's future deliverance because the king had humbled himself before God

16 Then *Elisha* said to the king of Israel, "Lay your hand on the bow." And he laid his hand *on it*, then Elisha put his hands on the king's hands.

16 Then he said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow." And he put his hand *on it*, then Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands.

16 Then Elisha told Israel's king, "Draw the bow!" As he did so, Elisha laid his hands on top of the king's hands

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.

- By taking the bow in his hands the king was symbolically becoming the agent of God's power

— The bow and arrows were symbols of the strength and victory that God would give the king

— Elisha put his own hands on Jehoash's hands to symbolize that the power the king would exert came from the Lord through His prophet

17 And he said, "Open the window toward the east," and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!" So he shot. And he said, "The LORD'S arrow of victory, and the arrow of victory over Aram; for you will defeat the Arameans at Aphek until you have put an end *to them*."

17 He said, "Open the window toward the east," and he opened *it*. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!" And he shot. And he said, "The LORD's arrow of victory, even the arrow of victory over Aram; for you will defeat the Arameans at Aphek until you have destroyed *them*."

17 and ordered him, "Open a window that faces east." So he did so.

Elisha ordered him, "Shoot!" So he shot.

Then Elisha said, "This is the LORD's arrow of victory—the victory arrow against Aram, because you will defeat the Arameans at Aphek until you will have utterly finished them off."

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.

- Jehoash was to open an east window, which faced toward the enemy Aramean hosts at Aphek, so that he could shoot

— Obeying the prophet, the king shot an arrow out the window toward Aram. By actually shooting the arrow the king was appropriating the victory symbolized by the arrow.

— As the king shot, Elisha said that the arrow represented victory over Aram at Aphek (Cf. 1 Kings 20:30) in the Transjordan

18 Then he said, "Take the arrows," and he took *them*. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground," and he struck *it* three times and stopped.

18 Then he said, "Take the arrows," and he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground," and he struck *it* three times and stopped.

18 After this Elisha said, "Pick up the arrows." So the king picked them up.

Then Elisha told the king of Israel, "Strike the ground!" So he struck it three times and then stood still.

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.

- Elisha then instructed the king to take the arrows that remained and to shoot them at the ground

19 Then the man of God became angry at him and said, "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you put an end *to it*. But now you shall strike Aram *only* three times."

19 So the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have struck five or six times, then you would have struck Aram until you would have destroyed *it*. But now you shall strike Aram *only* three times."

19 At this, the man of God became angry at him and told him, "You should have struck five or six times! Then you would have attacked Aram until you would have destroyed it! But as it is now, you'll defeat Aram only three times!"

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 was angry with him for stopping because the king was manifesting failure to trust God to give him as many victories as there were arrows

- Jehoash understood what shooting the first arrow symbolized; Elisha had explained it (v17)

— By letting the king shoot more arrows, God was inviting him through Elisha to claim as many victories as he had arrows

— God assured him that he would have victory by divine enablement but perhaps

Jehoash felt that God could not or would not do as much for him as Elisha implied

— This unbelief explains why Elisha became angry. Jehoash had failed to trust God even though he knew what God had promised

— The prophet told the king that had he shot more arrows, God would have honored his faith and given him additional victories resulting in Aram's complete destruction. As it was he would now win only three victories (v25).

**20** And Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the marauding bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year.

**20** Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites would invade the land in the spring of the year.

**20** Later, Elisha died and was buried. Now at that time, various Moabite marauders had been invading the land each spring.

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

- Shortly thereafter, Elisha died

— His ministry spanned at least 56 years (including his years of serving as Elijah's servant) since he was called by Elijah during Ahab's reign (which ended in 853 BC) and Elisha died in Jehoash's reign (which began in 798 BC)

— The prophet was probably buried as most of the early Israelites were in a cave or tomb (v21) hewn out of a rock, after his body was wrapped in linen cloths

21 And as they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they threw the man into the grave of Elisha. And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet.

21 As they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they cast the man into the grave of Elisha. And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet.

21 One day while some Israelites were burying a man, they saw some marauders, so they threw the man into Elisha's grave. But when the man fell against Elisha's remains, he revived and rose to his feet.

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.

- Some time later some men were laying another man's body to rest near Elisha's tomb, they were surprised by a group of Moabite raiders who were apparently going to rob

whomever they met

— To flee quickly, the Israelite pallbearers removed the stone in front of Elisha's tomb, threw the corpse of their friend in the tomb, and retreated

— When the new corpse touched Elisha's, he came to life and stood up on his feet. Evidently the men who placed the body in Elisha's tomb observed this.

- Doubtless they told their story far and wide, and it probably reached the ears of Jehoash for whom this miracle seems to have been intended primarily

— Such a sign of the power of God working even through His prophet's corpse may have both encouraged the king as he anticipated his battles with the Arameans, and rebuked him for his lack of faith

**22** Now Hazael king of Aram had oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

**22** Now Hazael king of Aram had oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

**22** Meanwhile, King Hazael of Aram had been oppressing Israel throughout the reign of Jehoahaz,

**22** But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.

23 But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them and turned to them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and He was unwilling to eliminate them or cast them away from His presence until now.

23 But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them and turned to them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them or cast them from His presence until now.

23 but the LORD showed grace to them, displayed his compassion toward them, and turned to them due to his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would not destroy them or evict them from his presence up until that time.

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.

- The basis of God's continuing mercy to Israel was not her goodness but God's goodness in remaining faithful to the Abrahamic Covenant (Cf. 1 Kings 8:44-50; Gen 13:14-17)

— God would never punish Israel to the point of annihilation because of His promises in the Abrahamic Covenant

**24** When Hazael king of Aram died, his son Ben-hadad became king in his place.

**24** When Hazael king of Aram died, Ben-hadad his son became king in his place.

**24** After King Hazael of Aram died, his son Ben-hadad replaced him as king.

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

25 Then Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz again took from the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken in war from the hand of his father Jehoahaz. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the cities of Israel.

25 Then Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again from the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken in war from the hand of Jehoahaz his father. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the cities of Israel.

25 At that time, Jehoahaz's son Jehoash recaptured from Hazael's son Ben-hadad the cities that Hazael had captured through warfare from the control of Jehoahaz, Jehoash's father. Joash defeated and recovered cities of Israel from Ben-hadad three times.

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.

- After Hazael died (801 BC), Jehoash engaged the new Aramean king, Ben-Hadad III in battle and defeated him three times, as prophesied by Elisha (v19)

— The battle of Aphek (v17), though not mentioned here, may have been one of the three battles. Jehoash recaptured the Israelite towns Jehoahaz had lost in battle to Hazael in these three encounters (Cf. v3).