

2 Kings 14

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 21 September 2016 15:34

This chapter is important (as are others) because it shows a vital fact – that when God chooses us, he also protects us to a certain extent and loves us though we sin. It does NOT mean we are free to sin, only that God keeps His promises.

Verses 1-4

1.

In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah.

2.

He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

3.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did.

4.

Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.

25 year old Amaziah, son of Joash, took to the throne of Judah, just two years after Joash, son of Jehoahaz, gained the throne of Israel. Amaziah ruled for 29 years and was mainly good, doing *“that which was right in the sight of the Lord”*. However, he was not as good and righteous as David, because he had the same failings as his father. One example is given – like his father, he allowed the groves of idols to remain in the land, where sacrifices and worship were made to false gods.

No Christian can allow false worship to go on. That includes the many false worship practices in our churches today, which few believers oppose. To God there is no difference! We should not

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willingly allow false religions into the country, but must resist them fully and with stout heart and mind. The reason they are so plentiful is that we have not shown our horror and disgust at their existence. Cults think that we do not care enough about our God to fight on His side and for His honour. And they are right!

Verses 5&6

1.

And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants which had slain the king his father.

2.

But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

As soon as Amaziah was crowned, he ordered the deaths of those who killed his father. Interestingly, he did not go on to also kill their families. His reasons for holding back were biblical and tie-in with the teaching of Christ – that each person is liable only for his own sins. However, I have a caveat – what if the family are in league with the killers? What if they knew what they were about to do and said nothing? Is this not the same as killing?

Verses 7-11

1.

He slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, and took Selah by war, and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.

2.

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.

3.

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And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

4.

Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this, and tarry at home: for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?

5.

But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Bethshemesh, which belongeth to Judah.

Amaziah's army killed 10,000 enemy Edomite soldiers in the "valley of salt" and took Selah, renaming it Joktheel. Edom land was south and south-east of Judah. Selah (a rock) was the chief Edomite city of Arabia, upon which Amaziah built a fortress (also named Petra).

Amaziah thus brought back Edom into allegiance after it had revolted against Judah some years before. This campaign made use of 300,000 picked young warriors. To this number was added 100,000 men of Israel, who were paid with silver. But, a prophet warned him that Israel was not then in God's favour, so Amaziah sent the Israelites back home, paying them anyway, as promised. 'Joktheel' means 'the blessedness of God'.

After this, Amaziah sent word to the king of Israel, seeking to go to war together. But, Jehoash, probably still smarting after his army was returned home, asked Amaziah why he wanted to risk everything after his recent triumph. He advised Amaziah to go back home and enjoy his success, using a metaphor to warn him. Amaziah would not listen, and so both young kings and their armies met at a town in south-west Judah, Bethshemesh ('house of the sun'), ready to do battle.

Verses 12-15

1.

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And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to their tents.

2.

And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Bethshemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.

3.

And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

4.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which 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?

Obviously, Judah's venture was not approved by God, for Judah lost to Israel. Jehoash captured Amaziah and went on to Jerusalem. There, his army smashed down a long length of wall stretching from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, a length of 400 cubits (roughly 600 feet). This must have taken great effort as the walls were thick. The historian, Josephus, wrote that the wall was broken to show the superior strength of Israel, and, when broken down, Jehoash drove through the breach in his war chariot. It seems from records that Jerusalem did not offer up a fight. Thus, God shows no respect for a king when that king does not rely on the Lord for guidance and help. Amaziah thought that his Edomite success meant God was with him for the fight against Israel – but not so! He was presumptuous.

Jehoash did not then claim the city but took spoils of war – gold, silver, vessels from the Temple and everything valuable in the king's palace, plus hostages taken as a surety against further attacks. The word (*ta`arubah*) is linked to *ben*, the word meaning sons or kin. Jehoash then went back to Samaria, not bothering to strike any harder. More details are in Chronicles.

Christians who think a sudden reliance on God will bring His help, are mistaken. Many only turn to God in a time of hardship or trouble, but God wants us to be loyal throughout our lives.

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Sporadic worship is not enough. And dutiful rituals are not enough (e.g. regular mundane prayer meetings not required by God, baptisms and communion out of duty, etc).

Verses 16-18

1.

And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

2.

And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years.

3.

And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Jehoash died and was buried in the royal burial place in Samaria. Jeroboam then became king in about 793BC. He, too, was bad. The defeated Amaziah lived for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash. See Chronicles.

Verses 19-24

1.

Now they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

2.

And they brought him on horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

3.

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And all the people of Judah took Azariah, which was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah.

4.

He built Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

5.

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 reigned forty and one years.

6.

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 to sin.

The lords of Judah conspired against Amaziah, who fled to Lachish south of Jerusalem. But, they caught up and killed him. Horses were used to take him back to Jerusalem, where he was buried. The people then crowned his son, Azariah, to be king, aged 16.

Azariah built Elath, or, rather re-built it; it was a sea port on the north-eastern shores of the Red Sea, with a large number of palms or other tall trees. In this way he brought the port back under the rule of Judah. He died and was buried in Jerusalem. In the meantime, Jeroboam began his 41 year (bad) rule of Israel. Like all the other post-Solomon kings, Jeroboam "*departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam*"

leading all Israel into sin (particularly in the worship of the two calves). This is our condition in the West today; we are under the rule of bad leaders and many pastors who hate God and bring down God's people and laws. But, we are not guiltless, for it is we who allowed them to rule in the first place, and we willingly sin.

Verses 25-29

1.

He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the

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son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gathhepher.

2.

For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

3.

And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

4.

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

5.

And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.

Jeroboam the Second took back all the coast line of the Mediterranean “from the entering of Hamath” to the “sea of the plain”. This was in upper Syria down to the flatter areas in Israel. This retaking of the land was according to God’s prophecy given to Jonah. The king was a success in an earthly way, showing that neither long life nor achievements are a marker of one’s holiness or acceptance by God.

God seems to have had sympathy for Israel, who were constantly under attack from Syria and others, but they had no guide, as was Elisha. *“And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven.”*

Do you recognise God’s election in this? Those whom He chooses to be His own are NEVER lost or cast out. Israel had a long line of bad kings, but those kings also, at times, believed God. God Himself said that he would not cast off Israel because of His promises made to Abraham, etc., and because of the holiness of king David, For their sakes, He kept Israel from the worst of

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times.

Today, many Christians might think they have success or good times because of their own spirituality. Not so. It is more likely that they are at ease because of their holier forefathers. Even so, in the past half century, God has allowed us to suffer because of our lack and laxity. As the sun slowly sinks in the West, so evil begins its ascendancy from the East, at the moment mainly in the form of Islam. As this evil progresses, so Christians will lose their outward glory, and will comply to the demands of the moon-god, thus following in the footsteps of ancient Israel, whose acceptance of false gods was well-known.

And so Jeroboam the Second, bad though he was, became a helper of Israel against warring countries. We see this today, as Israel battles against huge forces surrounding it. God will save Israel today because of the promises to Abraham.

Read more on Jeroboam in Chronicles. He captured Damascus from Judah, too. When he died, he was succeeded by his son, Zachariah.

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