

Monday, July 29

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2 Chronicles 24:1 - 25:28

24 **1** Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother was Zibiah from Beersheba. **2** Joash did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight throughout the lifetime of Jehoiada the priest. **3** Jehoiada chose two wives for Joash, and he had sons and daughters. **4** At one point Joash decided to repair and restore the Temple of the LORD. **5** He summoned the priests and Levites and gave them these instructions: "Go to all the towns of Judah and collect the required annual offerings, so that we can repair the Temple of your God. Do not delay!" But the Levites did not act immediately. **6** So the king called for Jehoiada the high priest and asked him, "Why haven't you demanded that the Levites go out and collect the Temple taxes from the towns of Judah and from Jerusalem? Moses, the servant of the LORD, levied this tax on the community of Israel in order to maintain the Tabernacle of the Covenant." **7** Over the years the followers of wicked Athaliah had broken into the Temple of God, and they had used all the dedicated things from the Temple of the LORD to worship the images of Baal. **8** So now the king ordered a chest to be made and set outside the gate leading to the Temple of the LORD. **9** Then a proclamation was sent throughout Judah and Jerusalem, telling the people to bring to the LORD the tax that Moses, the servant of God, had required of the Israelites in the wilderness. **10** This pleased all the leaders and the people, and they gladly brought their money and filled the chest with it. **11** Whenever the chest became full, the Levites would carry it to the king's officials. Then the court secretary and an officer of the high priest would come and empty the chest and take it back to the Temple again. This went on day after day, and a large amount of money was collected. **12** The king and Jehoiada gave the money to the construction supervisors, who hired masons and carpenters to restore the Temple of the LORD. They also hired metalworkers, who made articles of iron and bronze for the LORD's Temple. **13** The men in charge of the renovation worked hard and made steady progress. They restored the Temple of God according to its original design and strengthened it. **14** When all the repairs were finished, they brought the remaining money to the king and Jehoiada. It was used to make various articles for the Temple of the LORD —articles for worship services and for burnt offerings, including ladles and other articles made of gold and silver. And the burnt offerings were sacrificed continually in the Temple of the LORD during the lifetime of Jehoiada the priest. **15** Jehoiada lived to a very old age, finally dying at 130. **16** He was buried among the kings in the City of David, because he had done so much good in Israel for God and his

Temple. **17** But after Jehoiada's death, the leaders of Judah came and bowed before King Joash and persuaded him to listen to their advice. **18** They decided to abandon the Temple of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and they worshiped Asherah poles and idols instead! Because of this sin, divine anger fell on Judah and Jerusalem. **19** Yet the LORD sent prophets to bring them back to him. The prophets warned them, but still the people would not listen. **20** Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood before the people and said, "This is what God says: Why do you disobey the LORD's commands and keep yourselves from prospering? You have abandoned the LORD, and now he has abandoned you!" **21** Then the leaders plotted to kill Zechariah, and King Joash ordered that they stone him to death in the courtyard of the LORD's Temple. **22** That was how King Joash repaid Jehoiada for his loyalty—by killing his son. Zechariah's last words as he died were, "May the LORD see what they are doing and avenge my death!" **23** In the spring of the year the Aramean army marched against Joash. They invaded Judah and Jerusalem and killed all the leaders of the nation. Then they sent all the plunder back to their king in Damascus. **24** Although the Arameans attacked with only a small army, the LORD helped them conquer the much larger army of Judah. The people of Judah had abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, so judgment was carried out against Joash. **25** The Arameans withdrew, leaving Joash severely wounded. But his own officials plotted to kill him for murdering the son of Jehoiada the priest. They assassinated him as he lay in bed. Then he was buried in the City of David, but not in the royal cemetery. **26** The assassins were Jozacar, the son of an Ammonite woman named Shimeath, and Jehozabad, the son of a Moabite woman named Shomer. **27** The account of the sons of Joash, the prophecies about him, and the record of his restoration of the Temple of God are written in His son Amaziah became the next king.

25 1 Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother was Jehoaddin from Jerusalem. **2** Amaziah did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight, but not wholeheartedly. **3** When Amaziah was well established as king, he executed the officials who had assassinated his father. **4** However, he did not kill the children of the assassins, for he obeyed the command of the LORD as written by Moses in the Book of the Law: "Parents must not be put to death for the sins of their children, nor children for the sins of their parents. Those deserving to die must be put to death for their own crimes." **5** Then Amaziah organized the army, assigning generals and captains for all Judah and Benjamin. He took a census and found that he had an army of 300,000 select troops, twenty years old and older, all trained in the use of spear and shield. **6** He also paid about 7,500 pounds of silver to hire 100,000 experienced fighting men from Israel. **7** But a man of God came to him and said, "Your Majesty, do not hire troops from Israel, for the LORD is not with Israel. He

will not help those people of Ephraim! **8** If you let them go with your troops into battle, you will be defeated by the enemy no matter how well you fight. God will overthrow you, for he has the power to help you or to trip you up.” **9** Amaziah asked the man of God, “But what about all that silver I paid to hire the army of Israel?” The man of God replied, “The LORD is able to give you much more than this!” **10** So Amaziah discharged the hired troops and sent them back to Ephraim. This made them very angry with Judah, and they returned home in a great rage. **11** Then Amaziah summoned his courage and led his army to the Valley of Salt, where they killed 10,000 Edomite troops from Seir. **12** They captured another 10,000 and took them to the top of a cliff and threw them off, dashing them to pieces on the rocks below. **13** Meanwhile, the hired troops that Amaziah had sent home raided several of the towns of Judah between Samaria and Beth-horon. They killed 3,000 people and carried off great quantities of plunder. **14** When King Amaziah returned from slaughtering the Edomites, he brought with him idols taken from the people of Seir. He set them up as his own gods, bowed down in front of them, and offered sacrifices to them! **15** This made the LORD very angry, and he sent a prophet to ask, “Why do you turn to gods who could not even save their own people from you?” **16** But the king interrupted him and said, “Since when have I made you the king’s counselor? Be quiet now before I have you killed!” So the prophet stopped with this warning: “I know that God has determined to destroy you because you have done this and have refused to accept my counsel.” **17** After consulting with his advisers, King Amaziah of Judah sent this challenge to Israel’s king Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz and grandson of Jehu: “Come and meet me in battle!” **18** But King Jehoash of Israel replied to King Amaziah of Judah with this story: “Out in the Lebanon mountains, a thistle sent a message to a mighty cedar tree: ‘Give your daughter in marriage to my son.’ But just then a wild animal of Lebanon came by and stepped on the thistle, crushing it! **19** “You are saying, ‘I have defeated Edom,’ and you are very proud of it. But my advice is to stay at home. Why stir up trouble that will only bring disaster on you and the people of Judah?” **20** But Amaziah refused to listen, for God was determined to destroy him for turning to the gods of Edom. **21** So King Jehoash of Israel mobilized his army against King Amaziah of Judah. The two armies drew up their battle lines at Beth-shemesh in Judah. **22** Judah was routed by the army of Israel, and its army scattered and fled for home. **23** King Jehoash of Israel captured Judah’s king, Amaziah son of Joash and grandson of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh. Then he brought him to Jerusalem, where he demolished 600 feet of Jerusalem’s wall, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. **24** He carried off all the gold and silver and all the articles from the Temple of God that had been in the care of Obed-edom. He also seized the treasures of the royal palace, along with hostages, and then returned to Samaria. **25** King Amaziah of Judah lived for fifteen years after the death of King Jehoash of Israel. **26** The rest of the events in Amaziah’s reign, from beginning to end, are recorded in **27** After Amaziah turned away from

the LORD, there was a conspiracy against his life in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But his enemies sent assassins after him, and they killed him there. **28** They brought his body back on a horse, and he was buried with his ancestors in the City of David.

Romans 12:1 - 21

12 **1** And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. **2** Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. **3** Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. **4** Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, **5** so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. **6** In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. **7** If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. **8** If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. **9** Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. **10** Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. **11** Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. **12** Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. **13** When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. **14** Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. **15** Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. **16** Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! **17** Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. **18** Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. **19** Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD. **20** Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them

something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.” **21** Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Psalms 22:19 - 31

22 19 O LORD, do not stay far away! You are my strength; come quickly to my aid! **20** Save me from the sword; spare my precious life from these dogs. **21** Snatch me from the lion’s jaws and from the horns of these wild oxen. **22** I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters. I will praise you among your assembled people. **23** Praise the LORD, all you who fear him! Honor him, all you descendants of Jacob! Show him reverence, all you descendants of Israel!**24** For he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy. He has not turned his back on them, but has listened to their cries for help. **25** I will praise you in the great assembly. I will fulfill my vows in the presence of those who worship you. **26** The poor will eat and be satisfied. All who seek the LORD will praise him. Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy. **27** The whole earth will acknowledge the LORD and return to him. All the families of the nations will bow down before him. **28** For royal power belongs to the LORD . He rules all the nations. **29** Let the rich of the earth feast and worship. Bow before him, all who are mortal, all whose lives will end as dust. **30** Our children will also serve him. Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord. **31** His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born. They will hear about everything he has done.

Proverbs 20:8 - 10

20 8 When a king sits in judgment, he weighs all the evidence, distinguishing the bad from the good. **9** Who can say, “I have cleansed my heart; I am pure and free from sin”? **10** False weights and unequal measures — the LORD detests double standards of every kind.