

The Story of Two Little Known Heroes of the Bible Jehosheba and Jehoiada

There is a wonderful story hidden in the scriptures that seems to have been overlooked. It is a story that reveals God's power in the face of overwhelming circumstances. It demonstrates the eternal principal that God's strength is made perfect in human weakness. It is the story of an unusual married couple named, Jehoiada and Jehosheba. It tells of the victory of weak and abused believers over the enmity of the powerful. The bare bones of the story are detailed in 2 Kings 11-12 and 2 Chronicles 22 - 24. However, to flesh out the story, you have to look at about twelve other passages in scripture. If you look at those passages carefully and combine that with a knowledge of Jewish customs and laws, you can unearth the whole amazing story.

The story begins with the long reigns of two of the better kings in the Bible. Asa reigned over Judah for 41 years (1 Kings 15:9-10), then his son Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah for 25 years (1 Kings 22:42). They both sought the Lord. God gave Judah 66 years of relative peace and prosperity in their time.

1 Kings 15:11-14 "Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done. He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his fathers had made. He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive Asherah pole. Asa cut the pole down and burned it in the Kidron Valley. Although he did not remove the high places, Asa's heart was fully committed to the LORD all his life."

1 Kings 22:41-44 "Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king of Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. In everything he walked in the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD. The high places, however, were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. Jehoshaphat was also at peace with the king of Israel."

In his early years Jehoshaphat's faith and obedience was strong.

2 Chronicles 17:3-5 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because in his early years he walked in the ways his father David had followed. He did not consult the Baals but sought the God of his father and followed his commands rather than the practices of Israel. The LORD established the kingdom under his control; and all Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so that he had great wealth and honor.

Unfortunately, in the middle of his life he made a terrible mistake. He allied his family and his nation with the wicked Ahab and Jezebel in war and marriage. They were the king and queen of the Northern Kingdom.

1 Kings 16:29-33 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole¹ and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.

2 Kings 19:2-3 Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani,² went out to meet him and said to the king, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, the wrath of the LORD is upon you. There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God.”

When King Jehoshaphat died, he left behind him the legacy of his mistakes. He had married his son Jehoram to the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

2 Kings 8:16-19 In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah. He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD. Nevertheless, for the sake of his servant David, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah.

Before he died, Jehoshaphat named Jehoram Co-Regent. Jehoram was 32 at the time, so his character should have been apparent. His wife Athaliah was even more wicked than her mother, the infamous Jezebel. After his father Jehoshaphat died, Jehoram slaughtered all seven of Jehoshaphat's other sons, his own brothers, to consolidate power in his own hands and to free his hand to pursue wickedness. He had two children by Athaliah³ whose names we know, a son Ahaziah and a daughter (one of our heroes) named Jehosheba. Ahaziah was as evil as his parents, but from what the Bible tells us, we can conclude that Jehosheba loved the Lord. He also had other sons and wives.

Jehoram reigned six years but then the Lord pronounced a curse on him and his family.

2 Chronicles 21:12-15 “Jehoram received a letter from Elijah the prophet,⁴ which said: ‘This is

1 The worship at the Asherah poles involved the worship of Astarte, the Canaanite goddess of sex. The pole was a penile representation and worship involved all kind of sexual depravity.

2 Hanani had been a prophet to Judah (2 Chronicles 16:7) who rebuked Asa for his alliance with Aram. Jehu, his son, earlier rebuked Basha the king of Israel and prophesied his death and the end of his line (2 Kings 16:1).

3 The fact that neither Ahaziah, Jehosheba, or Athaliah were kidnapped in the episode in 2 Chronicles 21:12-20 would indicate that they alone were together somewhere else. This indicates they were mother and children.

4 This was a letter that must have been written by Elijah before he died, as Elijah had died during the reign of Jehoram's father. God must have given Elijah foresight. This fits in the list of other things the Lord gave Elijah to do that were accomplished after his death in 1 Kings 19:15-16. Anoint Hazael, anoint Jehu. There is one

what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: ‘You have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your father’s house, men who were better than you. So now the LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out.’”

There was a raid on the King’s palace. Jehoram, along with his wife Athaliah and her two children were absent (possibly visiting Ahab and Jezebel). All of Jehoram’s other wives along with their sons (and presumably their daughters) were kidnapped and carried into slavery.⁵ The sons were later killed. This circumstance made Athaliah’s son Ahaziah undisputed heir to the throne.

2 Chronicles 21:16-17 The LORD aroused against Jehoram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabs who lived near the Cushites. They attacked Judah, invaded it and carried off all the goods found in the king’s palace, together with his sons and wives.⁶ Not a son was left to him except Ahaziah, the youngest.

2 Chronicles 22:1 The people of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, Jehoram’s youngest son, king in his place, since the raiders, who came with the Arabs into the camp, had killed all the older sons.

Jehoram fell ill with a disease of the bowels that caused him great pain for two years before he died. He reigned for eight years in all. Ahaziah, his son by Athaliah, became King.

Now we can introduce the other hero of our story, named Jehoiada. Jehoiada was an old man of the priestly line, the brother of Amariah, old King Jehoshaphat’s High Priest. Amariah, the High Priest died during the reign of Ahaziah. By Law, the successor had to be of the proper lineage, descended from Aaron and Zadok. Next to the King, the office of High Priest was the next most visible and prominent in the nation of Judah. Obviously, neither Ahaziah nor Athaliah wanted a High Priest that would give them any trouble, so instead of following the usual practice of choosing a new high priest from among Amariah’s sons or grandsons, they picked Amariah’s brother,⁷ Jehoiada, who was about 90 years old.

Ahaziah obviously despised his sister Jehosheba. Ahaziah, who despised the Lord married off his sister to an old, old man. From her later actions we can see that Jehosheba loved the Lord.

other post-mortem task of Elijah, that will be the proclamation of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem during the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

5 Ahaziah, not surprisingly, didn’t attempt to ransom back his brothers (He saw them as rivals).

6 These sons seem to have been carried off but were later killed (2 Chronicles 22:1). Perhaps a ransom was refused. Or perhaps Athaliah secretly paid the Arabs to kill off her son’s rivals. She may even have conspired with them to carry out the plot to begin with. Conveniently, she and her children were the only ones absent from the palace when the raid took place.

7 This is determined by examining the genealogy of the line of Zadok in 1 Chronicles 6:3-15. Jehoiada is not listed as Amariah’s descendant.

Ahaziah must have noted, with contempt, that she loved the Lord, and didn't want to marry an idol worshipper. Ahaziah decided to take care of the problem with a great joke. "She wants to marry a worshipper of Jehovah, does she?" Ahaziah must have asked himself. In that day, where a woman tended to measure her worth by the children she had, Ahaziah married his 20 year old sister to the old man Jehoiada. She couldn't complain, he was the High Priest of Jehovah.

Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah must have thought it was a stroke of genius. The priesthood couldn't protest the appointment of a High Priest who was of the right lineage who was married into the royal family as well. Ahaziah and his mother must have thought that the High Priesthood had been made powerless, held by a man in his 90's. As for Jehosheba, she would have gotten her comeuppance for going against the idolatry and wickedness of her family. She was married to an old man who could never father children and would doubtless leave her a widow in a short time.

But the Lord loves to turn those situations against the wicked and in favor of the righteous. He loves to use old men and women to bring deliverance, witness Mordecai and Esther. His strength is made perfect in weakness! As it turned out, because Jehosheba couldn't have children, so she loved the ones that weren't hers. God used that to accomplish His plan.

Jehosheba's brother King Ahaziah was killed by Jehu, along with Athaliah's nephew Joram, King of Israel, and her mother Jezebel.

1 Kings 9:14-33 So Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram. (Now Joram and all Israel had been defending Ramoth Gilead against Hazael king of Aram, but King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds the Arameans had inflicted on him in the battle with Hazael king of Aram.) Jehu said, "If this is the way you feel, don't let anyone slip out of the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel." Then he got into his chariot and rode to Jezreel, because Joram was resting there and Ahaziah king of Judah had gone down to see him. When the lookout standing on the tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's troops approaching, he called out, "I see some troops coming." "Get a horseman," Joram ordered. "Send him to meet them and ask, 'Do you come in peace?'" The horseman rode off to meet Jehu and said, "This is what the king says: 'Do you come in peace?'" "What do you have to do with peace?" Jehu replied. "Fall in behind me." The lookout reported, "The messenger has reached them, but he isn't coming back." So the king sent out a second horseman. When he came to them he said, "This is what the king says: 'Do you come in peace?'" Jehu replied, "What do you have to do with peace? Fall in behind me." The lookout reported, "He has reached them, but he isn't coming back either. The driving is like that of Jehu son of Nimshi--he drives like a madman." "Hitch up my chariot," Joram ordered. And when it was hitched up, Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah rode out, each in his own chariot, to meet Jehu. They met him at the plot of ground that had belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite. When Joram saw Jehu he asked, "Have you come in peace, Jehu?" "How can there be peace," Jehu replied, "as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel abound?" Joram turned about and fled, calling out to Ahaziah, "Treachery, Ahaziah!" Then Jehu drew his bow and shot Joram between the shoulders. The arrow pierced his heart and he slumped down in

his chariot. Jehu said to Bidkar, his chariot officer, “Pick him up and throw him on the field that belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite. Remember how you and I were riding together in chariots behind Ahab his father when the LORD made this prophecy about him: ‘Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons, declares the LORD, and I will surely make you pay for it on this plot of ground, declares the LORD.’ Now then, pick him up and throw him on that plot, in accordance with the word of the LORD.” When Ahaziah king of Judah saw what had happened, he fled up the road to Beth Haggan. Jehu chased him, shouting, “Kill him too!”⁸ They wounded him in his chariot on the way up to Gur near Ibleam, but he escaped to Megiddo and died there. His servants took him by chariot to Jerusalem and buried him with his fathers in his tomb in the City of David. (In the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king of Judah.) Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she painted her eyes, arranged her hair and looked out of a window. As Jehu entered the gate, she asked, “Have you come in peace, Zimri, you murderer of your master?” He looked up at the window and called out, “Who is on my side? Who?” Two or three eunuchs looked down at him. “Throw her down!” Jehu said. So they threw her down, and some of her blood splattered the wall and the horses as they trampled her underfoot.

At that point, Jehosheba’s mother, Athaliah, ordered the slaughter of all of her grandchildren so that there would be no blood successor to the crown. That way, she managed to hold on to the throne herself. It seems likely that Jehosheba was already in the quarters of her brother’s children when the assassins sent by Athaliah broke into the King’s nursery. It was probably only because Jehosheba was Athaliah’s own daughter that she wasn’t killed in the slaughter. Somehow she was able to scoop up her one year old 9 nephew Joash, Ahaziah’s infant son, 10 and rescue him from the slaughter. She took him to her husband Jehoiada, the High Priest, and they hid him and raised him in the Temple, safe from Athaliah.

2 Chronicles 22:10-12 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family of the house of Judah. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the royal princes who were about to be murdered and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Because Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and wife of the priest Jehoiada, was Ahaziah’s sister,¹¹ she hid the child from Athaliah so she could not kill him. He remained hidden with them at the temple of God for six years ¹² while Athaliah ruled the land.

8 It must be remembered that Ahaziah was a grandson of Ahab and thus covered by Jehu’s instructions to destroy the descendants of Ahab in 2 Kings 9:8.

9 We know that Joash was seven years old when he began to reign (2 Kings 11:21) and that he had been hidden for six years (2 Kings 11:3)

10 We know that Joash was under a year old because Jehu had just become King of Israel and Joash became King when he was seven in the seventh year of Jehu (2 Kings 11:21, 12:1).

11 She could have been the daughter of Athaliah, or another of Ahaziah’s wives. However, because of her seeming invulnerability, she was likely the daughter of Athaliah. She was obviously a young wife of Jehoiada, who was at least ninety years old. This marriage had probably been made intentionally, since it would eliminate the likelihood of children who would be royal contenders for the throne. This made Jehoiada Joash’s uncle.

12 This may be a type of human history, where the Devil rules the world for six years but the son of David rules the seventh.

2 Kings 11:1-3 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the royal princes, who were about to be murdered. She put him and his nurse in a bedroom to hide him from Athaliah; so he was not killed. He remained hidden with his nurse at the temple of the LORD for six years while Athaliah ruled the land.

After six years, Jehoiada deposed and executed Athaliah and put Joash on the throne. Joash was Jehoiada's and Jehosheba's nephew. They were his only surviving relatives and were thus the logical regents while he was still young.

2 Kings 11:3-17 He remained hidden with his nurse at the temple of the LORD for six years while Athaliah ruled the land. In the seventh year Jehoiada sent for the commanders of units of a hundred, the Carites and the guards and had them brought to him at the temple of the LORD. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath at the temple of the LORD. Then he showed them the king's son. He commanded them, saying, "This is what you are to do: You who are in the three companies that are going on duty on the Sabbath--a third of you guarding the royal palace, a third at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guard, who take turns guarding the temple--and you who are in the other two companies that normally go off Sabbath duty are all to guard the temple for the king. Station yourselves around the king, each man with his weapon in his hand. Anyone who approaches your ranks must be put to death. Stay close to the king wherever he goes." The commanders of units of a hundred did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered. Each one took his men--those who were going on duty on the Sabbath and those who were going off duty--and came to Jehoiada the priest. Then he gave the commanders the spears and shields that had belonged to King David and that were in the temple of the LORD. The guards, each with his weapon in his hand, stationed themselves around the king--near the altar and the temple, from the south side to the north side of the temple. Jehoiada brought out the king's son and put the crown on him; he presented him with a copy of the covenant and proclaimed him king. They anointed him, and the people clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!" When Athaliah heard the noise made by the guards and the people, she went to the people at the temple of the LORD. She looked and there was the king, standing by the pillar, as the custom was. The officers and the trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her robes and called out, "Treason! Treason!" Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of units of a hundred, who were in charge of the troops: "Bring her out between the ranks and put to the sword anyone who follows her." For the priest had said, "She must not be put to death in the temple of the LORD." So they seized her as she reached the place where the horses enter the palace grounds, and there she was put to death. Jehoiada then made a covenant between the LORD and the king and people that they would be the LORD's people. He also made a covenant between the king and the people.

Then the Lord did something wonderful. Jehoiada, the powerless, became the most influential and powerful High Priest in the whole history of the High Priesthood. The Lord extended his life to 130 years, during which he guided Joash in a righteous rule for about 35 years.

2 Kings 24:1-2 Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah; she was from Beersheba. Joash did what was right in the eyes of the LORD all the years of Jehoiada the priest.

2 Kings 24:14b-16 As long as Jehoiada lived, burnt offerings were presented continually in the temple of the LORD. Now Jehoiada was old and full of years, and he died at the age of a hundred and thirty.¹³ He was buried with the kings in the City of David, because of the good he had done in Israel for God and his temple.

After Jehoiada died, Joash turned to evil ways. This demonstrates both the enormous influence Jehoiada had in the ruling of the Kingdom when he was alive, but also the fact that no matter how good a person's role model is, in the end, they must decide for themselves to make the right choices.

2 Kings 24:17-19 After the death of Jehoiada, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king, and he listened to them. They abandoned the temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshiped Asherah poles and idols. Because of their guilt, God's anger came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Although the LORD sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, and though they testified against them, they would not listen.

At the end of the story we learned something else about the LORD's grace and power, When Joash started leading the people astray, one man stood up to speak for the LORD. The man was named Zechariah, and he was the son of Jehoiada. In a time when a man was considered to have lived a long life at seventy it is unlikely that this could have been one of Jehoiada's sons from his first marriage. All the sons from that marriage would have likely been over a hundred years old. I believe that this son of Jehoiada was also the son of Jehosheba. He was named Zechariah and would have grown up with Joash. Unlike Joash, he grew up believing the same things as Jehoiada and Jehosheba. He stood up to the unrighteousness of his cousin and was killed for his faith. However, his faith is memorialized forever in the word of God.

2 Chronicles 24:17-22 After the death of Jehoiada, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king, and he listened to them. They abandoned the temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshiped Asherah poles and idols. Because of their guilt, God's anger came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Although the LORD sent prophets to the people to bring them back to him, and though they testified against them, they would not listen. 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? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has forsaken you.'" But they plotted against him, and by order of the king they stoned him to death in the courtyard of the LORD's temple. King Joash did not remember the

13 In that age this was a very unusual age. The Kings of Judah from David to the exile who died a natural death had an average life span of 54 years old. Furthermore, Psalms 90:10, Isaiah 23:15, and Leviticus 27:7 confirm that anyone over 60 was considered old, and anyone who lived to be 80 was considered very old.

kindness Zechariah's father Jehoiada had shown him but killed his son, who said as he lay dying, "May the LORD see this and call you to account."

There is one other thing to note. Jehosheba was the only person from both the families of Jehoram and Ahab that survived the curses the Lord pronounced on both their houses. She wasn't bound by her heritage because like the "Sons of Korah" she had become part of a different family by faith.

Other Chronological Data

The age of Jehosheba at her marriage.

² Chronicles 21:5 Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.

² Kings 8:16-17 In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah. He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.

² Chronicles 22:2 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri.

² Kings 8:24-26 Jehoram rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David. And Ahaziah his son succeeded him as king. In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri king of Israel.

Since Ahaziah was the eldest son when his father Jehoram died at age 40, and he was 22, it is not likely that his sister Jehosheba was older than 25 as that would have made her father 15 years old at her birth. More than likely she was younger than her brother, but at least of marriageable age. If she was at least 20 she would have been twelve when her grandfather Jehoshaphat died. Perhaps it was from him she learned to love the Lord. She was between 15 and 25 years of age.

The age of Jehoiada at his marriage.

² Chronicles 18:34 All day long the battle raged, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot facing the Arameans until evening. Then at sunset he died.

² Chronicles 19:11 "Amariah the chief priest will be over you in any matter concerning the LORD, and Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the leader of the tribe of Judah, will be over you in any matter concerning the king, and the Levites will serve as officials before you. Act with courage, and may the LORD be with those who do well."

The previous two passages demonstrate that until after the death of Ahab, Amariah was still chief priest over Israel, not Jehoiada.

¹ Kings 22:42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years.¹⁴ His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.

¹⁴ That is, he became co-regent with his father, for ten years before he began to reign as sole ruler.

¹ 1 Kings 22:51 Ahaziah son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.

² 2 Kings 8:16-17 In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah.¹⁵ He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.

² 2 Kings 8:26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter ¹⁶ of Omri king of Israel.

² 2 Kings 1:17 So he died, according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. Because Ahaziah had no son, Joram succeeded him as king in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah.

² 2 Kings 3:1 Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years.

² 2 Kings 8:16 In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat began his reign as king of Judah.¹⁷

If Jehoshaphat reigned for 25 years (1 Kings 22:42), and Ahaziah became King of Israel on the death of his father in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat's reign (1 Kings 22:51), then Jehoshaphat reigned about six or seven years after Ahab's death. Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son had reigned six to eight years before he died (2 Kings 8:16-17). Ahaziah, Jehoram's son, had reigned one year before his death (2 Kings 8:26). The point of all this is to establish that from the death of Azariah the High Priest, and the appointment of Jehoiada could have been no longer than 14 years since it had been that long since the death of Ahab, and Azariah had outlived Ahab. Considering it is improbable that Jehoshaphat would have appointed a new High Priest out of the Father to Son line, it is likely that he had been appointed no earlier than seven years before the time of the slaughter in the Kings nursery, at which time Jehoiada was High Priest and husband of Jehosheba. I believe, that he was probably appointed by Ahaziah, after the death of Jehoram. We know that Jehoiada died before the reign of Joash was over which last 40 years. Add another 6 years for the time Joash was in hiding before he became King and we have a minimum of 46 years between the

¹⁵ This evidently was a co-regency with Jehoshaphat, since Joram started his reign in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat's reign (1 Kings 3:1, so this was only the 23rd year of Jehoshaphat's 25 year rule (1 Kings 22:42). The fact that there is no mention of Jehoshaphat's death here strengthens this view. It also explains why Judah again joined with the house of Israel in a military alliance in spite of the Lord's rebuke of Jehoshaphat. It was evidently the result of Joram's influence, who possibly had the strongest voice in the last day of his father's reign.

*¹⁶ The Hebrew here is **tB'** {bat} which is usually translated daughter, but actually means female descendant (daughter, granddaughter, etc.). Here the translators have supplied "granddaughter" because we know that was the actual relationship from other Biblical testimony.*

¹⁷ This evidently was a co-regency with Jehoshaphat, since Joram started his reign in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat's reign (1 Kings 3:1, so this was only the 23rd year of Jehoshaphat's 25 year rule (1 Kings 22:42). The fact that there is no mention of Jehoshaphat's death here strengthens this view.

time of the slaughter and the death of Jehoiada. Since we know that Jehoiada was 130 years old when he died, that would make him at least 84 at the time of that incident. Thus he was probably about the same age at the time of his marriage to Jehosheba, and the time of his appointment to the High Priesthood. Of course, reading the story of the last years of Joash, it seems likely that he survived Jehoiada at least five years, which would add another five years to Jehoiada's age at the time of the slaughter and the reign of Ahaziah.

The family of Jehoram and his demise.

² Chronicles 21:12-20 Jehoram received a letter from Elijah the prophet,¹⁸ which said: "This is what the LORD, the God of your father David, says: 'You have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your father's house, men who were better than you. So now the LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours, with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out.'" The LORD aroused against Jehoram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabs who lived near the Cushites. They attacked Judah, invaded it and carried off all the goods found in the king's palace, together with his sons and wives. Not a son was left to him except Ahaziah, the youngest. After all this, the LORD afflicted Jehoram with an incurable disease of the bowels. In the course of time, at the end of the second year, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great pain. His people made no fire in his honor, as they had for his fathers. Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He passed away, to no one's regret, and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

The family of Jehoiada

² Chronicles 23:11 Jehoiada and his sons brought out the king's son and put the crown on him; they presented him with a copy of the covenant ¹⁹ and proclaimed him king. They anointed him and shouted, "Long live the king!"

Although Jehoiada already had sons from a prior marriage, they were likely in their 50s or 60s by this time. At the time of Zechariah's death they were probably dead, as they would have been almost 100. It is true that Zechariah could have been one of their sons or grandsons, and still have been the "son of Jehoiada" but I recognize in this a pattern in which God works. He was Jehosheba's boy!

¹⁸ This was a letter that must have been written by Elijah before he died, as Elijah had died during the reign of Jehoram's father. God must have given Elijah foresight. This fits in the list of other things the Lord gave Elijah to do that were accomplished after his death in 1 Kings 19:15-16. Anoint Hazael, anoint Jehu. There is one other post-mortem task of Elijah. The proclamation of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem during the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.

¹⁹ This was to fulfill the commandment of Deuteronomy 17:18.

The Historical Reputation of Jehoiada

In the time of Jeremiah, an evil man named Shemaiah tried to encourage Zephaniah to action against Jeremiah over the King's ban. He used Jehoiada's name as a precedent of a powerful High Priest.

Jeremiah 29:26-27 'The LORD has appointed you priest in place of Jehoiada 20 to be in charge of the house of the LORD; you should put any madman who acts like a prophet into the stocks and neck-irons. So why have you not reprimanded Jeremiah from Anathoth, who poses as a prophet among you?

20 Shemaiah here was invoking the history of Jehoiada who was the High Priest who took back the kingdom from Athaliah for Joash and was the most powerful and influential High Priest in the history of Israel. Although Jehoiada was a great saint and Shemaiah was a blasphemer, it did not prevent him from enlisting Jehoiada's history in aid of an evil blasphemy.