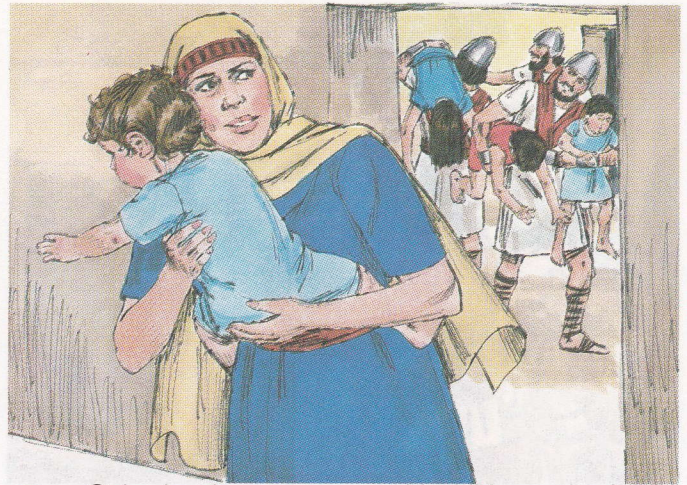


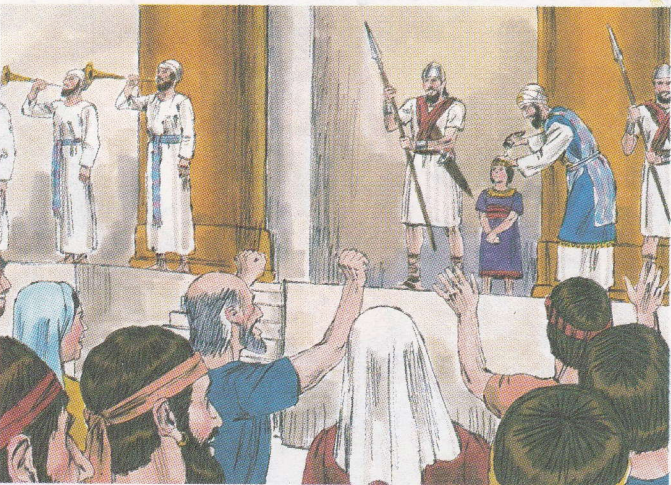
Joash the Boy King



1 Both Judah and Israel had many evil kings. When King Ahaziah of Judah died, his mother Athaliah wanted to be queen. She had all her grandsons killed so none of them could be king.



2 Only Joash, a one-year-old child, escaped. His aunt, Jehosheba, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, saved him. She kept him hidden in one of the rooms of the Temple for six years.



3 When Joash was seven, Jehoiada carried out a plan to make Joash king. Protected by soldiers, Jehoiada crowned Joash and anointed his head with oil. The people shouted, "Long live the king!"



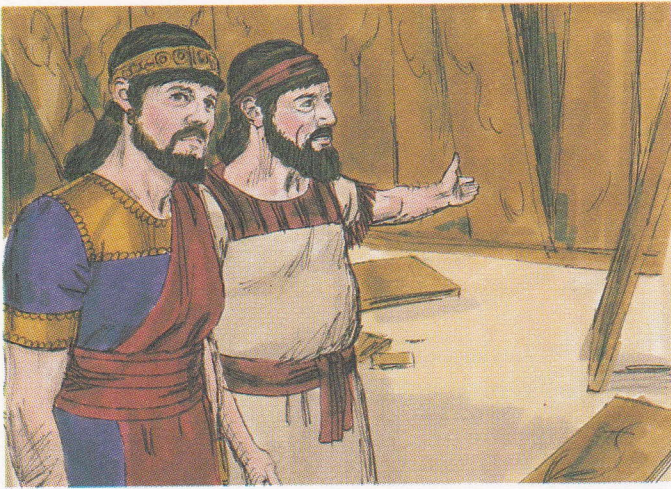
4 Hearing the noise, Athaliah hurried to the Temple. When she saw Joash, she tore her clothes and cried, "Treason!" Some soldiers were ordered to take her out of the Temple and kill her.



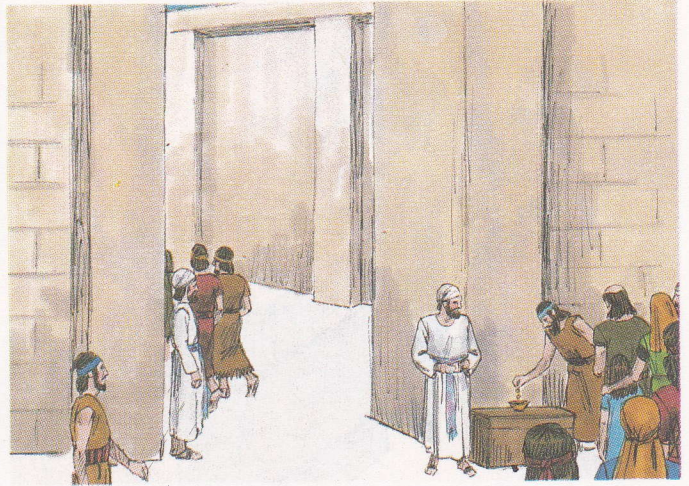
5 Jehoiada the priest had the boy king Joash and the people of Judah make a covenant with the Lord. They promised again that they would be the Lord's people.



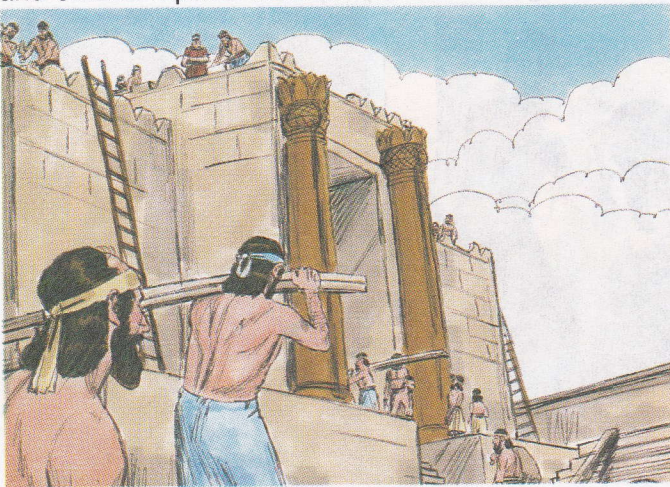
6 Then the people went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They destroyed the altars and broke the idols into pieces. They killed the priest of Baal in front of the altars.



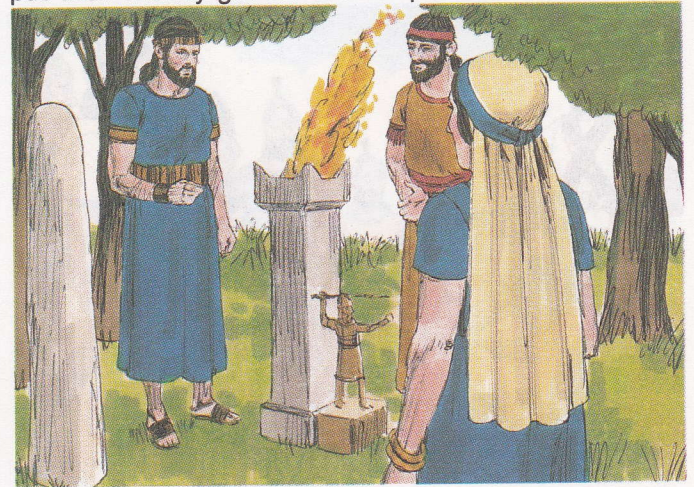
7 After several years, Joash decided to repair the Lord's Temple. He ordered the priests to collect money for making the repairs. But many years passed and still no repairs were made.



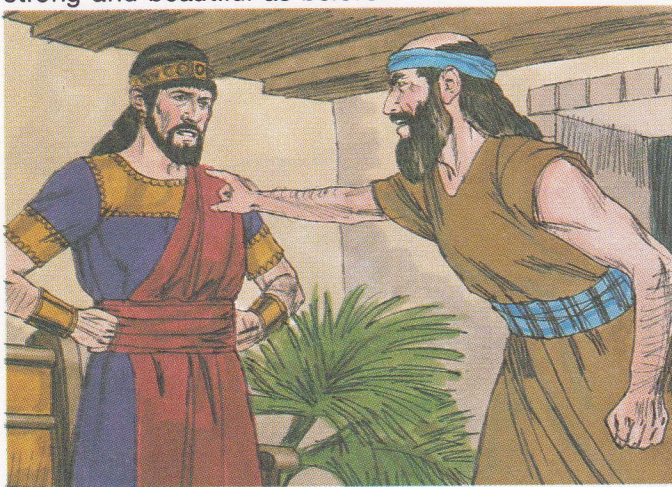
8 Finally Joash decided he must do something. He had a large box placed by the Temple gate. When the people came to offer sacrifices, they could put their money gift for the Temple in the box.



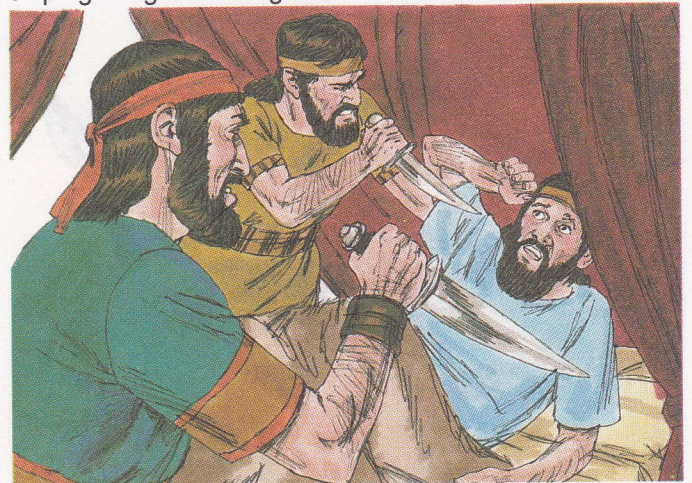
9 This money was used to pay the carpenters and stonemasons and metal workers who made the repairs on the Temple. Before long, the Temple was strong and beautiful as before.



10 As long as Jehoiada the priest was alive, sacrifices were made at the Temple every day. But when he died, the people stopped coming there. They began worshipping images of the goddess Asherah.



11 The Lord sent Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, to warn Joash. He said: "Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you." Joash was angry and ordered Zechariah to be stoned to death.



12 Later that year, the Syrian army attacked Judah and Jerusalem. King Joash was wounded during the battle. While still in bed, he was murdered by two men who had been friends of Zechariah.