

## The Greatest Among Us

There is not many a man who can boast of being “self-made.” It is true that a man may look at his life and focus on the individual struggles that were met and overcome, but generally there are other players in the background that yielded a mighty influence: either to do good, or to do evil (and in some cases, both).

There was one king who experienced the influence of both good and evil. His name was Joash. Joash came into this world as an exile in his own kingdom (so to speak). His grandmother, Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, had usurped the throne of Judah after the death of her son, Ahaziah. When she did, “she arose and destroyed all the seed royal” (2 Kgs. 11:1): except for Joash, “But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, and put them in the bedchamber; and they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not slain; And he was with her hid in the house of Jehovah six years. And Athaliah reigned over the land” (2 Kgs. 11:2-3). Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah was married to a priest named Jehoiada. In the seventh year of Joash (Jehoash) Jehoiada “brought out the king's (Ahaziah) son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, Long live the king” (2 Kgs. 11:12). Jehoiada had Athaliah slain and Joash began to reign when he was seven years of age, (2 Kgs. 11:21). “And Jehoash (Joash) did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him” (2 Kgs. 12:2).

An emphasis is placed upon the influence of Jehoiada, on Joash, “all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him” (Ibid.). However, “Jehoiada waxed old and was full of days, and he died; a hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and toward God and his house. *Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they forsook the house of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols:* and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their guiltiness. Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto Jehovah; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear” (2 Chron. 24:15-19), and not only so, it came to pass when “The Spirit of God came upon *Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest;* and he stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of Jehovah, so that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken Jehovah, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and *stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of Jehovah. Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son*” (emph. ret) (2 Chron. 24:20-22). Influence! We all make a choice as to what influence we follow. ret