

2Chronicles 22:1 ¶ And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.

2Chronicles 22:2 Forty and two years old *was* Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Athaliah the daughter of Omri.

2Chronicles 22:3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.

2Chronicles 22:4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction.

After the death of Jehoram, his youngest son Ahaziah was made king since a group of Arabians and Philistines had attacked and killed the rest of his sons.

2 Chronicles 21:16–17 “Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians: And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.”

Jehoahaz is another form of the name Ahaziah. It seems that the attackers first carried the sons away captive before killing them.

Ahaziah was 42 years old when he began his one-year reign in Jerusalem. Adam Clarke notes that the age recorded here must be an error based on 2Kings 8. “Ahaziah might have been twenty-two years old...but he could not have been forty-two, as stated here, without being two years older than his own father!”

2 Kings 8:16–17 “And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign. Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.”

Ahaziah was the son of Athaliah, a (grand)daughter of Omri by his son Ahab, a king in the Northern Kingdom. Because of the evil influence of his mother, Ahaziah became another wicked king of Judah who followed the ways of the house of Ahab. After his father died, his primary counselors were family members on his mother's side.

A historical note from JFB: “It may be mentioned as a very minute and therefore important confirmation of this part of the sacred history that the names of Jehu and Hazael, his contemporary, have both been found on Assyrian sculptures....”

2Chronicles 22:5 He walked also after their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramothgilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.

2Chronicles 22:6 And he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the

wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

2Chronicles 22:7 And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

On the advice of his ungodly counselors, Ahaziah joined with Jehoram, son of Ahab and king of Israel, against Hazael, king of Syria. The king of Israel was wounded by the Syrians in battle at Ramah and returned to Jezreel to be healed. Ahaziah (Azariah is yet another form of the name Ahaziah.) went to Ramah to see the wounded king. God used this visit to bring about the death of the king of Judah. During this visit, Jehoram went to meet with Jehu, son of Nimshi, the man that God had anointed to destroy the house of Ahab. (See the account of this anointing in 2Kings 9.) Some of Ahaziah's officials and relatives had accompanied Jehoram to this meeting.

2Chronicles 22:8 And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

2Chronicles 22:9 And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

When Jehu executed those of the house of Ahab, he found out that some of the leading men of Judah and Ahaziah's relatives were with the king. He then looked for Ahaziah, and his men found him hiding in Samaria. They brought him to Jehu who ordered that he be killed. The record in Kings tells us a bit more.

2 Kings 9:27–28 “But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.”

The Chronicler notes that he was given a proper burial since he was a son of Jehoshaphat, a king who had “sought the Lord with all his heart.”

This is another instance in scripture in which we see that the life of a grandparent continues to have influence after his death. As a grandparent, that speaks loudly to me--though I would prefer to have an influence that is more like Zadok's (as noted in Ezekiel 44), an influence that brings about good things during the lives of my descendants.

Ezekiel 44:15–16 “But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to

me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD: They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge."

It is also significant to me that the dominant memory about Jehoshaphat was that he "sought the LORD with all his heart." Again, I certainly hope that my family would be able to say the same about me in spite of all my many flaws.

The Chronicler also notes that no one was left in Ahaziah's family that was powerful enough to take the throne in Judah.

2Chronicles 22:10 ¶ But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah.

2Chronicles 22:11 But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.

2Chronicles 22:12 And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

When Ahaziah's mother Athaliah saw that her son was dead, she killed all her grandsons. As a grandmother, I cannot understand the desire for power that could make one so evil as to kill her own grandchildren. Then again, I can't understand how humans can do so many of the evil things they do as revealed in history and the headlines in the news today. An even more horrifying thought—But for the love of God at work in me, it could be me.

Jehoshabeath, Ahaziah's sister, was able to rescue Joash, her youngest nephew, and his nurse and hide them in a bedchamber. She was the wife of Jehoiada the priest. The couple were able to hide the child in the temple for six years. During that time, Athaliah reigned over the land.

I believe that the LORD directly empowered Jehoshabeath and her husband to rescue and hide Joash in order to preserve the seed of David that He had promised would bring forth the Messiah.