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**The Ironic End of Joash
in Chronicles**

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In 842 B.c.E.,¹ the high priest Jehoiada engineered a *coup d'etat* that installed the seven-year-old Joash² as king of Judah and expelled the only woman monarch, Athaliah (842/841-835), who for six years had ruled in succession of her slain son, Ahaziah (r. 843/842-842/841).³ She had tried to wipe out the whole royal family when her son Ahaziah was killed, but was thwarted by Jehoshabeath, a sister of Ahaziah and, according to the Chronicler, the wife of Jehoiada (2 Chron. 22:11), who rescued Joash, an infant son of Ahaziah and hid him in the temple during Athaliah's reign. Athaliah was executed at the end of the coup, when the people of the land also executed Mattan, who presided as priest over a temple of Baal in Jerusalem.

Joash's rule lasted forty years (842/841-802/801) and is reported in both 2 Kings 12 and 2 Chronicles 24, with the latter chapter rewriting the text of Kings⁴ and incorporating new information and a radical new theological inter

1. The dates used for the Judean monarchy are taken from Gershon Galil, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 147.

2. His name is spelled "Jehoash" in 2 Kings 12 (except for vv. 20, 21) and "Joash" in Chronicles. Since this article focuses on Chronicles, I will use the Chronicler's spelling of the king's name, as well as his spelling "Jehoshabeath" instead of "Jehosheba" for the name of the woman who saved the king, except in translations of the Kings text itself.

3. Galil (*Chronology*, 48) concludes that biblical chronologists later counted the beginning of Joash's reign from the time of the assassination of his father.

4. This has been the nearly unanimous assumption of scholars for the last two centuries. Recently, A. Graeme Auld has challenged this position in a forcefully written monograph (*Kings without Privilege: David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994]). Auld proposes that Kings and Chronicles independently supplemented a common inherited text that can be reconstructed from the texts they share in common. In his opinion, Chronicles did not omit the chapters narrating the questionable behavior of David and Solomon and the history of the northern kingdom. Rather, these materials were added by the Kings editor to the shared text. Since the shared text is itself

pretation of Joash's life. This study, offered in tribute to George W E. Nickelsburg, a close friend and colleague for almost forty years, assesses the ways in which the Chronicler has rewritten the story of Joash that he found in Kings.

The account of Joash in Kings created theological problems for the Chronicler and his strict views on retribution, since he expected blessings or punishments to happen in just proportion and within a person's lifetime. He would have been surprised and even offended by the idea that Joash's successful efforts to repair the temple (2 Kings 12:4-16) were followed immediately by an invasion by Hazael of Aram, to whom Joash paid an enormous bribe (2 Kings 12:17-18), and also by a palace conspiracy that led to the assassination of Joash himself (2 Kings 12:19-21). The Chronicler used new information and a fresh interpretation of the materials inherited from Kings to provide a theologically coherent, if somewhat ironic,⁵ account of the reign of Joash.

Introduction

2 Kings 12"Jehoash was seven years old when he became king. ² In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he ruled forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.'	2 Chron. 24 'Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he ruled forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.
³ Jehoash did what was upright in Yahweh's sight all his days because' Jehoiada the priest taught him.	² Joash did what was upright in Yahweh's sight all the days of Jehoiada the priest.
4Only they did not remove the high places; the people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.	³ Jehoiada secured two wives for him, and he engendered sons and daughters.

I call attention to the following significant changes introduced by the Chronicler:

postexilic, Auld attributes little historical credibility to the supplementary materials in Kings and Chronicles, saying, "I suspect in fact that this writer in Kings knew next to nothing about many of these ancient kings of the north" (139). For reasons set forth below in 9, I do not believe that Auld has successfully overturned the consensus.

5. For a discussion of irony in the text, see M. Patrick Graham, "Aspects of the Structure and Rhetoric of 2 Chronicles 25," in *History and Interpretation: Essays in Honour of John H. Hayes* (JSOTSup 173; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 78-89.

6. Second Kings 11:21 in English versions. English versification, therefore, is one less than the MT throughout this chapter.

7. The name of his mother is especially important, since there may have been some suspicion that the child brought forward by Jehoiada and Jehoshabeath was not really of the royal family. See even J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 303-5.

8. GKC 158b. Cf. Gen. 30:18; 31:49; 34:13; 1 Kings 8:33.

1. The Chronicler omits the synchronism with the northern kingdom as he does throughout his work.
2. The Deuteronomistic Historian had affirmed that Joash was faithful throughout his life, subject only to the limitation described in v. 4. The Chronicler, however, limited this fidelity to the lifetime of the priest Jehoiada and recorded the significant misdeeds of Joash in vv. 17-22. These faults provide a theological explanation for the Aramaean invasion (vv. 23-24) and the king's assassination (vv. 25-26).
3. The limitation placed on Joash's uprightness by 2 Kings 12:4 was omitted by the Chronicler, who has divided the life of Joash into two periods, in the first of which, before the death of Jehoiada, the king was completely upright.'
4. The additional information in Chronicles about Joash's wives and children^o shows that Joash lived under God's blessing in the first period of his life and that his wives, since chosen by the high priest himself, were permissible. Since Jehoiada chose only two wives for the king, Joash in the Chronicler's eyes apparently did not transgress Deut. 17:17; two is hardly the "many wives" of which Deuteronomy warns. While some scholars would attribute this information on Joash's family to the source cited in v. 27,¹¹ it is important to note how general and vague this information is, revealing no detailed knowledge of the king's life.¹²

9. The limitation on a king's righteousness by referring to ongoing worship at high places is recorded for *six* kings in the Deuteronomic History. In two cases, the Chronicler repeats the information from Kings (2 Chron. 14:17 // 2 Kings 15:14 and 2 Chron. 20:33 // 2 Kings 22:43). The Chronicler's treatment of the other three passages, in addition to 2 Kings 12:4, seems also to be motivated by theological considerations. He omits the reference to high places under Amaziah (2 Kings 14:4; cf. 2 Chron. 25:2) since this king's life, like Joash's, was divided into good and bad periods, with the bad period beginning at 2 Chron. 25:14. The reference to high places in the account of Azariah/ Uzziah (2 Kings 15:4; cf. 2 Chron. 26:3) was also omitted because of the Chronicler dividing Uzziah's life into good and bad periods. In the reign of Jotham (2 Kings 15:35), the Chronicler rewrote the verse as he compared the king to his father Uzziah: "Only he did not invade the temple of Yahweh, and still the people acted corruptly" (2 Chron. 27:2). The latter clause is the Chronicler's recasting of the reference to the high places. Auld, *Kings without Privilege*, 86-88, interprets the four omissions by the Chronicler, in fact, as additions to the shared text by the author of Kings. I plan to publish in another context a complete discussion of Auld's interpretation of the references to the high places, which he considers a "crucial illustration" of his case.

10. For children as a sign of blessing see 1 Chron. 14:3-7 (David); 2 Chron. 11:18-23 (Rehoboam); and 2 Chron. 13:21 (Abijah).

11. Raymond B. Dillard, *2 Chronicles* (WBC 15; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987), 188.

12. It is impossible to tell whether Jehoaddan of Jerusalem, the mother of Joash's son Amaziah (2 Chron. 25:1), was one of the two women picked by Jehoiada.

2 Kings 12	2 Chronicles 24
	4Afterwards Joash decided to renew the house of Yahweh.
5And Jehoash said to the priests, "All the silver of the votive gifts, which is brought to the house of Yahweh - silver of the census tax, silver from the valuation of persons, or any silver that a person may voluntarily bring to the house of Yahweh- ¹³	⁵ He gathered the priests and Levites and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah and gather from all Israel silver to repair the house of your God, year by year; and you shall act quickly in this matter." But the Levites did not act quickly. ¹⁴
6 let the priests take for themselves, each from his benefactors, and let them repair the damage to the house, wherever damage may be found." ⁷ In the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, the priests had not repaired the damage to the house.	
eSo King Jehoash called to Jehoiada the priest and to the other priests, and he said to them, "Why have you not repaired the damage to the house? Now, do not take silver from your benefactors, but you shall give it for the damage to the house."	the king called to Jehoiada the chief, ¹⁵ and he said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring from Judah and Jerusalem the tax required by Moses the servant of Yahweh and by the congregation of Israel for the tent of testimony?"

<p>Me priests agreed not to take silver from the people, and not to repair the damage to the house.</p>	<p>⁷"As for Athaliah, that wicked woman, her sons have broken into the house of God, and they have also given the votive gifts of the house of Yahweh to the Baals."</p>
<p>¹⁰Jehoiada the priest took a chest and bored a hole in its lid and put it on the south side of the altar, as one enters the house of Yahweh. The priests, the keepers of the threshold, would put there all the silver brought to the house of Yahweh.</p>	<p>⁸The king gave orders that they should make a chest and put it outside the gate of the house of Yahweh.</p> <p>⁹They made a proclamation in Judah and Jerusalem to bring to Yahweh the tax required by Moses the servant of God for Israel in the desert.</p>

13. The translation follows the suggestions of Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB 11; Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1988), 137.

14. H. G. M. Williamson (*I and 2 Chronicles* [New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], 320-21) proposes that vv. 5b-6 are secondary additions by a pro-priestly redactor. For counterarguments, see Dillard, *2 Chronicles*, 189-90, and Sara Japhet, *I and II Chronicles* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 843. Japhet believes that the second occurrence of "Levites" in this verse refers to all members of the tribe, priests and Levites alike.

15. Normally the leading priest is called "chief priest" in Chronicles. See v. 11 and 2 Chron. 19:11 and 31:10.

2 Kings 12	2 Chronicles 24
	<p>¹⁰And all the officials and all the people rejoiced, and they brought [the tax] and threw it into the chest until it was full.</p>
<p>"When they saw that there was much silver in the chest, the scribe of the king and the high priest would go up and bundle it up and count the money found in the house of Yahweh.</p>	<p>"Whenever someone brought the chest to the king's officers by the hand of the Levites, when they saw that there was much silver in it, the scribe of the king and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest, take it, and return it to its place. So they did every day, and they gathered much silver.</p>

<p>¹²They would put the silver which had been weighed out into the hands of the workmen in charge of the house of Yahweh, and they paid it out to the carpenters and builders working in the house of Yahweh,</p>	<p>^{1z}And the king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did have charge of the work of the house of Yahweh, and they hired masons and carpenters to renew the house of Yahweh, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of Yahweh.</p>
<p>¹³and to the masons and the stone cutters, to buy timber and quarry stone to repair the damage to the house of Yahweh, and for all the expenses of the temple to repair it.</p>	<p>¹³Those who were engaged in the project worked, and the repairing progressed in their hands. They restored the house of God to its proper condition, and they strengthened it.</p>
<p>¹⁴However, no silver basins, snuffers, sprinkling bowls or trumpets -any kind of vessel of gold and silver-were made from the silver which was brought into the house of Yahweh.</p>	<p>¹⁴When they had finished, they brought the rest of the silver before the king, and he made with it vessels for the house of Yahweh, both for the service and for the burnt offerings, and ladles, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of Yahweh regularly all the days of Jehoiada.</p>
<p>¹⁵For they paid it to the workmen, and they repaired the house with it. ¹⁶There was no accounting made with the people into whose hands they put the silver to pay the workmen, for they dealt honestly. ¹⁷Silver from guilt offerings and sin offerings were not brought to the house of Yahweh, but it was for the priests.</p>	

I call attention to the following significant changes:

1. The Chronicler adds a reference to the Levites in v. 5 and has Joash assign to them and to the priests the duty of actively collecting money for the repair of the temple. The Chronicler also changes the collection to an annual event, perhaps reflecting the customs of his time (see Neh. 10:33 [Eng. v. 32]). Joash criticized the Levites through Jehoiada for not collecting the funds rapidly enough. He also interpreted this collection

as a tax legislated by Moses originally for the tabernacle (Exod. 30:11-16; 38:25-26) but now

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due to the temple as well. The need for repairs is laid at the feet of Athaliah and her sons¹⁶ in v. 7, who are accused of breaking into the temple and using its votive gifts for the Baals. The damage to the temple was not due to negligence by the clergy. In Kings, on the other hand, Joash had asked the priests to provide funds for repair of the temple from their own regular income, and he discovered that no repairs to the temple had been made after twenty-three years! He then reprimanded Jehoiada for not repairing the house and ruled that the priests would receive no more money directly, although they would not be required to finance repairs to the temple.

2. In Kings, Joash proposed that the contributions be deposited in a chest he placed in the temple, thus avoiding the priests as intermediaries. One of the king's officials and the high priest¹⁷ would count the money and turn it over to those supervising the repairs in the temple. Cultic utensils did not have to be financed from these funds, and the priests were provided with restricted income from the guilt and sin offerings. The Chronicler moved the chest outside the gate of the temple where laypeople could deposit their money directly and not violate the holiness of the sanctuary. The proclamation reported in 2 Chron. 24:9 may reflect a communication strategy from the Persian period (cf. 2 Chron. 30:5; 36:22; Ezra 1:1; 10:7; Neh. 8:10).¹⁸ In any case, the people joyfully paid this tax in great amounts, thus setting an example for the Chronicler's audience. Both the king and the high priest in Chronicles are represented by an official in the counting of the money, correcting an impression from Kings that the high priest and the scribe of the king were equal in rank. In Chronicles the high priest is roughly equal to the king himself. Excess funds gathered from the people were used to finance or provide raw material for cultic vessels - in direct contradiction to Kings. The existence of such surplus silver emphasizes the size of the people's gifts. Since there were no longer kings to provide these cultic vessels after the exile, the Chronicler may be providing an etiology for the provision of cultic vessels in his own time.¹⁹

16. Athaliah had attempted to wipe out the royal family (2 Chron. 22:10), and various members of the family had been killed in earlier incidents (2 Chron. 21:4; 22:1). Perhaps the term "sons" here should be understood as her "adherents."

17. This may indicate mutual suspicion between the king and the priesthood that could only be assuaged by their counting the funds together. On the other hand, there is no required accountability for those supervising the repair work. Cf. 2 Kings 22:7 // 2 Chron. 34:12. The contractors were trusted more than the priests!

18. See Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 159.

19. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Chronikbacher* (HAT 21; Tubingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1955), 277.

Jehoiada's Death and Burial

¹⁵Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and he died. He was 130 years old at his death.

¹⁶They buried him in the city of David with the kings, for he had done good in Israel and toward God and his house.

The next three paragraphs, vv. 15-22, which are contained only in Chronicles, provide the theological rationale for the defeat and assassination of Joash. The Chronicler gives full honors to Jehoiada by crediting him with a life as long as Jacob's (Gen. 47:9) and similar to that of other patriarchs, matriarchs, and heroes of the faith.²⁰ Jehoiada had benefited Israel by restoring Joash to the throne, perhaps also serving as regent during his monarchy, and he had assisted God by repairing the house. This is the only time the Chronicler reports the death and burial of someone other than a king. Jehoiada's burial with the kings is a better fate than that of Joash (v. 25). With the death of Jehoiada, Joash's conduct and his fate turn from good to bad (cf. v. 2).

Transgression

¹⁷After the death of Jehoiada, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king. Then the king hearkened to them. ¹⁸They abandoned the house of Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, and worshiped the Asherim and the idols. Consequently the wrath of Yahweh was on Judah and Jerusalem on account of this guilt.

Joash listened to bad advisers, as had Rehoboam (2 Chron. 10:8-11), Ahab and Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 18:4-11), and Ahaziah, whose mother Athaliah was his counselor (2 Chron. 22:3-4). King and people together turned from the worship of Yahweh to Asherim (cf. the apostasy of Asa's mother in 2 Chron. 15:16 and of Manasseh in 2 Chron. 33:3, 19) and idols (cf. the Philistines, who sent news of Saul's death to their idols [1 Chron. 10:9]). The divine wrath for these offenses was manifested in the invasion of the Arameans in vv. 23-24.

Prophetic Warnings and Royal Murder

¹⁹He sent prophets among them to bring them back to Yahweh. They warned them, but they did not give heed. ²⁰Then the spirit of God clothed itself with Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood above the people and said to them, "Thus says God: Why are you transgressing the commandments of Yahweh? You will not prosper. Since you have abandoned Yahweh, he has abandoned you." ²¹They con

20. Sarah, 127; Aaron, 123; Moses, 120; Joseph and Joshua, 110. Historically, of course, Jehoiada's age seems unlikely because of general life expectancy and the age differential with his wife. Jehoshabeath was probably not much more than twenty at the death of her father Jehoram, who died when he was forty (2 Chron. 21:5). Ahaziah ruled for one year and Athaliah for *six*. Hence she would have been no more than twenty-seven at the time of the coup. Even if Jehoiada lived until two years before the death of Joash, he would have been sixty-five years older than his wife! Dillard (2 Chronicles, 192) is not

willing to preclude 130 as an accurate figure.

spired against him and stoned him with stones, following the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of Yahweh. ²²Joash the king did not remember the loyalty that Jehoiada his father had shown to him, and so he killed his son. As he died, he said, "May Yahweh see and avenge!"

The guilt is shared by king and people alike; both refused to listen to prophets sent by God just as both had practiced idolatry. Zechariah was endowed with prophetic powers (1 Chron. 12:19; 2 Chron. 15:1) and delivered a speech which reflects the Chronicler's own theology through and through. Prospering (or lack of it) is a typical reward (punishment) for good conduct (misconduct) in Chronicles, and the Chronicler notes elsewhere that abandoning Yahweh leads to divine abandonment of the sinners (2 Chron. 12:5). A mob stoned Zechariah, on the king's orders. Thus, the son of the man who had made Joash king was executed at Joash's initiative, and the deed took place in the temple courts. At Joash's own coronation, his supporters had taken care to get Athaliah out of the temple and into the palace before they killed her. Zechariah's request for vengeance is answered in vv. 23-26.

While the report about the group of prophets and the speech of Zechariah may be the contribution of the Chronicler's own pen, the specific identity of Zechariah and his violent death may have come to the Chronicler from another source, perhaps the one mentioned in v. 27. A recent inscription may also attest to the historicity of Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada.²¹ "Just as Ashyahu [Joash]²² commanded you to give by the hand of Zechariah silver of Tarshish to the house of -Yahweh. Three sheqels." Though the name Zechariah is very common, his connection here with Joash and with fund-raising for the temple seems more than a coincidence.

The royal hostility toward Zechariah and the priests is anticipated in the Book of Kings, when Joash criticized Jehoiada and the priests for not repairing the temple and when Joash raided the temple to buy off Hazael.

The Aramaean Attack

2 Kings 12	2 Chronicles 24
¹⁸ Then Hazael the king of Aram came up and fought against Gath and took it. Arid Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem.	²³ At the turn of the year, ²³ an army host came up against him. They came to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed all the officials of the people from among the people, and all their spoil he sent to the king of Damascus.

21. This was proposed by P Kyle McCarter, Jr., at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, San Francisco, November 1997.

22. Other names are attested in which the divine name appears in both the second and first position: Coniah and Jehoiachin.

23. The typical time for war (2 Sam. 11:1; 1 Kings 20:26; 1 Chron. 20:1).

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<p>¹⁹Jehoash king of Judah took all the votive gifts, which Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah his fathers the kings of Judah had dedicated, and his own votive gifts, and all the gold which was found in the treasuries of the house of God and the palace of the king, and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram so that he departed from Jerusalem.</p>	<p>²⁴With a few men the army of Aram had come, and Yahweh gave into their hands an exceedingly great army, for they had abandoned Yahweh the God of their ancestors. On Joash they inflicted punishment.</p>
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Kings and Chronicles both report an invasion by the Arameans, but the two accounts vary in almost every detail. According to the Kings account, Hazael (842-800 B.C.E.), a well-known king, captured Gath on the Mediterranean coast and then threatened to attack Jerusalem. Joash raided the temple and also delved into his own resources, and came up with a big enough bribe to send Hazael on his way. In the Chronicler's telling, Hazael did not personally lead the attack and, in fact, is not mentioned at all. Instead, the Aramaean army had a direct military engagement with Judah and Jerusalem and inflicted punishment on the officers of Judah who had led Joash astray. The booty taken by the army in its attack was sent on to the king. These changes avoid the embarrassment of having Joash, the restorer of the temple, undo his own repairs and impoverish the temple. In past times God had given victory to small armies of his people when they were far outnumbered (2 Chron. 13:3-18; 14:8-15). Now the same divine intervention assisted the outmanned Arameans as they executed God's wrath on Judah. The paragraph closes by repeating the people's offense of "forgetting Yahweh" and indicating that this was punishment for the sins of Joash, even though he is not mentioned in the battle account at all. Verse 25, however, indicates that he was wounded in this battle.²⁴

Joash's Death –Conclusion

2 Kings 12	2 Chronicles 24
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<p>Z⁰The rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? "His servants rose up and initiated a conspiracy against him, and they smote</p>	<p>²⁵When they went away from him, leaving him severely wounded, his servants</p>
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24. Williamson (1 *and 2 Chronicles*, 325) believes that the Chronicler was dependent on an extrabiblical source for his version of the Aramaean War, but Japhet (*I and II Chronicles*, 851-52) argues convincingly that the Chronicler modeled this account on his own narrative about Shishak's campaign (2 Chron. 12:2-12).

	<p>conspired against him because of the violence done to the son ²⁶ of Jehoiada the priest, and they killed him on his bed. They buried him in the city of David, but they did not bury him with the kings.</p>
<p>²²It was Jozabad²¹ the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, who struck him down so that he died. They buried him with his fathers in the city of David. Amaziah his son ruled in his stead.</p>	<p>²⁶These are the ones who conspired against him: Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess.</p>
	<p>²⁷As for his sons, the abundance of oracles against him, and the rebuilding of the house of God, behold they are written in the Midrash of the Book of Kings. Amaziah his son ruled in his stead.</p>

The respective concluding summaries in vv. 20 and 27 of Kings and Chronicles are worded differently and have a divergent location, one before and one after the death of

Joash." It is unclear whether the Midrash of the Book of Kings (Chronicles) contained additional oracles about Joash or whether "the abundance of oracles" in v. 27 is only a reference back to v. 19. The assassination of Joash in Kings takes place without an adequate explanation; in Chronicles it follows his submission to the officials of Judah with the resultant turn to idolatry, his failure to listen to the prophets, his complicity in the execution of Zechariah, and his defeat by the Aramaean army. In fact, that defeat, according to Chronicles, left him wounded, and his servants conspired against him in response to his violence against Zechariah - the priest-prophet's final prayer for vengeance is granted. The conspiracy against Joash offers a kind of poetic justice since Joash had been involved in the conspiracy against Zechariah. The Chronicler gives a different location for the king's death (on his bed instead of in the Beth Millo), either

25. "Silla" may be a corrupt variant of Millo. Its inclusion in the text required the addition of "which goes down to."

26. LXX, Vulgate, MT use the plural form.

27. "Jozacar" is attested in many Hebrew manuscripts and may be original, although Chronicles was using a text with the Jozabad variant. The "Jo-" prefix is absent in Chronicles due to haplography (cf. the suffix on the preceding word).

28. In a discussion on the death of Josiah, H. G. M. Williamson ("Reliving the Death of Josiah," VT 37 [1987]: 12) argued that the Chronicler must have had a different edition of the Deuteronomistic History, since he places the source citation at a different position than in Kings MT and the Chronicler is not known to move such citations from their position in his Vorlage (cf. 2 Chron. 35:26-27 and 2 Kings 23:28). He considers this the decisive argument in his discussion with Christopher Begg about whether Chronicles knew an alternate form of the Deuteronomistic History. He mentions 2 Chron. 16:11; 2 Chron. 20:34; and 2 Chron. 25:26 as places where Chronicles follows the unusual placement of the formulae in Kings. Perhaps 2 Chron. 24:27 is a second case, in addition to Josiah, in which the Chronicler in fact moved the source citation found in his Vorlage.

because he did not understand the reference in Kings or because he was drawing a contrast with Joash's early life when he was hidden in a bedroom of the temple (see below). Both Kings and Chronicles report his burial in the city of David, but Chronicles adds that it was not with the other kings - in pointed contrast to the burial place of Jehoiada.²⁹

Kings provides the names of the conspirators and the names of their fathers. Building on the feminine *taw* ending on Shimeath, and adding a *taw* to the parent of Jehozabad as well, the Chronicler interpreted both words as mothers' names and connected them to Ammon and Moab, respectively. Graham has noted the presence of two men named Jehozabad and three named Zabad in Ezra 10 and suggested that the hostility toward the Ammonites and Moabites in Ezra 9:1 may have led to the inclusion of these Gentiles in 2 Chron. 24:26 as well.³⁰ Ackroyd has remarked that those who had turned to alien deities were punished by alien instruments of divine wrath.³¹

The Irony of It All

The additional material and the theological interpretation introduced by the Chronicler lend a poignant tone to the account of Joash in Chronicles. These ironic items include:

1. Jehoiada and Jehoshabeath saved the life of Joash and put him on his throne, but Joash was implicated in the murder of their³² son Zechariah. By the same token Zechariah was probably among the sons of Jehoiada who anointed Joash (2 Chron. 23:11).
2. At the command of the king,³³ people conspired against Zechariah and killed him (2 Chron. 24:21), but Joash's own servants conspired against him because of the violence done to the son(s) of Jehoiada. Both the bad Athaliah (2 Chron. 23:13) and the good Joash died by treason/conspiracy.
3. Zechariah was murdered in the same temple where Joash had been protected during the reign of Athaliah. Those who had crowned Joash carefully removed Athaliah from the temple before killing her.

29. Other kings to be given less than fully honorable burials in Chronicles are Asa (2 Chron. 16:14), Jehoram (2 Chron. 21:19-20), Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:23), and Ahaz (2 Chron. 28:27).

30. M. Patrick Graham, "A Connection Proposed Between II Chr 24,26 and Ezra 9-10," ZAW 97 (1985): 256-58. Japhet (I and II Chronicles, 854), on the other hand, believes that the information on the ethnic background of the assassins was found in the Chronicler's source and subsequently omitted in Kings.

31. Peter R. Ackroyd, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah (Torch Bible Commentaries; London: SCM, 1973), 161.

32. Jehoshabeath is never called the mother of Zechariah, but priests would not have had multiple wives.

33. These same people transgressed the commandments of Yahweh (24:20).

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4. Jehoiada, the glorified high priest, is buried with the kings; Joash, the king whose life turned from good to bad, is not buried with the kings.
5. Worshipers turn from one deity to another. The sons of Athaliah used the votive gifts of the house of Yahweh for the Baals (2 Chron. 24:7). Subsequently, the people looted the Baal temple and killed Mattan, its priest. At the end, Joash himself and the people worshiped Asherim and idols (2 Chron. 24:28).
6. Jehoshabeath hid Joash and his nurse in a bedroom of the temple (22:11); Joash's servants killed him on his own *bed* (24:25).
7. Joash *did not remember* the loyalty of Jehoiada and killed Zechariah his son; the name Zechariah means "Yahweh has remembered."
8. Joash *listened* to the officers of Judah and fell into sin, but he and the people *would not listen* to the warnings of the prophets.'

The net effect of these ironic twists is to show the ingratitude of Joash toward Jehoiada and his irresponsibility in leading the people. In several ways he even repeated the offenses of Athaliah. In recasting 2 Kings 12 the Chronicler provides a coherent theological and historiographical account of Joash and summons his readers to loyalty to

Yahweh and to his temple.

34. The verbs are synonyms in Hebrew.