

2Kings 11:1 ¶ And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.

2Kings 11:2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were slain*; and they hid him, *even him and his nurse*, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.

2Kings 11:3 And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.

The historian turns his attention back to Judah after the death of Ahaziah.

When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, her first response wasn't grief. This mother's first response was to kill all of her son's children, her own grandchildren. I am a mom and grandma, and I can't even begin to understand such a woman.

Jehosheba, Ahaziah's half sister, was able to steal away with her baby nephew Joash, Ahaziah's son, and hide him and his nurse from Athaliah. He remained hidden in the house of the LORD for six years. During those six years, Athaliah ruled in Judah—the only female that ever did so.

The Chronicler tells us that Jehosheba was the wife of Jehoiada the priest.

*2 Chronicles 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."*

2Kings 11:4 ¶ And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.

After seven years, Jehoida sent for the top military leaders to come to the temple. He made a covenant with them confirmed by an oath and then showed them that the king's son Joash had survived.

I think it is important to note that this young boy was the only remaining link to preserving the line of David and ultimately—the Messiah.

The fact that Jehoiada was able to be so influential on the military leaders makes me think he was the high priest. I think it also testifies to the fact that Athaliah was not at all liked by the military.

I couldn't help but wonder why the people of Israel tolerated the rule of this evil queen who wasn't even Jewish. Guzik made a good observation: "One reason Athaliah was able to reign for six years was that *no one knew any alternative*. Many people live under the reign of Satan because they don't really know there is a

legitimate king ready to take reign in their life.”

The Chronicler identifies the top military leaders for us and tells us a bit more.

2 Chronicles 23:1-3 “And in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into covenant with him. And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king’s son shall reign, as the LORD hath said of the sons of David.”

After making a covenant with the top military leaders, they gathered together the Levites along with the recognized civic leaders out of all the cities of Judah. That group also made a covenant to support Joash as king in accordance with the word of the LORD.

2Kings 11:5 And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king’s house;

2Kings 11:6 And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down.

2Kings 11:7 And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king.

2Kings 11:8 And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, let him be slain: and be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in.

2Kings 11:9 And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

I think the summary provided by the Chronicler is a bit easier to understand.

NLT - 2 Chronicles 23:4–7 “This is what you must do. When the priests and Levites come on duty on the Sabbath, a third of them will serve as gatekeepers. Another third will go over to the royal palace, and the final third will be at the Foundation Gate. Everyone else should stay in the courtyards of the LORD’s Temple. Remember, only the priests and Levites on duty may enter the Temple of the LORD, for they are set apart as holy. The rest of the people must obey the LORD’s instructions and stay outside. You Levites, form a bodyguard for the king and keep your weapons in hand. Any unauthorized person who enters the Temple must be killed. Stay right beside the king at all times.”

The plan was in place and everyone took position as directed by Jehoiada the priest.

Clarke has this note as to why Jehoiada chose the Sabbath day to implement his

plan: "It appears that Jehoiada chose the Sabbath day to proclaim the young king, because as that was a day of public concourse, the gathering together of the people who were in this secret would not be noticed...."

Gill provides this note on the numbers of priests that were available: "...it should be observed, that the priests, in the times of David, were divided into twenty four courses, which were by turns to serve a week in the temple; the course that came in entered when the sabbath began, and that which went out went out when it ended, and each course consisted of a thousand men...."

Gill also notes that the Jews equated the Sur Gate to the eastern gate, the gate of foundation.

2Kings 11:10 And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields, that *were* in the temple of the LORD.

2Kings 11:11 And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, *along* by the altar and the temple.

2Kings 11:12 And he brought forth the king's 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, God save the king.

Jehoiada gave the military leaders David's spears and shields that were stored in the temple. The Chronicler tells us they numbered in the 100s.

2 Chronicles 23:9 "Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's, which were in the house of God."

Every man took his weapon and got into position as had been instructed. Young king Joash was brought out and the crown put upon him. They gave him a copy of God's law and officially anointed him as their king. Then all the people began to clap their hands and cheer, saying "God save the king."

To give the king a copy of God's law was in accordance with the directives established by the word of the LORD through Moses before they ever entered the land.

Deuteronomy 17:14 "When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me.... And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel."

Interesting bit of related trivia from Wiseman as quoted by Guzik: "This is the

basis for the British custom of presenting the monarch with a copy of the Bible during the coronation service.”

2Kings 11:13 ¶ And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD.

2Kings 11:14 And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason.

2Kings 11:15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD.

2Kings 11:16 And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

When Athaliah heard all the noise, she came to the temple to find out what was happening. She saw the young king standing by the pillar (designated for the king), according to custom, with the leaders and trumpeters standing next to him. All the people were rejoicing as the trumpets sounded. Athaliah yelled, “Treason, Treason.” I guess she was hoping her cries would bring help.

Jehoiada the priest ordered the military leaders to take her outside the temple and kill anyone that tried to rescue her. He ordered that she not be killed in the temple. So they took her out to the gate where the horses came into the place and killed her.

2Kings 11:17 ¶ And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD'S people; between the king also and the people.

2Kings 11:18 And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.

2Kings 11:19 And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings.

Jehoiada then established a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, renewing their pledge to be the LORD's people. He also established a covenant of loyalty between the king and his people.

Then the people went to the house of Baal and destroyed it, breaking the altars and idols into pieces. They killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of those altars.

Next, Jehoiada appointed officers to guard the temple of the LORD.

After that, they formed a huge procession to escort the king from the temple to

the palace where Joash took his place on the throne.

2Kings 11:20 And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword *beside* the king's house.

2Kings 11:21 Seven years old *was* Jehoash when he began to reign.

The people of Judah rejoiced and the city of Jerusalem was finally quiet.

The wicked queen mother was dead.

Joash was seven years old when he became king.

Primary lesson: The LORD's word will always be proven true—even when the circumstances seem to declare otherwise.