

2 Chronicles 23 - Joash Crowned King of Judah; Death of Athaliah

IV. Judah's Kings (2 Chr 10:1—36:23)

(2) Reform and apostasy in Judah (2 Chr 12:1—36:14)

(G) Athaliah (2 Chr 22:10—23:21)

(b) Jehoida overthrows Athaliah and enthrones Joash (23:1-21)

Athaliah's End

Ahaziah's wicked Israelite mother finished the bloody massacre begun by Jehu and destroyed all remaining members of the Judean royal family she could find. This meant, of course, that she put the sword to many of her own flesh and blood since she was the queen mother! Thanks to Jehosheba, sister of Ahaziah, the infant Joash, her nephew, was spared and placed under close security during the six years of Athaliah's reign (841-835 BC).

2 Chronicles 23

(b) Jehoida overthrows Athaliah and enthrones Joash (23:1-21) (Cf. 2 Kings 11:4-12)

1 Now in the seventh year, Jehoiada gathered his courage, and took captains of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Johanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, *and they entered* into a covenant with him.

1 Now in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took captains of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Johanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, *and they entered* into a covenant with him.

1 Seven years later, Jehoiada mustered up some courage and made a deal with the officers who commanded units of hundreds of soldiers, including Jehoram's son Azariah, Jehochanan's son Ishmael, Obed's son Azariah, Adaiah's son Maaseiah, and Zichri's son Elishaphat.

1 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.

- Jehoiada the priest (and husband of Jehosheba, Cf. 22:11) made his move

2 And they went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers' *households* of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

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2 They traveled throughout Judah and gathered together the descendants of Levi from all the cities of Judah, along with the Israeli family leaders.

2 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.

3 Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And Jehoiada said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has spoken concerning the sons of David.

3 Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And Jehoiada said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has spoken concerning the sons of David.

3 Everybody went to Jerusalem, and the whole group made a covenant with the king in God's Temple, where Jehoiada addressed them:

"Look! The king's son is going to rule, just as the LORD promised David's descendants.

3 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.

- Eager to restore the Davidic family to the throne, specifically Joash, he engineered a plot with five army officers to assemble the Levites and leaders of Judah in Jerusalem and persuaded them to support the young king in a formal covenant ceremony.

4 This is the thing which you shall do: a third of you, of the priests and Levites who come in on the Sabbath, *shall be* gatekeepers,

4 This is the thing which you shall do: one third of you, of the priests and Levites who come in on the sabbath, *shall be* gatekeepers,

4 So here's what you'll need to do: One third of you priests and descendants of Levi who are on duty during the Sabbath will serve as guards at the temple gates.

4 This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors;

5 and a third *shall be* at the king's house, and a third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people *shall be* in the courtyards of the house of the LORD.

5 and one third *shall be* at the king's house, and a third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people *shall be* in the courts of the house of the LORD.

5 Another third of you priests and descendants of Levi will take your places in the royal palace, while another third of you priests and descendants of Levi will stand near the Foundation Gate. The rest of you will remain in the courtyard of the LORD's Temple.

5 And a third part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD.

6 But no one is to enter the house of the LORD except the priests and the ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy. And all the people are to keep the command of the LORD.

6 But let no one enter the house of the LORD except the priests and the ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy. And let all the people keep the charge of the LORD.

6 Nobody is to enter the LORD's Temple except for the priests and descendants of Levi who are on duty. They may enter because they are ceremonially holy, but all the rest of the people must observe the LORD's instructions.

6 But let none come into the house of the LORD, save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they are holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.

7 The Levites will surround the king, each man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever enters the house is to be put to death. Therefore be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

7 The Levites will surround the king, each man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever enters the house, let him be killed. Thus be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

7 The descendants of Levi will surround the king, brandishing weapons in their hands, and anybody who enters the Temple will be killed. Stay near the king wherever he enters and leaves."

7 And the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

- Instead of protecting the temple, as all the good kings of Judah had done so far, Joash enjoyed protection *in* the temple

— The temple was a visual symbol of the continuity of the Davidic dynasty. Even though there was no visible king during Athaliah's usurpation of the throne of Judah, the temple reminded the people that God would fulfill His promise to David of an unbroken royal line.

Many years later, the returned exiles were in a similar situation. A Davidic king was not on the throne in their day, but the rebuilt temple gave hope that a successor to David would again sit on his throne. In their day, they could not set a king on their throne, because they were no longer a sovereign nation, but only a province of the Persian Empire. Evidently the people had already rebuilt the temple when the Chronicler wrote this book (Cf. 5:9). Clearly the restoration community's hope of the fulfillment of the promise that God made to David centered on the temple. As long as they had permission to rebuild the temple, there was hope that someday a successor to David might rule over them again. The temple was in that sense the protector of the promise to David, both in Athaliah's day and in the Chronicler's day.

8 The Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. And each one of them took his men who were to come in on the Sabbath, with those who were to go out on the Sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest did not dismiss *any of* the divisions.

8 So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. And each one of them took his men who were to come in on the sabbath, with those who were to go out on the sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest did not dismiss *any of* the divisions.

8 What Jehoiada the priest ordered is precisely what the descendants of Levi and all of Judah did. Each of them took the men who were on duty on the Sabbath as well as those who were off duty. Jehoiada the priest did not release the divisions from service,

8 So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the courses.

- The account of these events in 2 Kings 11:1-16 emphasizes the part played by the royal bodyguard, whereas the Chronicler emphasized the part played by the Levites

9 Then Jehoiada the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and the shields and quivers which had been King David's, which were in the house of God.

9 Then Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains of hundreds the spears and the large and small shields which had been King David's, which were in the house of God.

9 and Jehoiada the priest issued the spears and shields that King David had placed in storage in God's Temple to the officers in charge of the units of hundreds.

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.

10 He stationed all the people, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, by the altar and by the house, around the king.

10 He stationed all the people, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, by the altar and by the house, around the king.

10 He set the rest of the people to serve as guards for the king, and each one brandished weapons in his hand, from the south side of the Temple to the north side of the Temple, around the altar, and surrounding the palace.

10 And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.

11 Then they brought out the king's son and put the crown on him, and *gave him* the testimony and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, "*Long live the king!*"

11 Then they brought out the king's son and put the crown on him, and *gave him* the testimony and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, "*Long live the king!*"

11 Then he brought out the king's son, put a crown on him, and presented him with the Testimony,

11 Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, God save the king.

- When all was ready, Jehoiada presented him to the crowd, crowned him, gave him a copy of the covenant (i.e., the Law) as protocol required (Cf. Deut 17:18-20), anointed him, and led the acclamation, Long live the king!

— The public presentation of Joash recalls the anointing of Solomon, which ended Adonijah's vain attempt to succeed David (1 Kings 1:39-40,45-46)

Joash Crowned and Athaliah Executed (Cf. 2 Kings 11:9-12)

12 When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she went into the house of the LORD to the people.

12 When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came into the house of the LORD to the people.

12 When Athaliah heard all the commotion of the people running around and praising the king, she went straight to the LORD's Temple to confront the people.

12 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the LORD:

13 She looked, and behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters *were* beside the king. And all the people of the land rejoiced

and blew trumpets, the singers with *their* musical instruments leading the praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and said, "Conspiracy! Conspiracy!"

13 She looked, and behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters *were* beside the king. And all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets, the singers with *their* musical instruments leading the praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and said, "Treason! Treason!"

13 She looked around, and there was the king, standing by his pillar at the gate, accompanied by officers and trumpeters who stood beside the king, along with all the people of the land rejoicing and sounding trumpets while singers lead the celebration with their musical instruments. Athaliah tore her robes and yelled "Treason! Treason!"

13 And she looked, and, behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and all the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets, also the singers with instruments of musick, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, Treason, Treason.

14 And Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were appointed over the army, and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks, and whoever follows her is to be put to death with the sword." For the priest said, "You shall not put her to death in the house of the LORD."

14 Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were appointed over the army and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks; and whoever follows her, put to death with the sword." For the priest said, "Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD."

14 But Jehoiada the priest summoned the captains of hundreds who had been appointed in charge over the army and ordered them, "Bring her out between the ranks, and execute anyone who follows her." The priest also told them, "Don't execute her in the LORD's Temple."

14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, Slay her not in the house of the LORD.

15 So they seized her, and when she arrived at the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's house, they put her to death there.

15 So they seized her, and when she arrived at the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's house, they put her to death there.

15 So they arrested her when she arrived at the entrance to the Horse Gate near the royal palace, and then they executed her there.

15 So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the entering of the horse gate by the king's house, they slew her there.

Jehoiada's Reforms (Cf. 2 Kings 12:17-20)

16 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king, that they would be the LORD'S people.

16 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king, that they would be the LORD's people.

16 After this, Jehoiada drew up a covenant between himself as an individual with all the people, and between himself as king, that they would be the LORD's people.

16 And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD'S people.

17 And all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down, and they broke in pieces his altars and his images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

17 And all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down, and they broke in pieces his altars and his images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

17 Then all the people went to the temple of Baal, broke its altars and idols to pieces, and executed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars.

17 Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

- Jehoiada's reforms indicated the extent to which Judah had departed from God's ordained worship

18 Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the LORD under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the Law of Moses—with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David.

18 Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the LORD under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses—with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David.

18 Jehoiada also placed the offices of the LORD's Temple under the authority of the Levitical priests whom David had assigned over the LORD's Temple, just as is required by the Law of Moses, to offer the LORD's burnt offerings with joy and singing, just as David had ordered.

18 Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the

burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.

19 He stationed the gatekeepers of the house of the LORD, so that no one would enter *who was* in any way unclean.

19 He stationed the gatekeepers of the house of the LORD, so that no one would enter *who was* in any way unclean.

19 Jehoiada also stationed inspectors at the LORD's Temple so that no one would enter who was ritually unclean in any manner.

19 And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in.

20 He took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and went through the upper gate to the king's house. And they seated the king upon the royal throne.

20 He took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers of the people and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and came through the upper gate to the king's house. And they placed the king upon the royal throne.

20 He also took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the people's governors, and all the people of the land, and they all marched with the king from the LORD's Temple through the upper gate to the royal palace, where they installed the king on his royal throne.

20 And he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.

21 So all of the people of the land rejoiced and the city was at rest. For they had put Athaliah to death with the sword.

21 So all of the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet. For they had put Athaliah to death with the sword.

21 There all of the people of the land rejoiced and the city stayed quiet, because they had executed Athaliah with a sword.

21 And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

- All the people of the land rejoiced, a characteristic response found in Chronicles whenever the Lord's will was being followed

The flame of love for Yahweh burned low, but it was still alive among His people. In the absence of a king, the LORD raised up the high priest as Judah's spiritual leader.