

2 Chronicles 23-24 – Thursday, February 16th, 2017

- Before we jump in, we need to know a little of the backstory first concerning Athaliah the daughter of the evil Ahab and Jezebel.
- To me, this explains why she murders her own grandchildren in order to stay in power, in that it's right out of their evil playbook.
- Enter Jehosheba who takes Joash, who's about one year old and hides him for what we're told ends up being a total of 6-years.

- What Jehosheba does here is interesting for a couple of reasons, as it relates to why she hides this one son in the first place.
- First, Joash as the son of the King of Judah was the only remaining descendant of King David, which is the line of the Messiah.
- In other words, were she to have somehow killed Joash then God's promise to David would have been broken, which can't be.

- The second reason has to do with what would have seemed like the Word of God not being found true for a period of six years.
- More specifically, that of God's promise to David seeming like it failed by virtue of Athaliah killing every one of the royal heirs.
- Here's what I'm thinking, for six thousand years, it may seem like God's Word is not true in keeping His promise of His coming.

- I find it interesting, as we'll see now in chapter 23, that it's in the seventh year, Jehoiada moves to reveal the son of King David.
- The point being is for six thousand years it may seem God's promise may not be kept, but in the seventh year, we know it will.
- It's also interesting to note how that he was hid for six years in the temple, which is one place where Athaliah would never go.

2 Chronicles 23 -- 1 In the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and made a covenant with the captains of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri. 2 And they went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the chief 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 he said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has said of the sons of David. 4 This is what you shall do: One-third of you entering on the Sabbath, of the priests and the Levites, shall be keeping watch over the doors; 5 one-third shall be at the king's house; and one-third at the Gate of the Foundation. All the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD. 6 But let no one come into the house of the LORD except the priests and those of the Levites who serve. They may go in, for they are holy; but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD. 7 And the Levites shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes into the house, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

- I don't know if it's possible to overstate how grand and glorious this must've been for them after six long years of evil reigning.
- As far as they're concerned there was no legitimate king and there were no surviving heirs to the throne of David's royal line.
- But God, true to His Word, and true to His promise, on the seventh day, in the seventh year, reveals and anoints their true King.

- There's something else here that's sort of impossible to overstate, and it has to do with what Jehoiada's bold faith in doing this.
- Namely, that of coming forth and boldly confronting the evil of Athaliah, knowing full well that it could cost him his life doing it.
- This speaks to the paramount importance of stepping out in faith and trusting in God, instead of playing it safe doing nothing.

F.B. Meyer - "The easiest thing for Jehoiada would have been to shut himself up in the temple, and leave things to take their course. The noblest thing was to come forth, and boldly confront the rampant, evil of his time. ...The world is full of Athaliahs, and it is not befitting that the Jehoiadas should remain at their holy rites and services if there is a paramount need for action in the world's battlefield, in the strife against wrong."

8 So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. And each man took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath; for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed the divisions. 9 And Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains of hundreds the spears and the large and small shields which had belonged to King David, that were in the temple of God. 10 Then he set all the people, every man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and by the temple, all around the king. 11 And they brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, gave him the Testimony, and made him king. Then Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, "Long live the king!" 12 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people in the temple of the LORD. When she looked, there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance; and the leaders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, also the singers with musical instruments, and those who led in praise. So Athaliah tore her clothes and said, "Treason! Treason!" And Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were set over the army, and said to them, "Take her outside under guard, and slay with the sword whoever follows her." For the priest had said, "Do not kill her in the house of the LORD." So they seized her; and she went by way of the entrance of the Horse Gate into the king's house, and they killed her there.

- Couple of thoughts here on these verses, which should bring encouragement and hope when Jesus is anointed King of kings.
- More specifically, as F.B. Meyer says, anointing and enthroning of our King, after a cruel and murderous tyranny of the usurper.
- I would suggest that we are at the end of that sixth year, and our greater than Joash, is about to be anointed and enthroned.

G. Campbell Morgan - "Her own treason against the true and abiding King of the nation was defeated. Thus, sooner or later, and in ways equally dramatic, the moment arrives when those who plot and plan against Heaven and righteousness, find themselves looking at the evidences of the triumph of God and of goodness over all their wickedness."

- It should be noted that this judgment on Athaliah was in accordance with the Law of Moses for turning Israel away from God.
- The reason I mention this is because God takes very seriously the leading of His people away from Him to worship false gods.
- It should also be noted that Athaliah had been fully given over to the worship of Baal, and as such, had led Israel into that sin.

16 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, the people, and the king, that they should be the LORD's people. 17 And all the people went to the temple of Baal, and tore it down. They broke in pieces its altars and images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. 18 Also Jehoiada appointed the oversight of the house of the LORD to the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had assigned 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 established by David. 19 And he set the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD, so that no one who was in any way unclean should enter. 20 Then he took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD; and they went through the Upper Gate to the king's house, and set the king on the throne of the kingdom. 21 So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

- Notice that the first thing the king and the people do after making a covenant was to thoroughly break down the temple of Baal.
- Not only do they break it into pieces, they do so with excitement, which seems to indicate they had suffered enough under this.
- The reason I point this out is because when the righteous rule and reign, people will rejoice, but when wicked rule, they groan.

Proverbs 29:2 (NKJV) - When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.

Proverbs 11:10 (NKJV) - When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.

2 Chronicles 24 -- 1 Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. 2 Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. 3 And Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he had sons and daughters.

- Joash was a good king who did what was right in the sight of the Lord, but we're also told it was while Jehoiada was still alive.
- Joash as one of the good kings is also one of eight who started well, but in the end did not finish well because of disobedience.
- Such is the case here with Joash, who it seems did what right in the sight of the Lord only while Jehoiada the priest was alive.

4 Now it happened after this that Joash set his heart on repairing the house of the LORD. 5 Then he gathered the priests and the Levites, and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah, and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that you do it quickly." However the Levites did not do it quickly. 6 So the king called Jehoiada the chief priest, and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and from Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the LORD and of the assembly of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?" 7 For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also presented all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD to the Baals. 8 Then at the king's command they made a chest, and set it outside at the gate of the house of the LORD. 9 And they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God had imposed on Israel in the wilderness. 10 Then all the leaders and all the people rejoiced, brought their contributions, and put them into the chest until all had given. 11 So it was, at that time, when the chest was brought to the king's official by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, that the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it and returned it to its place. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. 12 The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the LORD; and they hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also those who worked in iron and bronze to restore the house of the LORD. 13 So the workmen labored, and the work was completed by them; they restored the house of God to its original condition and reinforced it.

- Here we're told that Joash redirected the monies that were sorely needed to repair the temple damaged under Athaliah's reign.
- One commentator suggested the reason the temple-needed renovation was because Athaliah and her evil sons vandalized it.
- This should come as no surprise given that Joash had a soft spot for the temple having been raised in the temple for six years.

14 When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada; they made from it articles for the house of the LORD, articles for serving and offering, spoons and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada. 15 But Jehoiada grew old and was full of days, and he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old when he died. 16 And they buried him in the City of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and His house. 17 Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them.

- This is where everything takes a turn for the worse in Joash's rein, subsequent to the death of his mentor Jehoiada the priest.
- Sadly, the righteous reign of Joash was extrinsic and not intrinsic in the sense that it came by way of the influence of Jehoiada.
- It seems that Jehoiada's godly influence was evidenced not only in the life of Joash as king, but in the life of Israel as a nation.

Charles Spurgeon - "See the influence of one man. One man can sway a state. One man can check sin. One man can be the head of a host who shall serve God, and honor his name."

18 Therefore they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served wooden images and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. 19 Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the LORD; and they testified against them, but they would not listen. 20 Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, "Thus says God: 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He also has forsaken you.' " 21 So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD.

- This is a textbook case of killing the messenger because you don't like the message. However, to do so is to ones own peril.
- If you're anything like me and I suspect you are, you have a difficult time wrapping your mind around how Joash could do this.
- As such, the question becomes one of what happened to Joash to make him become so wicked after Jehoiada the priest died.

Charles Spurgeon answers this question for us this way, "All that Joash had done was to give his heart to Jehoiada, not to Jehovah. It is very easy to be outwardly religious by giving your heart to your mother, or your father, or your aunt, or your uncle, or some good person who helps you to do what is right. You are doing all this out of love to them, which is at best but a very secondary motive. God says, 'My son, give me thine heart.' "

22 Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son; and as he died, he said, "The LORD look on it, and repay!" 23 So it happened in the spring of the year that the army of Syria came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the leaders of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus. 24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men; but the LORD delivered a very great army into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash. 25 And when they had withdrawn from him (for they left him severely wounded), his own servants conspired against him because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and killed him on his bed. So he died. And they buried him in the City of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. 26 These are the ones who conspired against him: Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess. 27 Now concerning his sons, and the many oracles about him, and the repairing of the house of God, indeed they are written in the annals of the book of the kings. Then Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

- The chapter ends with a number of ironies, chief of which is that Zechariah is murdered in the same place Joash was anointed.
- But God! But God brings about just judgment by way of the Syrian army coming against him, which ultimately brings his death.
- And, another irony is the hand of his own servants brings about his death, after his hand brought about the death of Zechariah.

Adam Clarke - "What a most wretched and contemptible man was this, who could imbrue his hands in the blood of a prophet of God, and the son of the man who had saved him from being murdered, and raised him to the throne! Alas, alas! ...And so he did; for, at the end of that year, the Syrians came against Judah, destroyed all the princes of the people, sent their spoils to Damascus; and Joash, the murderer of the prophet, the son of his benefactor, was himself murdered by his own servants. Here was a most signal display of the divine retribution. ...Thus ended a reign full of promise and hope in the beginning, but profligate, cruel, and ruinous in the end. Never was the hand of God's justice more signally stretched out against an apostate king and faithless people, than at this time."

G. Campbell Morgan - "The study of the story of Joash offers a striking illustration of how a weak man is easily influenced. It emphasizes the need of strong individual character, which can only be created by direct dealing with God. ...However valuable the influence of a good man may be, it remains true that if a man have nothing more to lean on than that, if it should fail, collapse is almost inevitable. All foundations fail, save one."