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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

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**The Late Bishop E. Samuel Green, Establishmentarian**

**“GOD SAVE THE KING”**

**2 Chronicles 23:1-21**

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***II Chronicles 23:1 "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."***

In the last chapter, Athaliah had killed all of her grandchildren {except one}, so that she could be queen. Joash had been hidden in the temple. He was the rightful heir to the throne. Jehoiada was the high priest who had hidden the baby, Joash. In the seventh year of Athaliah’s reign, Jehoiada made his move. He had strengthened his courage enough that he called the leaders of the army to him to anoint Joash king. These were leaders of various segments of the troops. We may assume that Jehoiada knew them well enough to know that he could trust them. Jehoiada had risked his own life, and the life of his family, to hide the baby these years.

***II Chronicles 23:2 "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."***

They had to do this secretly not to arouse the suspicion of this evil queen. The decision to anoint this youngster as king and overthrow the queen would need to be sanctioned by the Levitical tribe. All of these who came were people in authority.

***II Chronicles 23:3 "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."***

This covenant was an unbreakable agreement of these men of authority gathered in the temple. It is explained to everyone that the LORD had promised David that his lineage would sit on the throne of Judah. This young boy, Joash, is the only living heir to the throne. It appears, that all were in agreement.

***II Chronicles 23:4 "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;"***

It was not unusual for Levites to come to the temple on sabbath. 1/3 of them shall be keepers of the door. They could not take a chance on someone entering who was not aware of what is going on.

***II Chronicles 23:5 "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."***

This is just explaining that Joash, the king to be, would be guarded every step of the way. No one would be able to get to him.

***II Chronicles 23:6 "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."***

The people, who are not the Levites, are to guard from the outside all of the entrances to the place where the young boy will be anointed king. Only the priests, who have been anointed of God themselves to take place in the services in the temple would be in the near vicinity of Joash {Jehoash}.

***II Chronicles 23:7 "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."***

The Levites had swords in their hands, ready to kill anyone who came near the boy. They made a human wall around Joash. Anyone trying to enter who was not part of the anointing service would be killed.

***II Chronicles 23:8 "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."***

It would appear to be a normal sabbath at the temple. Everyone did just as Jehoiada had planned.

***II 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."***

It appears, these weapons of David's had been kept in the temple. Now, they were distributed out to the leaders of the groops of men who would protect the young king. We must remember that the temple was like a complex. The temple, itself, was surrounded by other buildings.

***II Chronicles 23:10 "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."***

The weapon being in their hand showed their readiness to use it. These men covered the entire wall, so that no one could possibly get through to Joash.

***II Chronicles 23:11 "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."***

The high priest, Jehoiada, and his sons, the priests did the actual anointing of Joash as king. They put a crown on his head, and put the book of the law into his hands. He had been trained by the high priest in the temple. They gave him God's law as a guide to judge by.

***II Chronicles 23:12 "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:"***

***II Chronicles 23:13 "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 music, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, Treason, Treason."***

It is interesting that all of this went on without her knowing it was happening. The people could not contain their joy, when Joash was anointed king. Athaliah came to see for herself what was happening. When she heard the commotion and realized she was being deposed in a coup, she screamed, Treason!, which must have sounded ridiculous to those who remembered how she had murdered her way to the throne. ﻿She was shocked, when she saw the young boy crowned king in her stead. She immediately understood what had happened, and she began to tear her clothes in mourning. The treason was not against the land, but against her as queen.

***II Chronicles 23:14 "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."***

***II Chronicles 23:15 "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 reminded them not to kill her in the house of the LORD, but to take her away from the temple to kill her. Anyone who was with her was to be slain along with her. It would be hard to see why anyone would follow so evil a woman. They killed her by the horse gate, because she was no more than an animal. She had no conscience at all. She would be killed in disgrace. In his ironic providence, then, the Lord saw to it that Athaliah’s life fulfilled the spiritual principle of “sowing and reaping.” What she had sown, she reaped. We do well to remember that “God is not mocked”.

***Galatians 6:7 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”***

***II Chronicles 23:16 "And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD'S people."***

Jehoiada set about restoring the proper worship of God in Judah. Jehoiada had taught the new king the ways of the LORD, while he was in his care. The queen was evil and had led the country away from God. The agreement that the people, the officials, Jehoiada, and the king made would succeed only, if they returned to the LORD. The covenant with the LORD in this would be a special effort to get back into good relationship with the LORD.

***II Chronicles 23:17 "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."***

Under the previous idolatrous rulers, a temple of Baal had actually been erected! This was quickly smashed to pieces. Ahab and Jezebel had brought the worship of Baal into Israel. Their daughter, Athaliah, had introduced it in Judah. It appears, she had actually built a building to this false god. The very first thing to do to show the LORD they were sincere, would be to tear down the building, the images, and to do away with the priest of Baal. This was the first step in bringing Judah into fellowship with the LORD. We must remember, that Jehoiada had been like a father to Joash while he was in hiding. Joash would do what Jehoiada wanted him to do.

***II Chronicles 23:18 "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."***

It appears, that the worship in the temple had been limited during the reign of Athaliah. Now, the worship in the temple would be re-established. Jehoiada would go by the example that David started in the temple. He would be high priest, his sons, the priests, and all of the others who serve in any capacity in the temple would be established according to their families. We have discussed before, that musicians and singers are ministers called of God, as well as the priests.

***II Chronicles 23:19 "And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none [which was] unclean in anything should enter in."***

Even these porters had to be of the Levites. They were to guard the entrance against intruders.

***II Chronicles 23:20 "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."***

The anointing of the king was done by the priests, but the placing of the king on his throne in his house, was a joint participation. All of the officials in the land were involved in this. Partially for the king's safety, and partially showing their approval of Joash as king, they accompanied him to his throne.

***II Chronicles 23:21 "And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword."***

We can see that the tyrant, Athaliah, was gone, now all the people rejoiced, again. The young king would rule pleasing unto God, as long as the high priest was living to guide him. Jehoiada and all the officials held a proper coronation for young King Joash, and all the people rejoiced.

**QUESTIONS**

1. When did Jehoiada strengthen himself?
2. Who had Athaliah killed, so that she might be queen?
3. Where had Joash been hidden?
4. Who was the high priest in the temple at the time?
5. Who does Jehoiada call to the temple?
6. Who did they gather out of Judah to come to Jerusalem to the temple?
7. Why had Jehoida called these men of authority?
8. Why was it important that Joash reign as king?
9. What was this covenant?
10. What shall 1/3 of the Levites do, when they enter on the chosen sabbath?
11. Who are the only ones to enter into the house of the LORD?
12. Where will the Levites' weapons be?
13. Why did the queen not suspicion something was going on?
14. Where did they find weapons to use?
15. What did the weapon being in their hands show?
16. Who actually anointed Joash king?
17. What did Athaliah do, when she heard the noise of praise?
18. What did she do, when she saw what was going on?
19. In verse 16, we read they made a covenant to be what?
20. What did they do with the altars of Baal?
21. Who had brought the worship of Baal into Israel?
22. Jehoiada had been like a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Joash.
23. Who were the porters at the gate?
24. Who went with Joash to the house of the king, to set him on his throne?
25. How long did Joash reign righteously in the land?