

Athaliah

2 Kings 11

2 Chronicles 22:10 – 23:21

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Ahaziah king of Judah was dead, as was his father Jehoram king of Israel. His mother Athaliah seized her son's throne. In order to retain it, she proceeded to destroy the rest of Judah's royal family – her own family. Ahaziah's sister Jehosheba took the dead king's infant son, Joash, and hid him in the Temple of God so Athaliah wouldn't be able to murder him as she had the rest of her grandchildren. Jehosheba was the wife of Jehoiada the priest. Together they concealed the boy in the Temple for six years while Athaliah ruled Judah.

Then Jehoiada the priest organized a revolt against Athaliah. He gathered the people at the Temple and brought out Joash, the king's son, placed the crown on his head, presented him with a copy of God's Law, anointed him, and proclaimed him king. The crowd shouted, "Long live the king! Long live the king! Long live the king!"

From the palace, Athaliah heard the noise and went to the Temple to find out what was going on. She was stunned to see the newly-crowned king standing in the place of authority by one of the bronze pillars at the entrance to the Temple. She understood instantly and shouted, "Treason!" Jehoiada sent troops to drag Athaliah out of the Temple and kill her.

Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and the king and the people of Judah that they would be the Lord's people. The seven-year-old King Joash was led out of the Temple and into the palace; he was seated on the throne; and the people rejoiced over their new king, grateful to be rid of the wicked Athaliah.