

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 2 Kings 11

We started our study through 2 Kings with the ministry of Elisha – the prophet of grace.

Elisha's ministry was one of trying to turn the Kingdom of Israel away from idolatry by reminding them of the goodness of God.

And we saw that through the miracles that God performed through Elisha.

And starting in chapter 9 – we started to see the consequences of rejecting God's grace.

Even though God is merciful and gracious, He is also holy and just.

And through our study, we saw Him use an imperfect instrument – Jehu to bring judgment to the children and grandchildren of Ahab.

Will they learn the object lesson from Ahab???

Will they turn from their idolatry?

Or will they suffer the same fate as King Ahab and his house.

So from chapter 11 we have the historical account of the kings that followed.

In the Northern Kingdom –Israel, there were 19 total kings – and I have mentioned before, all of them were wicked. No good kings. And we will see by the end of the book that God will use the Assyrians to bring judgment upon them in 726 BC

The Southern Kingdom – (Judah), 20 kings and only eight of them were good. And by the end of the book we will see God use the Babylonians to disperse them in 586 BC.

But here in chapter 11, we are going to see God continue to extend His abundant grace to His rebellious people and we are going to be introduced to the one of the good kings that brings a little bit of hope to Judah.

Let's pray...

[2Ki 11:1-21 NKJV] 1 When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs.

So for the past two chapters, the focus has been on the Northern Kingdom.

Jehu killing King Joram – taking his place on the throne, ordering people's heads chopped off and eliminating the worship of Baal in the Northern Kingdom – we saw this in our study last week.

So, the focus here now is on Judah.

In Chapter 9, after killing Joram, Jehu kills Ahaziah, the king of Judah. (He was the grandson of Ahab)

Athalia, his mother, she receives the news of his death – she also probably knows that Jehu also killed Ahaziah's 42 other brothers.

she sees that there is an opening in the throne –

So she proceeds to kill off her grandchildren in order to secure her own position on the throne of Judah.

Now, Athaliah was a very wicked woman – just like her mother – Jezebel.

It was Jezebel that introduced the worship of Baal to the King of Israel, and it was Athaliah who introduced it to the Kingdom of Judah.

And the scriptures also tell us that she counseled King Ahaziah in his wickedness. (2 Chron 22:3)

And now she makes herself ruler over God's children.

And so here you have wickedness wanting a place of leadership among God's people.

Now, turn with me to Acts 20 -

Because there is great application for us as we look at the life of Athaliah as she wants to lead God's people.

So, here in Acts 20, Paul is speaking to the leaders of the church Ephesus – he is exhorting them as he says his good byes to them.

We are going to pick it up starting in verse 28.

[Act 20:28-30 NKJV] 28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

So, who owns the church, Jesus does. Why?

Because He purchased your life and mine with His blood.

29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

Paul was warning the elders and the church both then and now, that there will be individuals within the church who will seek to do great harm to the church.

Notice, Paul doesn't just identify them by the word "wolves", he describes them as salvage wolves.

They are wolves dressed in sheep's clothing and it is only a matter of time before they reveal their fangs.

They bring attention to themselves, to deceive people and to bring division to the church

To the church in Corinth – Paul warned them. (2 Cor 11:4)

There will be individuals who will infiltrate the church and preach another Jesus, preach another gospel, or preach of a different Spirit that one can receive.

That is why, I am grateful for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives because I know that He will take care of His church.

False sheep and savage wolves do not last very long in a healthy church.

Because the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual and God will reveal the hearts of men.

[Heb 4:13 NKJV] 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things [are] naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we [must give] account.

You want an example of God revealing the heart of man –

Achan in the book of Joshua is a perfect example.

God told the Children of Israel – the spoils of victory of Jericho belong to Me.

Achan doesn't agree with God said and he takes some of the spoils and he buried them underneath his tent –

The Children of Israel then move from Jericho to Ai –

They suffer a humiliating defeat against Ai and when Joshua seeks the Lord – he is told that they lost because there is sin in the camp.

Joshua lines up the Children of Israel and God gives him discernment as he excuses tribe after tribe, family after family, one by one until Achan is the only left standing.

He had every opportunity to repent – but he didn't, so his sin was exposed and he and his family were sentenced to kill.

You see, the flock of God, the church, is very precious to Him.

He loves you as His precious flock.

He loves His church and He loves this church – this local body.

So we come here and serve one another in love.

Remember church, it's not your church, it's not my church, it's His church because He purchased it with His own blood.

2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons [who were] being murdered; and they hid him and his nurse in the bedroom, from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. 3 So he was hidden with her in the house of the LORD for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

I had you make a note of the name Jehosheba.

I am pretty sure we are all familiar with the story “How the Grinch stole Christmas”

Here in verse 2 and 3, we find the story of the “Lady who saved Christmas”

You see church, if it weren't for the action of this faithful servant, humanly speaking, there would be no Christmas, no Messiah.

Why?

Because Joash was the last remaining descendant of King David.

And in 2 Samuel 7, God made a promise to David that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever.

So, now we see that Athaliah's power grab was also a demonic attack in order to prevent the arrival of the Messiah.

Just like Pharaoh ordered the killing of the Hebrew children and later on Herod ordering all the male babies to be killed.

So, it is important that we recognize Jehosheba as a faithful servant of God who put her trust in Him.

Not only was she Ahaziah's sister – her mother or most likely, her step-mother was Athaliah yet her commitment was to the Lord.

And later on, we find out that she was married to Jehoida, the priest

So here we see her obedience and we also see God's grace as Joash is hidden in the chambers of the temple.

Joash will spend the first six years of his life hiding out in the Temple.

That's probably not a bad place to grow up, in some ways.

And it's a safe bet that Athaliah would never accidentally stumble across this child in the House of the Lord. Why? Because she was a worshipper of Baal.

[Psa 27:4 NKJV] 4 One [thing] I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

David found sanctuary in the House of the Lord and here we find that Joash, his descendent did as well.

4 In the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the captains of hundreds--of the bodyguards and the escorts--and brought them into the house of the LORD to him. And he made a covenant with them and took an oath from them in the house of the LORD, and showed them the king's son. 5 Then he commanded them, saying, "This [is] what you shall do: One-third of you who come on duty on the Sabbath shall be keeping watch over the king's house, 6 "one-third [shall be] at the gate of Sur, and one-third at the gate behind the escorts. You shall keep the watch of the house, lest it be broken down. 7 "The two contingents of

you who go off duty on the Sabbath shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD for the king. 8 "But you shall surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes within range, let him be put to death. You are to be with the king as he goes out and as he comes in." 9 So the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each of them took his men who were to be on duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. 10 And the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and shields which [had belonged] to King David, that were in the temple of the LORD.

So 6 years pass by and Jehoiada assembles all the leaders of Judah and says, "hey guys – I know you guys are tired of Athaliah, it is time to act – I have something to show you but before I show you, you must enter a covenant with me"

And after they enter the covenant with Jehoiada, "tada – here is your true king – the last descendant of King David"

And after presenting Joash to them, they come up with a plan on how to make the announcement to the people.

And they made sure to protect Joash at all cost.

They didn't know who would be loyal to Joash and who would be loyal to Athaliah.

So they were to set up a perimeter around Joash and were to warn anyone who approached not to come near & if they did, they were to be slain.

Jehoiada takes down King David's weapons that were on the wall – these were 200 years old and gives them to the people to protect their young king.

11 Then the escorts stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, all around the king, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, by the altar and the house. 12 And he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and [gave him] the Testimony; they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

The "Testimony" Jehoiada gave Joash was a copy of the Law of Moses.

This gives us an idea of what this revolt was about.

It was staged by people who recognized Athaliah's reign was contrary to God's will and that He was calling them to do what they could to make things right.

Athaliah's reign as queen was illegal & unjust.

So, Jehoiada's conspiracy to return the throne to the rightful king was motivated by his loyalty to God.

Jehoida giving Joash a copy of the Law of Moses proves he understood that the real legitimacy of Judah's king comes from his keeping God's Word.

Now, under normal conditions, the son of a king was not to be anointed, because he already had the right to the throne.

So the anointing of a man to be king came only when a new dynasty was started.

Saul, the first king, was anointed.

David, not from Saul's family, had to be anointed.

Solomon, though David's son, was anointed, but it was because his older brother Adonijah had already made a claim to the throne and had already made himself king.

We just saw Jehu anointed king, to take the place of the dynasty of Ahab.

Here Joash is anointed because Athaliah had usurped the throne, and he's now being placed on it in her place.

And we see the response of the people when Joash is presented.

13 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the escorts [and] the people, she came to the people [in] the temple of the LORD. 14 When she looked, there was the king standing by a pillar according to custom; and the leaders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. So Athaliah tore her clothes and cried out, "Treason! Treason!"

Here we have Athaliah's last desperate attempt to hang onto power -

She knew exactly what had just occurred – the real leaders of Jerusalem & Judah had chosen someone else to rule.

So she played her last card and cried out the one word that just might swing the tide of public support her way.

Treason was a crime punishable by immediate death.

When she cried it out – what followed would tell her instantly if she had a chance or not.

As she immediately realized – her power was totally gone.

No one came to her aid.

Interestingly, Jehoiada wasn't committing treason at all.

Joash was the rightful heir to the throne of David.

Athaliah was the one who was out of line. She was not a descendant of David.

15 And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of 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 let her be killed in the house of the LORD." 16 So they seized her; and she went by way of the horses' entrance [into] the king's house, and there she was killed.

Notice that no one else is mentioned as dying with her.

Everyone forsook her in the end.

Which gives us a good idea of what kind of a person she really was.

17 Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people, that they should be the LORD's people, and [also] between the king and the people.

I love the way it's recorded for us here.

Jehoiada first called the people to return to their covenant with God.

THEN, he reiterated the terms of the relationship between the king & the people.

In other words, their relationship with God came first, and then their social & civil relationships between one another flowed from that.

Here we see the word covenant again –

It is a pledge –

A time of renewal begins.

It doesn't just start with the death of Athaliah. It starts when the people make a fresh commitment to the Lord.

In our walk with God, it is important that we learn to “kill Athaliah”, to “crucify the flesh”.

But that's not where it ends.

God wants us to make a connection with Him.

(Ro 6:11 NKJV) Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sometimes we like to talk about all the things we've "given up" for God.

I gave up beer for Christ or I gave up smoking dope for Christ or chasing after women for Christ.

Spiritual maturity is not about what we give up, but what we commit to.

God wants us to be connected to Him, not just cut off from the junk.

And then we see the response of the people in verse 18 -

18 And all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal, and tore it down. They thoroughly broke in pieces its altars and images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.

The people responded not with simple words – they responded with obedience.

They didn't simply put a sign in front of the temple of Baal restricting access – they tore it down.

It didn't make it impossible for someone to still worship Baal but it made it more difficult.

And church, that is what true repentance does - repentance burns the bridges.

It makes it as hard as possible to go back to the old ways. Not impossible, but hard.

19 Then he took the captains of hundreds, the bodyguards, the escorts, and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and went by way of the gate of the escorts to the king's house. Then he sat on the throne of the kings. 20 So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet, for they had slain Athaliah with the sword [in] the king's house. 21 Jehoash [was] seven years old when he became king.

Jehoash was made king at seven years old – think about how scary that is.

The wonderful thing was that he had a godly man by his side to guide him and that was uncle Jehoiada.

And we will see some of the reforms that Joash brings to Judah next week.

As I was studying this chapter –

I could not help to be reminded that there is a usurper, an oppressor named Satan who causes trouble and turmoil throughout the world today.

But we should be encouraged that when our Greater than Joash – Jesus Christ – comes, there will be clapping of hands as we crown Him King of Kings.

Church, Jesus is coming back soon – and when He does, things will be right.

Athaliah will be no more and righteousness will prevail.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NKJV] 24 "The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." '

