SECOND KINGS

Chapter 11

*Athaliah and Joash*

**When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family. 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the royal princes, who were about to be murdered. She put him and his nurse in a bedroom to hide him from Athaliah; so he was not killed. 3 He remained hidden with his nurse at the temple of the Lord for six years while Athaliah ruled the land. 4 In the seventh year Jehoiada sent for the commanders of units of a hundred, the Carites and the guards and had them brought to him at the temple of the Lord. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath at the temple of the Lord. Then he showed them the king’s son. 5 He commanded them, saying, “This is what you are to do: You who are in the three companies that are going on duty on the Sabbath—a third of you guarding the royal palace, 6 a third at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guard, who take turns guarding the temple— 7 and you who are in the other two companies that normally go off Sabbath duty are all to guard the temple for the king. 8 Station yourselves around the king, each man with his weapon in his hand. Anyone who approaches your ranks must be put to death. Stay close to the king wherever he goes.” 9 The commanders of units of a hundred did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered. Each one took his men—those who were going on duty on the Sabbath and those who were going off duty—and came to Jehoiada the priest. 10 Then he gave the commanders the spears and shields that had belonged to King David and that were in the temple of the Lord. 11 The guards, each with his weapon in his hand, stationed themselves around the king—near the altar and the temple, from the south side to the north side of the temple. 12 Jehoiada brought out the king’s son and put the crown on him; he presented him with a copy of the covenant and proclaimed him king. They anointed him, and the people clapped their hands and shouted, “Long live the king!” 13 When Athaliah heard the noise made by the guards and the people, she went to the people at the temple of the Lord. 14 She looked and there was the king, standing by the pillar, as the custom was. The officers and the trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her robes and called out, “Treason! Treason!” 15 Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of units of a hundred, who were in charge of the troops: “Bring her out between the ranks and put to the sword anyone who follows her.” For the priest had said, “She must not be put to death in the temple of the Lord.” 16 So they seized her as she reached the place where the horses enter the palace grounds, and there she was put to death. 17 Jehoiada then made a covenant between the Lord and the king and people that they would be the Lord’s people. He also made a covenant between the king and the people. 18 All the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They smashed the altars and idols to pieces and killed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars. Then Jehoiada the priest posted guards at the temple of the Lord. 19 He took with him the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guards and all the people of the land, and together they brought the king down from the temple of the Lord and went into the palace, entering by way of the gate of the guards. The king then took his place on the royal throne, 20 and all the people of the land rejoiced. And the city was quiet, because Athaliah had been slain with the sword at the palace. 21 Joash was seven years old when he began to reign.**

**11:1** *Athaliah.* See note on 8:18. *her son was dead.* See 9:27. *destroy the whole royal family.* To secure the throne in Judah for herself. By this time the royal family in Judah had already been reduced to a mere remnant. Jehoram, the late husband of Athaliah and the father of Ahaziah, had killed all his brothers when he succeeded his father Jehoshaphat on the throne (see 2Ch 21:4). Jehu had slain another 42 members of the royal house of Judah, perhaps including many of the sons of Jehoram’s brothers (10:12–14; 2Ch 22:8–9), and the brothers of Ahaziah had been killed by marauding Arabs (2Ch 22:1). It is likely that Athaliah’s purge focused primarily on the children of Ahaziah, i.e., her own grandchildren. Ahaziah had died at the young age of 22 (see 8:26). This attempt to completely destroy the house of David was an attack on God’s redemptive plan—a plan that centered in the Messiah, which the Davidic covenant promised (see notes on 2Sa 7:11, 16; 1Ki 8:25).

**11:2** *daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah.* It is likely that Jehosheba was the daughter of Jehoram by a wife other than Athaliah, and thus she was a half sister of Ahaziah. She was married to the high priest Jehoiada (see 2Ch 22:11). (CSB)

*him and his nurse.* The child was not more than a year old and had not yet been weaned (see vv. 3, 21).) (CSB)

**11:4** *seventh year.* Of Athaliah’s rule. (CSB)

*commanders of units of a hundred.* 2Ch 23:1 lists the names of five commanders, all native Israelites. (CSB)

*Carites.* Mercenary soldiers from Caria in southwest Asia Minor who served as royal bodyguards. (CSB)

*had them brought to him at the temple.* 2Ch 23:2 includes the Levites and family leaders of Judah in the conspiracy. (CSB)

**11:10** *spears and shields that had belonged to King David and that were in the temple.* David had probably taken the spears and gold shields as plunder in his battle with Hadadezer and then dedicated them to the Lord (see 2Sa 8:7–11). (CSB)

**11:12** *covenant.* Either (1) the Ten Commandments, (2) the entire Mosaic covenant or (3) a document dealing more specifically with the covenant responsibilities of the king (see Dt 17:14–20; see also note on 1Sa 10:25). The third option is most likely. (CSB)

*anointed him.* See notes on 1Sa 2:10; 9:16; 1Ki 1:39. (CSB)

*Long live the king!* See 1Sa 10:24; 1Ki 1:34, 39. (CSB)

**11:14** *pillar.* Apparently one of the two bronze pillars of the portico of the temple, named Jakin and Boaz (see 23:3; 1Ki 7:15–22; 2Ch 23:13). (CSB)

*all the people of the land.* It is likely that Jehoiada had chosen to stage his coup on a Sabbath during one of the major religious festivals, when many from the realm who were loyal to the Lord would be in Jerusalem. (CSB)

**11:17** *covenant between the Lord and the king and people that they would be the Lord’s people.* A renewal of the Mosaic covenant, by which Israel had been constituted as the Lord’s people (see Ex 19:5–6; Dt 4:20). The years of apostasy, involving both the royal house and the people of Judah, necessitated a renewal of allegiance to the Lord at the time of an important new beginning for the southern kingdom (see notes on 1Sa 11:14–15; 12:14–15, 24–25). (CSB)

*covenant between the king and the people.* Defined responsibilities and mutual obligations of king and people that were compatible with Israel’s covenant relationship with the Lord (see notes on 1Sa 10:25; 2Sa 5:3). (CSB)

**11:18** *idols.* Stone pillars (see note on 1Ki 14:23) and Asherah poles (see note on 1Ki 14:15). (CSB)

**11:19** *commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guards.* See note on v. 4. (CSB)

**11:21** See v. 3. The Lord had preserved a lamp for David in Jerusalem (see 1Ki 11:36). (CSB)