

God Will Guard Your Promise in Dark Times

Many people today feel overwhelmed by negative circumstances. But you can be sure the Lord has an amazing plan to carry you through.

Long ago God promised He would send the Messiah through the lineage of King David. Yet there was a time in Judah's history when the royal seed was almost snuffed out.

It happened during the oppressive reign of Queen Athaliah, a selfish woman who was so power-hungry that she killed her own grandchildren in an attempt to secure her position. The Bible says in 2 Kings 11:1-3:

"When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose and destroyed all the royal offspring. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and placed him and his nurse in the bedroom. So they hid from Athaliah, and he was not put to death. So he was hidden with her in the house of the Lord six years, while Athaliah was reigning in the land (NASB)."

"Don't be dismayed by delay. God knows the beginning and the end. Entrust your promise to the faithful One who will bring it to pass in His perfect timing."

There was more going on in this story than mere human conspiracy or palace intrigue. Satanic powers were at work to destroy God's promised offspring—and Athaliah was the agent used to carry out infanticide. Yet at the same time God inspired a selfless woman, Jehosheba—the wife of the high priest Jehoida—to counter this attack by hiding baby Joash.

The story has a violent but positive ending. Athaliah's murderous reign ended with her execution, her Baal idols were destroyed and Joash was placed on his rightful throne. He carried on the lineage of David that continued until the time of Christ. God's promised seed was not destroyed. A holy remnant was preserved and the young king later led a campaign to renovate the temple, which had fallen into disrepair during Athaliah's regime.

Six years is a long time to hide a baby from a brutal tyrant. Obviously Jehosheba did not rely on her own cleverness to conceal the child. God helped her to outwit the enemy. A model of a true intercessor, Jehosheba was vigilant, discerning, brave and fiercely determined to see God's plan established.

I meet many Christians today who feel that their spiritual goals and prophetic promises are in serious jeopardy. Some people are experiencing intense financial stress because of the economic recession; some who are in ministry feel as if all of hell's fury has been

unleashed on their
churches. Others simply feel physically and spiritually
exhausted by
discouraging trends in our country.

We are certainly in a spiritual quagmire. I've never
known any period in my lifetime when national and world events
were this
unsettling.

Yet I find a lot of comfort in this story of a baby
king who survived a palace conspiracy. It shows me that
God—who knew Athaliah
would terrorize Jerusalem for six years—was well able to
protect the promised
seed and put him in authority when the evil threat had been
moved out of the
way. It also shows me that God is certainly able to carry a
faithful remnant of
people through a dark national crisis.

Do you feel as though your promise is under attack?
Does it seem that Athaliah is ready to wipe out your spiritual
inheritance? Has
she discouraged you to the point that you are tempted to give
up and let her
win?

I encourage you to rise up in faith like Jehosheba
and put your trust in the God who knows the final outcome of
the story. What He
has promised He can preserve. You can bravely take hold of
your promise like
the apostle Paul, who wrote: "For I know whom I have believed
and I am
convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to
Him until that day"
(2 Tim. 1:12).

As an act of faith, you might want to write down what the Lord has promised you and hide the piece of paper in your Bible. The enemy will not find it there, no matter how long this challenging season lasts. Don't be dismayed by delay. God knows the beginning from the end. Entrust your promise to the faithful One who will bring it to pass in His perfect timing.

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