

PRIESTS AND WARRIORS OF THE LORD – KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

When king David came to the throne, two men, Zadok and Abiathar, served as priests unto the Lord; 2 Samuel 8:17. These two men were separated from Saul's kingdom (the rule of the kingdom of flesh), to be with David, while he was in the wilderness, being pursued by Saul. Some years later, when David was reigning as king, his son Absalom, sought to alienate the people from the king. Absalom, who was handsome and charismatic, "stole the hearts of the men of Israel"; 2 Samuel 14:25; 15:1-6. He conspired against David, and rose up against him in an attempt to usurp the throne from his father.

Zadok and Abiathar returned with the Ark of the Covenant to the city and served David even while his enemies were rising up against him; 2 Samuel 15:24-29. Absalom did not succeed with his plans; he was slain by Joab, a warrior and captain of David's army; 2 Samuel 18:1-5. Zadok, Abiathar and Joab all recognized the anointing that rested upon David, and had been faithful to serve him for many years. They served king David, God's anointed, who declared that his son, Solomon, would succeed him as king of Israel. It was Solomon, who received instructions from his father to build a temple for the Lord, 1 Chronicles 22:9-10. It was Solomon who brought the Ark into the temple, where the glory of the Lord would be manifested and fill the house of the Lord; 1 Kings 8:1-13.

Then came the rebellion of Adonijah, another son of David, who exalted himself and rebelled against the word of the king. Like his brother Absalom, he desired to usurp his father's throne. In 1 Kings 1:7-8 we read that he (Adonijah), conferred with Joab and with Abiathar, and they followed Adonijah and helped him. But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the warrior, Nathan the prophet and the other mighty men who belonged to David, were not with Adonijah. **THEY HAD PLACED THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE WORD OF THE KING**, and sided with Solomon, whose name means "peace", and whose kingdom pre-figures the coming Millennial Kingdom reign of Jesus Christ.

Joab the warrior and Abiathar the priest, who previously had been loyal to the king, allowed themselves to be caught in the snare of a rebellious son of the king. Adonijah was persuasive and convincing; he sought to gain the allegiance of the people, including the "priests and the warriors" in his father's kingdom. Having instigated a rebellion against David, he was able to turn the hearts of seasoned men unto himself, through subtle deceit, to align themselves with him.

Scripture records that Adonijah and Joab both died violent deaths; 1 Kings 2:24-25, 33-34. Benaiah the warrior took Joab's place, and was promoted to captain of the army. Abiathar the priest, had come through a crisis in the past, and had previously been faithful to king David and the anointing. But instead of following the true Word of the Lord, he listened to the wrong voice (of selfish ambition) and participated in a rebellion that ended with Adonijah's death. Now, just prior to crossing the "finish line", Abiathar was allowed to remain in the kingdom, but he was banished from his priestly office; 1 Kings 2:26-27. He didn't pass the test; he was disqualified from his role as a priest in king Solomon's administration.

Zadok, who had remained continually loyal to the word of the king, takes over the office of Abiathar the priest; 1 Kings 2:35. It was Zadok who was given the privilege of participating in the anointing of Solomon as he came to the throne. It was Zadok (who is a type of those who pass through the veil into the Most Holy Place), who “puts on other garments”, who was completely clothed in white linen. “Zadok” is allowed to come near to the Lord and to His table, to minister unto the Lord Himself; see Ezekiel 44:15-18. Like the apostle Paul, those who “run the race” can see the “finish line” right ahead of them. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. And Paul the apostle was cautious, as he warned the Church, that even after preaching the Gospel to others, he (like Abiathar the priest), could be disqualified from receiving “the prize”; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

Scripture reveals that the Lord honors and promotes those who have endured their time in the wilderness, in obedience to their King, being faithful to the Word of the Lord. We are told that the Lord has a people who are “kings and priests” unto God; Revelation 1:6. Scripture has also recorded that those who rebel against the king, even after serving him for many years, may be disqualified from an office, role or position in the future Kingdom administration which is now at hand. Only he that “overcomes” shall inherit all things; Revelation 21:7. May God give us the grace to pass every test, to overcome every obstacle and temptation that comes our way, especially just prior to our crossing “the finish line”. Jesus summed it up perfectly when He said “Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”; Revelation 3:11.

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