

## General Topics :: Did I make a terrible mistake?

**Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by Revivalist\_\_ (), on: 2006/10/30 9:27**

Dear friends in Christ,

My name is Nathan and I've been a great admirer of Sermon Index for a few years now. Although I haven't posted much, I thought this would be a good place to request some godly advise concerning a predicament I'm in. It concerns my daughter who is about 5 months old. . . .

About 10-12 months ago when my wife and I found out we're having a daughter, we began praying about a name for her. . . . We searched and brainstormed but we couldn't figure out the right name . . . Finally I asked my wife what her greatest prayer would be for our daughter and she said that she prays our daughter will be a really strong and mighty woman of God. That night we discovered on the internet the name Athalia which means "Mighty is the LORD." (According to (<http://baby-names.adoption.com/search/Athalia.html>) this link). . . . My wife thought it was a beautiful name and I was very happy with the meaning. We did a google search and confirmed the meaning of the name. So we chose the name Athalia for our daughter. . . .

Since our daughter's birth we've proudly introduced her as Athalia which means "Mighty is the LORD." Everyone in our church and our circle of family and friends knows her name. And of course, while playing with our daughter, my wife has come up with a cute song based on her name Athalia. . . .

Now, comes the problem. . . . Yesterday a friend at church happened to notice the name Athaliah in the Bible (spelled just a little different with an "h" at the end). It's in 2 Kings 11. I was surprised and unaware that the name was in the Bible. I quickly started reading the passage and suddenly discovered that Athaliah in the Bible was a wicked queen who tried to murder the sons of the royal family in Judah in an attempt to hold onto power. After reigning for 6 years, she was eventually put to death and the entire city celebrated that she was removed. I discovered that the same story is also in 2 Chronicles 23. There it even goes as far as saying that she was a wicked woman whose sons broke into the temple of God and used its sacred objects to worship Baal. . . .

Needless to say I feel very disappointed about this discovery. I feel like I made a terrible mistake while naming our daughter and I'm very embarrassed. My precious daughter whom I desire to grow up as a great and powerful woman of God was given the name of a wicked and treacherous queen in the Bible. My wife was also surprised because I generally know the Bible very well but I was not aware of this account in the Bible concerning the name Athaliah. . . .

My question now is what should I do? Should I consider changing her name? Or should I just ignore that story in the Bible because she was given that name to honor God who is mighty? Right now I'm thinking that the second choice is better. After all, even though there was a wicked queen in the Bible with that name, our vision for our daughter is to be a woman of God who is mighty in God like the name Athalia implies. . . .

I would really appreciate any input or insight from anyone on this topic because I feel really down about it and unsure what I should do. . . . Thank you very much for taking the time to read this. . . .

Blessings in Christ,  
Nathan

P.S. Here's some  
(<http://s79.photobucket.com/albums/j160/Revivalist/01-Athalia/04-Seven%20to%20eight%20weeks%20old/?sc3>) pics of our little girl.

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/30 9:36**

Quote:  
-----Athalia  
-----

What a lovely name! Rejoice in it, and praise God that HE led you to it. There is no special power in a name in itself - even if it is found in the Bible. (My apologies to all who call their sons Joseph or David, or who call their daughters Mary.)

God knows, there may have been hundreds of Athalia's who have brought glory to his name. Speak blessing into the name and into your daughter.

And, by the way, Congratulations!! May Athalia become mighty is the LORD.

Diane

**Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2006/10/30 10:06**

Quote:  
-----What a lovely name!  
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Yes, I agree with my sister. Athalia (with or without the "h" at the end) is quite a beautiful name. Though Athaliah was wicked, we shouldn't let the person of who she was stigmatize the name. Eli, for example, was a shameful high priest - so shameful, in fact, that God had to kill him - but that doesn't stop people today from naming their kids Eli!

Don't worry about this, dear brother. You've chosen an honorable name for your daughter, a royal name. Pray that she does justice to her needlessly-maligned gorgeous name, as a woman who will give God glory, and whose honor and faith will rise beyond the price of rubies.

**Re: - posted by Kolombian (), on: 2006/10/30 10:11**

Athalia is a gorgeous name!

I can tell that God has given you both this name for your daughter. I agree with Diane, 'cause it's not the power in her name itself, but the power of His NAME upon her that will guide her to declare in her existence that only the LORD is mighty!

God bless your precious Athalia!

Karen

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by rocklife (), on: 2006/10/30 10:38**

whatever you and your wife feel led, and if it helps, you can tell your pastor or church friends you didn't know that evil queen's name was in the bible (and be thankful it isn't spelled exactly the same).

I hope things work out, and God helps you with this. I like the advice given here by the others, I think that is the way most people will see it too

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2006/10/30 10:50**

bro Nathan

she is beautiful! and Athalia is a beautiful name! yesterday our Lord had me reading out of 2 Kings where the story of the wicked queen is. you have nothing to fear because if you raise her up in the ways of our Lord for whom she is named, she shall surely not disappoint us as a daughter nor her God as His child either.

God bless you bro

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/10/30 14:31**

Quote:  
-----My question now is what should I do? Should I consider changing her name? Or should I just ignore that story in the Bible because she was given that name to honor God who is mighty?  
-----

Nathan

This is a difficult one.

There are at least two other people in the scriptures with this name but they would appear to be men and there is not much evidence to see what kind of characters they were. 1Chr 8:26; Ezra 8:7

My advice would be to think carefully about continuing with this name, simply because you and your lovely daughter are going to have this conversation over and over for the next 50 years or so if you decide to stick with it.

It is a pretty sounding name but there are some names which are so associated with terrible acts that they pass from us; eg Adolph means brother and was the name of many a German boy... It may be embarrassing to change now but it will be much more difficult later.

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/10/30 15:58**

**Athaliah** (Hebrew Atalyahu (&#1506;&#1514;&#1500;&#1497;&#1492;), "God is exalted")

Or you might say she was named thus to restore the honor given to the name.

Beautiful girl brother.

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/10/30 16:17**

It is not the name that makes the person, it is the person that makes the name. If you worry about this, then so shall your daughter. Rather, if you give your daughter to God, He will shape her name in accord with His working in her.

If she is to be a mighty woman of God, then let it be that whoever hears the name "Athalia" thinks not of the biblical character, but of your daughter whom everyone says is a mighty woman of God. Only God can make this happen.

The name "Jesus" was a rather common name when it was given to Christ. I am sure there were some people with that name whose pasts were terrible. However, God still gave that name to His beloved son, because He knew that the name would be above all names, not because of its meaning, but because what Christ would do on the cross.

Lastly, it could be quite possibly that God may use this in the future to speak to your daughter concerning a few things. You don't know. Just be open to His working in her life. Surrender it to Him, and He will lead your path.

May Christ bless you with peace in this.

In love,  
Blake

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by PTywama3 (), on: 2006/10/30 17:25**

Nathan,

I don't know if you made a mistake, but your concerns and question of your choice (as others have said) might become one.

There are several roads I have seen taken with persons and their names (albeit a bit more common with boys.) If her middle name seems to be a more appropriate title, you might consider calling her by that name.

I have to agree with the general sentiment, however, that is not the history of the name that matters, but the person who carries it. There has been in my life time at least one false prophet ("David Koresh") to carry my name - intentionally. And as far as I know, little boys are still being named Jeffrey and Theodore even though relatively recent events have had people shed bad light on those names here in the states (Jeffrey Dahmer and Ted Kaczynski). Another one that comes to mind is John Wilkes Booth, an assassin with whom many of my friends share a first name. I don't think that taints the name. And those are stories everyone (here) knows.

Frankly, I'd be more concerned about how much she'd going to get teased for an archaic name on the playground.

I think, sir, that since you as a family didn't choose rashly, that a great consideration for that should take place in your and your wife's decision here, as well.

Good luck and God bless!

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by dohzman (), on: 2006/10/30 23:22**

The bibles already written, God's purposes in the names---past---has been fulfilled. No need to go hyper spiritual and believe like those of the ancient middle east did, that the name defined the character. Just love your daughter and give her Jesus, without the hang ups others may try to cast upon you to place within her, just give her Jesus.

Might I suggest that you buy a regular ole' bible and start by reading it to her and dating all the promises you know God has for her, the Holy Spirit will quicken them to you---highlight them and date them, than when she's old enough you will have given her a treasure that will last for generations to come. And foundation which can never be removed. :-)

**Re: - posted by Koinonia2 (), on: 2006/10/31 7:40**

I agree with most of the other brethren here... it is a lovely name with a wonderful significance, and I believe that the Lord will honor your desire for your daughter. Keep praying for her always. That is surely the best thing that you as parents can do.

dohzman, I'm wondering if you could say something more about dating Bible promises as you mentioned. I've never really heard this and would like to know more of the meaning. Thanks!

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/31 9:48**

Nathan,

As I read your post and the replies to it, I notice most are men and they spoke as most males would, meaning I can hear my DH and sons saying the same thing. But, we are talking about a female here, and they think differently. Females are more sensitive to their names than males are. I have heard more females complain about their names than I ever did males (I do not think men care a whole lot). In fact, I do not ever recall hearing a male say he did not like his name.

I agree the name has a pleasant sound to it, but the historical figure who was so wicked casts a tragic pall over it and in your spirit you sense this could become unpleasant for her as she gets older. And you are right! As a female I would guess she will grow up hating the name because of it - if she grows up loving the LORD. In fact, it will be almost guaranteed.

What can you do about it? Can you give her a nickname, one derived from hers, like Leah? or call her by her middle name. (We have a junior and have always called him by his middle name to avoid confusion with his dad.) You could retain the name but use it only on official documents where such info is required. Yes, I would definitely change it. (When I started reading your post I wondered why you ever chose the name, thinking of the OT queen...)

I have heard of a young man who turned his heart against God, forsaking all he had been taught. When he married and had a son, he named him Lucifer. Everyone who has heard it, is appalled. Likewise, I would never name a child Jezebel (might be alright for a goat!)..sounds pretty, but if your are Biblically literate, what do you think of the minute you hear it? Knowledgeable people will do the same with the name Athalia, sorry.....

I said it as I see it...blessings to you and your wife and your DD...

ginnyrose

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by Revivalist\_\_ (), on: 2006/11/1 22:04**

I really want to thank each of you very much for your responses. IÂ've read over all of them many times while thinking and praying about this issue. . . . This forum is really a blessing. . . .

Concerning the issue . . . First off, I donÂ't really consider it an option to simply use my daughterÂ's middle name or nickname as a substitute. (We are of course fond of her middle name which is Â"GraceÂ" and we do call her by nicknames like Thalia and Tali.) But my point is that I believe that if we keep the name Athalia then we should not be ashamed of it or try to essentially hide it or avoid it. If that were the case, then I would rather just change it. (However, I do appreciate those who made these suggestions in the effort to offer a solution.)

As for the name being Archaic or causing her to be made fun of on the playground, we were indeed sensitive to that. We thought that the nickname Tali is actually fairly common (probably spelled Tally). Hopefully that would help avoid unnecessary mockery when sheÂ's little. . . .

But the main issue was whether it is wise from a spiritual perspective to leave her with the name Athalia despite the fact that it is the name of an evil queen in the Bible. . . . After much thought, IÂ've come to the conclusion that the issue at hand is really one that concerns redemption and victory. . . . Let me explain. . .

We know that the name Athalia literally means Â"Mighty Is The LORD.Â" Thus it is a name meant to bring glory and honor to God. When Queen Athaliah of the Old Testament chose to do evil, I believe that Satan used that to desecrate the name Athaliah. The name that originally belonged to God for His glory and honor was stolen by Satan and maligned so that it would no longer bring glory to God. So if Christians refrain from using this name then we are basically accepting the fact that the name belongs to Satan and is permanently desecrated. We are basically saying that it is not redeemable. However, from what I understand biblically, ALL things are redeemable in Christ. There is nothing that is so desecrated and so abused by Satan that it can not be redeemed through the power of God and made holy and honorable to God once more. I believe that it is the right and duty of GodÂ's children to take back all things that the Devil has stolen and declare them holy unto God. This is the authority that God has given us in Christ, to take what is called Â"uncleanÂ" and call it Â"cleanÂ" in Christ. . . . And so this is very much a matter of redemption. . . .

In fact, I think that at this point, if we were to change our daughterÂ's name then we would be essentially declaring that Satan is victorious over the name Athaliah, that he stole the name and we have no right or power to take it back. . . . Perish the thought! God has given us authority in Christ to take back everything that Satan has stolen and turn it back to the rightful owner who is God himself. My wife and I took the name Athaliah back from Satan and dedicated it to the worship of God without ever realizing that Satan had stolen it to begin with! How sad would it be if after realizing that Satan had stolen it, we gave it back to him again as if it rightfully belongs to him. Never! It belongs to God and is to be used to worship and honor God as the Mighty One. Queen Athaliah of the Old Testament was used to steal the name from God, but with GodÂ's grace may the daughter born to us be the one who reclaims the name and dedicates back to the glory of God. . . . And so this is very much a matter of victory. . . .

Now, with all of that said, let me admit that my only concern is how my precious little daughter will deal with all this. My zeal to redeem the name Athalia hasnÂ't made me insensitive to the fact that she will very possibly face challenges with this issue. How will she react when 2 Kings 11 or 1 Chron. 23 is read in church in her presence, or if it comes up in Sunday school, or perhaps even if someone brings it up to her? Will she feel embarrassed, condemned, or perhaps doubt her integrity as GodÂ's child? . . .

The comment made by Â"beenblakeÂ" earlier in this thread came to my mind. He says, Â"it could be quite possibly that God may use this in the future to speak to your daughter concerning a few things. You don't know. Just be open to His working in her life.Â" Thinking about this I realized that this might be the very thing God uses to teach Athalia what it means to be mighty in the Lord. As she learns to be mighty in God, she can stand up and declare, Â"The name Athalia means

‘Mighty is the LORD!’ It is a name that glorifies God. Yes, it’s true that an evil queen in the Old Testament had this name but there is no reason why that name should belong to Satan any longer. The name belongs to God and I pray that God would use me to redeem that name. . . . Wouldn’t that be wonderful? . . . Ok, granted it’s hoping for a lot. But with God nothing is impossible, right?!. . . I must say that the irony amazes me that the very issue of having the name A thalia could be the means by which God teaches my daughter what it means to be mighty in Him! . . .

Well, I apologize for writing so much on the matter. I guess I just wanted to share my full thoughts on this issue that so many of you were gracious enough to offer your thoughts concerning. . . .

Blessings to you all in Christ and thanks again!

Nathan

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/11/1 23:37**

Hi Nathan,

Wonderful that you have decided to continue on with such a healthy perspective. And just as surely the time will come when you and your wife will sit down with her and explain all these things to her. Could almost see her reacting with "How dare she!" to hear what was done with her beautiful name.

**Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2006/11/1 23:51**

dohzman, I'm wondering if you could say something more about dating Bible promises as you mentioned. I've never really heard this and would like to know more of the meaning. Thanks!

As is my habit when I read the Word of God, if something is quickened to me or speaks to me in a special way or if I have an understanding out of the Word of God I highlight it and date it with a marker. I have prayer journals for each of my children which will be passed down to them at the proper time. My comment to our brother was that he could get a bible and as he came across promises and special words he felt were from God to his daughter specially he could highlight and date that promise, and at the right time pass that bible over to her. What a precious gift. It would take a committed life and one that's very focused, naturally the child would see her fathers painstaking devotion to the Lord on her behalf and become even as one of the daughters of Philip in the book of Acts. What a noble task.

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake?, on: 2006/11/2 1:43**

name her Ruth.

God bless you is my prayer, bartle

**Re: - posted by kdbutton, on: 2006/11/2 6:58**

Quote:  
-----First off, I don’t really consider it an option to simply use my daughter’s middle name or nickname as a substitute. (We are of course fond of her middle name which is “Grace” and we do call her by nicknames like Thalia and Tali.)  
-----

The two names together tells of Christ's redemptive power!!!! Were we not all in the character of the flesh of the first name until by the "Grace" of God we were saved!

What a powerful name!!!! One that gives Glory to God in a wonderful way. Give Tali Grace a big kiss for proclaiming God's redemptive power and hope for the world each time she signs her name!!!!

**Re: Ah.... a name... - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/11/2 7:42**

Quote:  
----- How will she react when 2 Kings 11 or 1 Chron. 23 is read  
-----

That reminds me of a 10 yo named Katrina. I felt for her during the Katrina Hurricane crisis, and was careful not to say anything, as I was sure plenty of her peers were making the association. Really she was the type that could handle it. I believe that if a child is secure in their parents love then, they can weather such "storms" to their name.

While it is possible that Athaliah is read in a scripture reading, I doubt that attention will be drawn to her wicked deed. It is not the focus. The story has a marvelous outcome, and Athaliah quickly fades away into the shadows. (not like Jezebel)

I do think it is a good idea to take out the "h", so as to make a distinction, and also easy to spell. These days I hear a lot of strange names—parents trying to be unique. You have to ask over and over again how to spell the name and also how to pronounce it. Athalia is easy to say, spell, and remember. It has a feminine ring.

Quote:  
----- I have heard more females complain about their names than I ever did males  
-----

Ginnyrose, you can add me to your statistics. As a youth I hated my name. But that had to do with overall self-perception. I simply hated myself back then.

By the way, no one has ever associated me with the Goddess Diana, nor with the (in)famous Princess Diana. Neither did I.

God bless Athalia!

Diane (meaning: In God's Glory)

**Re: Did I make a terrible mistake? - posted by avessel (), on: 2006/11/2 8:02**

Nathan,  
I want to ask you Nathan, did you intend for your daughter to dishonor God when you named her? According to your post, I think not. It's not the name that makes a person, it's the heart. Remember that the Lord looks at the heart. I am sure that you and your wife will teach your daughter the fear and the love of the Lord. Blessings to you and your precious family.