

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
PRIDE THAT CAUSED LEPROSY
2 KINGS 15:1-7; 2 CHRONICLES 26:1-23

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Introduction

We are swinging back and forth in looking at the kings of **ISRAEL** and the kings of **JUDAH**. Last week we were up north in **ISRAEL**. This week we swing back to the south to deal with another of **JUDAH'S** kings.

Last time we were down south was just two weeks ago. So I'm not going to review much other than to remind you that we last dealt with **AMAZIAH** who started well, but did not finish well.

Just like his father, he died at the hands of conspirators who likely blamed him for **1) Judah's defeat at the hands of Israel, 2) Israel's breaking down part of the wall of Jerusalem, 3) Israel taking all the gold and silver out of the Temple and all the treasures out of the king's house and some hostages back to Samaria!** And he was at fault because he brought back Edom's idols and worshiped them instead of the LORD! So after a 29-year reign he was assassinated at Lachish while in hiding from his conspirators! Tonight we'll see **AMAZIAH'S** son **UZZIAH** whose pride was his undoing!

I. WE SEE UZZIAH'S PROMOTION.

(2 KINGS 15:1-2; 2 CHRONICLES 26:1-3)

Once again, we're going to look at the account given to us in the book of **2 Chronicles** because it gives us more details than the **2 Kings** account does!

AMAZIAH'S 16-year old son, called **AZARIAH** in **2 Kings 15** and **UZZIAH** in **2 Chronicles** was made king in his father's stead.

Nevertheless, though young, we see here that it says he reigned **52 years** in **JERUSALEM!**

Our text mentions that *"his mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem."* The words, *"his mother's name,"* are found about thirty times in the books of the **Kings** and the **Chronicles**, and seem to indicate that maybe the mother largely determined the character and conduct of the son.

With his father gone before he reached adulthood, we might expect that to be the case with **UZZIAH**.

II. WE SEE UZZIAH'S PROSPERITY.

(2 KINGS 15:2 CHRONICLES 26:4-5)

A. His PROSPERITY Was Found In Doing Right In The Eyes Of The LORD! (2 Kings 15:3-4; 2 Chronicles 26:4)

UZZIAH started out his reign in the same way his father **AMAZIAH** had done! Both are said to have done *that which was right in the sight of the LORD*.

Nevertheless, **UZZIAH** also failed initially in the same way that his father **AMAZIAH** had failed initially! The account in **2 Kings** records that **UZZIAH** also failed to remove the high places and so the people of **JUDAH** continued to sacrifice and burn incense on the high places.

We are not told, but knowing human nature, the failure to remove the high places could have been a political decision on both their parts because the people loved the high places and leaving them helped them to stay in the good graces with the people.

B. His PROSPERITY Was Found In Seeking God!

(2 Chronicles 26:5)

"And he sought God in the days of Zechariah..."

"...as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."

C. His PROSPERITY Was Manifested In His Accomplishments! (2 Chronicles 26:2, 6-15)

As a king of Judah, Uzziah is remembered principally for the era of **prosperity** which prevailed during his reign.

He reigned for fifty-two years, and a graphic account of what he accomplished for Judah has been preserved here in the Word of God in **2 Chronicles 26**.

1. He PROSPERED In His Battles! (Vs 6-8)

Note the phrase in *verse 7, "And God helped him..."*

That is what he should have known and remembered!

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Note that phrase in *verse 8*, “*and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.*”

(Do you sense in that his pride might be swelling up?)

May God help us to acknowledge Him in whatever we are able to accomplish by His grace and help!

2. **He PROSPERED In His Building! (Vs 2, 9-15)**
 - a. **He built towers and fortifications. (Vs 2, 9)**
Under **UZZIAH**, Jerusalem was adorned with many and costly improvements, to which her citizens pointed with patriotic pride.
 - b. **He dug wells and had great vineyards and gardens and herds of cattle. (Vs 10)**
 - c. **He built his war machine. (Vs 11-15)**

Note that last phrase of *verse 15*...

“*And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.*”

PROMOTION...PROSPERITY...

III. **WE SEE UZZIAH’S PRIDE! (Vs 16-18)**

A problem with **PROSPERITY** is that it can cause one to get **PRIDEFUL** of what **THEY** have done to the extent that it turns their heart away from God and God’s great part in their **PROSPERITY** and back on to self and its **PRIDEFUL** accomplishments.

(e.g. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon)

“*When he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction.*”

UZZIAH’S great sin here was a **PRIDEFUL**, rash intrusion into the **priest's office**. What he did by offering incense upon the altar of incense was a function given to the priests and priests alone!

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In this he was a type of the antichrist of the last days!

Daniel 11:36-37—“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.”

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4—“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

So, King **UZZIAH** usurped the function of the chief priest and offered incense. Too bad he didn’t learn from King Saul’s intrusion into the priests office.

(*Cf. 1 Samuel 13:8-14 ... Saul was needing to and wanting to sacrifice to the LORD before going into battle with the Philistines. That was a noble thing to want to do!*

Initially, he waited seven days for Samuel come. When Samuel was tardy, the people started scattering and so Saul thought it OK for him to intrude into the Samuel’s office of priest and offer the burnt offering himself.

As soon as he was done making his offering, Samuel showed up! Samuel asked him what he had done and Saul gave Samuel his lame excuses trying to make what he did seem OK, but it wasn’t OK!

1 Samuel 13:13—“And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.”

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i.e. Samuel pointed out to Saul his failed responsibility to keep the commandment of the LORD his God! That is foolishness! Especially when the LORD had said something in His Word about what Saul did! He had the ABILITY as well as the RESPONSIBILITY to have known the Word of the LORD!

Samuel went on to tell Saul in 1 Samuel 13:14–“But now thy kingdom shall not continue...because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.”

Now understand that **UZZIAH** also had the ABILITY as well as the RESPONSIBILITY to have known the **LAW** of God the same as Saul. But in addition, he had the ABILITY and the RESPONSIBILITY to have known about what Saul did and what the consequences were for his disobedience!

Jesus had this to say in **Luke 12:48**–“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”

That is a Scriptural principle! The more that we have been given, the more responsibility we have! We have the **WHOLE** of Scripture!

At the beginning of his reign, **UZZIAH** was classed among the good kings. Had he been content to remain a good king, all would have been well! But his **PRIDE** did him in!

PROMOTION, PROSPERITY, PRIDE...

IV. WE SEE UZZIAH’S PUNISHMENT!
(2 CHRONICLES 26:19-23)

- A. He Launched His Own Leprosy! (Vs 19)**
For his intrusion into the sacred duties of the priesthood, **UZZIAH** was smitten with plague of **LEPROSY** from the **LORD!** But it was launched or brought on by both his **DISOBEDIENCE** and his **ANGER** that he expressed before the 80 **PRIESTS** that rebuked him for his actions!

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He Launched His Own LEPROSY...

B. He Lost His Own LEGACY! (Vs 20-21)

- 1. He Was Thrust Out Of The Temple And Was Never Able To Enter The Temple Again! (Vs 20)**

That’s because he was considered **UNCLEAN** as a **LEPER** and he remained in his **LEPROSY** until the day of his death! *(Vs 21)*

- 2. He Was Forced To Leave His House, His Family, His Friends, And His Throne And Never Return To Any Of Them! (Vs 21)**

His **LEPROUS** condition caused him to have to live in what is called here “*a several house.*”

A “*several house*” is where those who were “*severed*” from everything and everyone they loved because of their **LEPROUS** condition had to live.

His only social interaction from that day forth was with other **LEPERS!**

Because he was forced to withdraw from public affairs, his son **JOTHAM** acted as his representative!
(2 Kings 15:5; 2 Chronicles 26:21)

His **LEPROUS** condition was an appropriate expression of God's indignation at his presumption!

LEPROSY was very humiliating! God humbled him!

- 3. He Was Buried As A Leper! (Vs 22-23)**

What happened to **UZZIAH** here should be a warning to anyone who is lifted up with **PRIDE** that can cause us to **PRESUME** upon the good grace of our **LORD!**
Psalm 19:13–Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me