

# UZZIAH AND HIS SELF-EXALTATION

## BIBLE TEXT : II Chronicles 26:1-23.

LESSON 321 Senior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6:3).

### BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

#### **2 Chronicles 26:1-23**

<sup>1</sup> Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

<sup>2</sup> He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

<sup>3</sup> Sixteen years old *was* Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did.

<sup>5</sup> And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

<sup>6</sup> And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

<sup>7</sup> And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that

### BIBLE REFERENCES:

#### **I Uzziah's Piety and Prosperity**

1. Elevated to the throne at a young age, Uzziah, or Azariah, closely followed the man of God, II Chronicles 26:1-5;

##### **2 Kings 15:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

<sup>2</sup> Sixteen years old *was* he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

<sup>4</sup> Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

##### **1 Kings 2:4**

<sup>4</sup> That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

2. God prospered Uzziah and Judah as long as Uzziah followed the Lord and obeyed His commandments, II Chronicles 26:5-15;

##### **2 Chronicles 31:21**

<sup>21</sup> And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

##### **1 Samuel 12:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

<sup>14</sup> If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:

<sup>15</sup> But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as *it was* against your fathers.

##### **Deuteronomy 29:9**

<sup>9</sup> Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

##### **1 Chronicles 22:11-13**

<sup>11</sup> Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

<sup>12</sup> Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

<sup>13</sup> Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

##### **Psalms 1:3**

<sup>3</sup> And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

#### **II Uzziah's Pride and Punishment**

1. When Uzziah became strong he forgot the commands of God, II Chronicles 26:15, 16;

##### **Deuteronomy 6:10-12**

<sup>10</sup> And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac,

dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims.

<sup>8</sup> And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad *even* to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened *himself* exceedingly.

<sup>9</sup> Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning *of the wall*, and fortified them.

<sup>10</sup> Also he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells: for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains: husbandmen *also*, and vine dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel: for he loved husbandry.

<sup>11</sup> Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, *one* of the king's captains.

<sup>12</sup> The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour *were* two thousand and six hundred.

<sup>13</sup> And under their hand *was* an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

<sup>14</sup> And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows,

and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

<sup>11</sup> And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

<sup>12</sup> *Then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

#### Deuteronomy 8:10-20

<sup>10</sup> When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

<sup>11</sup> Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

<sup>12</sup> Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein*;

<sup>13</sup> And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

<sup>14</sup> Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

<sup>15</sup> Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

<sup>16</sup> Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

<sup>17</sup> And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth.

<sup>18</sup> But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

<sup>19</sup> And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

<sup>20</sup> As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

#### Psalms 62:10

<sup>10</sup> Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them*.

#### Proverbs 1:32

<sup>32</sup> For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

#### Proverbs 30:7-9

<sup>7</sup> *Two things* have I required of thee; deny me *them* not before I die:

<sup>8</sup> Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

<sup>9</sup> Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

## 2. Pride and self-sufficiency are damning sins, II Chronicles 26:16;

#### Daniel 4:30-32

<sup>30</sup> The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

<sup>31</sup> While the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, *saying*, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.

<sup>32</sup> And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

#### Daniel 5:17-24

<sup>17</sup> Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

<sup>18</sup> O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

<sup>19</sup> And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

and slings *to cast* stones.

<sup>15</sup> And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

<sup>16</sup> But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

<sup>17</sup> And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, *that were* valiant men:

<sup>18</sup> And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, *It appertaineth* not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither *shall it be* for thine honour from the LORD God.

<sup>19</sup> Then Uzziah was wroth, and *had* a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.

<sup>20</sup> And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he *was* leprous in his forehead, and they

<sup>20</sup> But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

<sup>21</sup> And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling *was* with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

<sup>22</sup> And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

<sup>23</sup> But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath *is*, and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

<sup>24</sup> Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

#### Hosea 13:1-8

<sup>1</sup> When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died.

<sup>2</sup> And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, *and* idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff *that* is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.

<sup>4</sup> Yet I *am* the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for *there is* no saviour beside me.

<sup>5</sup> I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.

<sup>6</sup> According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore I will be unto them as a lion: as a leopard by the way will I observe *them*:

<sup>8</sup> I will meet them as a bear *that is* bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them.

#### Luke 12:16-21

<sup>16</sup> And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

<sup>17</sup> And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

<sup>18</sup> And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

<sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

<sup>20</sup> But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

<sup>21</sup> So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

#### Proverbs 16:18

<sup>18</sup> Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

#### 1 John 2:16

<sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

3. Feeling that he was strong and sufficient in all things, Uzziah performed the duties of the priests, II Chronicles 26:16-18;

#### Proverbs 25:14

<sup>14</sup> Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift *is like* clouds and wind without rain.

#### Numbers 16:1-35

<sup>1</sup> Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *men*:

<sup>2</sup> And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown:

<sup>3</sup> And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against



thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

<sup>21</sup> And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, *being* a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son *was* over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

<sup>22</sup> Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

<sup>23</sup> So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which *belonged* to the kings; for they said, He *is* a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

Aaron, and said unto them, *Ye take* too much upon you, seeing all the congregation *are* holy, every one of them, and the LORD *is* among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?

<sup>4</sup> And when Moses heard *it*, he fell upon his face:

<sup>5</sup> And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who *are* his, and *who is* holy; and will cause *him* to come near unto him: even *him* whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.

<sup>6</sup> This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;

<sup>7</sup> And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be *that* the man whom the LORD doth choose, *he shall be* holy: *ye take* too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.

<sup>8</sup> And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:

<sup>9</sup> *Seemeth it* but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?

<sup>10</sup> And he hath brought thee near *to him*, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?

<sup>11</sup> For which cause *both* thou and all thy company *are* gathered together against the LORD: and what *is* Aaron, that ye murmur against him?

<sup>12</sup> And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up:

<sup>13</sup> *Is it* a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?

<sup>14</sup> Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

<sup>15</sup> And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the LORD, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.

<sup>16</sup> And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the LORD, thou, and they, and Aaron, to morrow:

<sup>17</sup> And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each *of you* his censer.

<sup>18</sup> And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

<sup>19</sup> And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.

<sup>20</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

<sup>21</sup> Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

<sup>22</sup> And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

<sup>23</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>24</sup> Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

<sup>25</sup> And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.

<sup>26</sup> And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

<sup>27</sup> So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

<sup>28</sup> And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for *I have not done them* of mine own mind.

<sup>29</sup> If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; *then* the LORD hath not sent me.

<sup>30</sup> But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that *appertain* unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that *was* under them:

<sup>32</sup> And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that *appertained* unto Korah, and all *their* goods.

<sup>33</sup> They, and all that *appertained* to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

<sup>34</sup> And all Israel that *were* round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up *also*.

<sup>35</sup> And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

#### Leviticus 10:1-11

<sup>1</sup> And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

<sup>2</sup> And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> Then Moses said unto Aaron, This *is it* that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

<sup>4</sup> And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

<sup>5</sup> So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

<sup>6</sup> And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

<sup>7</sup> And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD *is* upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

<sup>8</sup> And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

<sup>9</sup> Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations:

<sup>10</sup> And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

<sup>11</sup> And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

#### Numbers 3:5-10

<sup>5</sup> And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>6</sup> Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.

<sup>7</sup> And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle.

<sup>8</sup> And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.

<sup>9</sup> And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they *are* wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.

<sup>10</sup> And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

#### Numbers 18:1-7

<sup>1</sup> And the LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father's house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.

<sup>2</sup> And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee: but thou and thy sons with thee *shall minister* before the tabernacle of witness.

<sup>3</sup> And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die.

<sup>4</sup> And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you.

- <sup>5</sup> And ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel.
- <sup>6</sup> And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you *they are given as a gift for the LORD*, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- <sup>7</sup> Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and within the vail; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office *unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.*
4. Uzziah became angry when reprimanded by God's servant -- another manifestation of his pride -- and was stricken by God, II Chronicles 26:19;
- 2 Kings 15:5**
- <sup>5</sup> And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son *was over the house, judging the people of the land.*
- Psalms 141:5**
- <sup>5</sup> Let the righteous smite me; *it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.*
- Hebrews 12:5**
- <sup>5</sup> And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:
- 1 Peter 2:20**
- <sup>20</sup> For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is acceptable with God.*
- Ephesians 5:21**
- <sup>21</sup> Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.
- 1 Peter 5:5**
- <sup>5</sup> Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of *you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*
- 1 Peter 5:6**
- <sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:
5. Uzziah was trust out of the Temple, II Chronicles 26:20.
6. Uzziah carried the evidence of God's displeasure and judgment to his grave; no mention was made of any repentance on his part, II Chronicles 26:21-23;
- 2 Kings 15:5-7**
- <sup>5</sup> And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son *was over the house, judging the people of the land.*
- <sup>6</sup> And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*
- <sup>7</sup> So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

### **NOTES:**

Uzziah, the king of Judah, had a good beginning; and he could have had a very good ending if he had continued in the way that brought God's blessing upon him in the beginning of his reign. But Uzziah failed his God and turned from righteousness and holiness to pride and self-sufficiency. He suffered a terrible fate and died under God's judgment for his sin. We are not told the extent of his repentance, or if any repentance was found in his heart, but because of his leprosy he was never able to go to the House of God again and he died without that consolation or encouragement.

How pitiful is an individual who has had every advantage in a spiritual way, but forsakes that way of right and chooses instead the way of error! "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; . . . neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth" (Ezekiel 33:12). The sins of the sinner are blotted out when he is justified by the free grace of God; and likewise, the good deeds of the righteous man do not deliver that man if he

turns aside from the paths of right into the way of sin. If the righteous "trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it" (Ezekiel 33:13). These are solemn considerations. They show the vital importance of beginning in the right way and the equally vital requirement of continuing in the right way to the very end.

### **Uzziah the Privileged King of Judah**

Uzziah had a privilege that many have not had. He was king and had access to many different opportunities that were either good or evil; and for the first part of his life he acted wisely and followed the counsel of the man of God. "He did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, . . . And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper." The list of his accomplishments is long. Judah was blessed during this portion of his reign. It is said of Uzziah that he was the first to invent machines of war that would cut down the time of besieging walled cities. As a lover of husbandry, the country prospered under his administrations.

Uzziah had the privilege of knowing many outstanding men of God other than Zechariah, about whom we know little. Isaiah was a prophet during Uzziah's reign, and it was in the year of Uzziah's death that Isaiah saw the vision of the Triune Godhead that convinced him of his need of entire sanctification. Amos and Hosea prophesied during Uzziah's reign. There were, beyond all doubt, other godly people in the nation who were led to God by these three ministers of righteousness whose combined faith and spiritual grace would naturally have enhanced and blessed the kingdom and the monarch.

But the nation did not wholly follow the example of their king or the words of their prophets, and the people continued to burn incense and offer sacrifices on the high places which Uzziah had failed to remove. The nation was divided in their worship, a poor substitute for the theocracy that God desired. Some of the people went to the House of God, while others turned aside to an easier way – the conveniently located substitute house or place of worship that did not require the sacrificial effort on their part as did the long trip to Jerusalem three times a year. Some probably went to the House of God and the high place also, reasoning that if one was good, both would be better. Some, no doubt, went to the House of God only because they knew it was proper to do so and not because there was a genuine spirit of worship in their hearts. But there was always the faithful remnant who worshiped God, and Him alone, because they loved Him and because they desired His way more than anything else.

Counterparts of all these classes of people can be found in Christendom today, as well as at any time in the history of the Church. But there is only one way. There is only one God. There is only one salvation. There is only one worship and that is the worship of the true God, which is in spirit and in truth. There is only one group that will be gathered by the Lord when He comes, and that group is made of those who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice.

Uzziah "was marvellously helped, till he was strong." The Apostle wrote: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:9, 10). So long as Uzziah depended upon God, he was helped by God. And so long as he was helped by God he had great strength.

But often others do as Uzziah did. It is easy, after God has helped us and given us a measure of strength in one way or another, for us to get our eyes off the Giver and look at the strength, or the accomplishments, or at the blessings we have received. This we must never do if we want to retain the favour and blessing of God. We must always keep our eyes on the Giver. We must not allow ourselves to look at our skills, our



accomplishments, our attainments, or our gifts. Some not only look at these things but even dare to boast of them, which is infinitely worse than merely seeing them. The godly man will not allow himself even to see these things unless he looks at them for the sole purpose of letting God be glorified through them.

Jesus said: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). Paul the Apostle wrote, "Our sufficiency is of God" (II Corinthians 3:5). It is also written: "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12), to which we can add the searching question from Scripture: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (I Corinthians 4:7).

### **The Consequences of Sin**

The next step that Uzziah took was one that he would never have thought of taking at an earlier date when his heart was humble toward God. Sin is not entered into in all its terribleness at the very beginning. There is a start, and that start may appear to be very innocent. In Uzziah's case, perhaps it was not noticed by anyone. The Bible says: "His heart was lifted up." Perhaps he went on in the same way, in the same outward attitudes, in the same system of worship, with the same associates and companions, as before. But there was a change: "His heart was lifted up."

How subtle are the works of Satan, designed and perpetrated by him for the destruction of God's servants. Like the bite of a poisonous serpent, they may be difficult to see on the outside, but the poison is implanted within and its deadly work is going on. A bit of flattery received and treasured, a little self-praise silently allowed within one's own secret thoughts, a feeling that he is the one who can do best the duty before him, a lack of consideration of the abilities or accomplishments of others; any of these can be an anchor-stone which, if sent on its way, can release a whole avalanche of infamy and spiritual destruction where once there was a peaceful and prosperous condition. Every Christian would do well to examine his own heart, over and over, for any evidences or inclinations of this serious condition. Above all, the Christian's heart must not be lifted up. He must be humble in every way; but, especially, he must be humble in heart. Outward humility is valueless if one's heart is lifted up. And one's outward attitude will be right if his heart is truly humble.

### **Presumption the Result of Pride**

Uzziah entered the sanctuary of God, setting aside the ordinances and ordained men of God, to burn incense on the altar of God. This was a serious sin. The Law of Moses decreed that those who committed it should be put to death, but since Uzziah was the titular head of Judah there was no one to order the supreme penalty upon him.

The priest of God, however, withstood the king, exercising his full right before God; and when the judgment of God fell, thoroughly vindicating the priest of God, the whole assembly of priests evicted Uzziah from the holy precincts. In fact, when Uzziah saw the leprosy that God had instantly sent upon him he was glad to go out of the House of God. The leprosy came, not in the early stages of the disease, but in one of the advanced stages. Uzziah knew that no leper had any right in the Temple. He knew also that no unordained person had any right there, especially to burn incense. He had violated God's ordinance and holy restrictions and had felt sudden judgment come upon him. He did not want to see further judgment come upon him by a further disregard of God's law.

In other instances when man set aside God's law in this matter, sudden judgment also came from God. Man did not have to raise his hand to defend God in the matter. Man had only to proclaim the law and will of God. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed alive by the earth because they attempted to set aside God's ordinances and ordained servant. Two sons of Aaron, themselves appointed to the priestly office, disregarded the ordinance of God and were slain by the Lord (Leviticus

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Name three prophets of God, who wrote Books of the Bible, who lived during the reign of Uzziah.
2. What great event occurred in the year that Uzziah died, recorded in the Book of Isaiah?
3. Under whose influence does our lesson state that Uzziah lived during part of his reign?
4. Did Uzziah do good or evil in the first part of his life?
5. What caused Uzziah to change and do differently in the latter part of his life?
6. Uzziah became a leper. What sin did he commit that brought his disease upon him?
7. What penalty and judgment, besides the disease of leprosy, did Uzziah suffer because of his sin?
8. Why is pride a sin?
9. What is meant by self-sufficiency? Why is it



such a serious sin?

10. The tendency in modern times is toward self-sufficiency. Name some of the influences that lead people in that way and show why the arguments in favour of it are contrary to the Gospel of Christ.

10:1).

We can see by these instances the seriousness of not walking in all the commandments of God, and the futility of attempting to set aside the plan of God for our own way that might be more pleasing to our lifted-up heart. Sudden judgment can come from God upon any violator of His commandments. We see here, in addition, the terrible consequences of so-called small transgressions, or indulgences, that may be concealed in the heart, which, if allowed to continue, will lead to greater sins and eventually to complete rebellion against God.