

The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles

Lesson 19: Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham -- 2 Chronicles 25:1–27:9

Some of the saddest words in the Bible are small ones. The Chronicler says of Amaziah that he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and then adds five quiet words that change everything: yet not with a whole heart. Not with a whole heart. He hit the target but not the bullseye. He obeyed enough to look obedient and held back enough to leave God second. If you have ever lived in that crack between almost and all the way, between Sunday devotion and Monday divided loyalty, these three kings have your name on them.

Amaziah starts well, even refusing to slaughter the children of executed traitors because the Law forbade it. But after a military victory he does something baffling: he carries home the gods of the people he just defeated and bows down to them. Worshiping the gods who could not save their own worshipers. When a prophet asks the obvious question, Amaziah threatens to kill him. Pride and half-heartedness curdle into folly, and a king who began with promise ends assassinated by his own people.

His son Uzziah gives us one of the most haunting one-line summaries in Chronicles: he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. As long as he sought God, God made him a builder, an inventor, a victor, famous to the borders of Egypt. But strength became the very thing that ruined him. Swollen with success, he marched into the temple to burn incense, a role God had reserved for the priests, and when eighty-one priests tried to stop him, he raged at them, and leprosy broke out on his forehead. He lived out his days in isolation, a king cut off from the very house of God he had presumed upon.

Then comes Jotham, and after two cautionary tales he is a breath of clean air. Chronicles says he became mighty because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God. No dramatic fall, no famous victory speech, just steady, ordered faithfulness, walking before God day after day. This lesson sets these three kings side by side to confront us with the difference between half-hearted obedience, prideful success, and humble consistency, and to ask the searching question: not whether we will serve God, but whether we will serve Him with our whole heart, in His way, all the way to the end.

Group Discussion: Amaziah did what was right “yet not with a whole heart,” while Jotham “became mighty because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God.” What does it look like, practically, to move from divided, half-hearted obedience to the steady whole-hearted faithfulness of Jotham?

Personal Reflection: Where in your own walk are you doing what is right “yet not with a whole heart”? Name the specific corner of your life you have kept back from God, and what it would mean to give Him all of it.

Read 2 Chronicles 25:1–27:9

Study Questions

1. Chronicles says Amaziah did right “yet not with a whole heart” (25:2), then describes his slide into idolatry. What does this teach us about the difference in God’s eyes between partial obedience and whole-hearted devotion?
2. Identify one area where your obedience to God is real but partial, where you are giving Him most but not all. What is holding back the rest?
3. After his victory Amaziah brought home the defeated nation’s idols and worshiped gods that could not even save their own people (25:14). What does this absurd choice reveal about the irrational nature of sin and idolatry in the human heart?
4. What are the modern “idols that cannot save” that you find yourself bowing to when life seems to be going well?
5. Uzziah “was marvelously helped till he was strong,” then his heart was lifted up to his destruction (26:15–16). What does this reveal about the spiritual danger that hides inside success and strength?
6. Recall a season when things were going well for you. Did your strength draw you closer to God in gratitude, or did it quietly make you more self-reliant and proud?

7. Jotham “became mighty because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God” (27:6). What does this teach us about the kind of steady, ordered faithfulness that God honors over time?
8. What would it look like this week to “order your ways before the LORD,” to build steady, consistent habits of walking with God rather than living from spiritual high to spiritual high?
9. Uzziah, proud in his strength, forced his way into the temple to burn incense, a role God had reserved for the priests, and was struck with leprosy for usurping it (26:16–21). In light of his presumption and Amaziah’s half-heartedness, what does the whole passage teach about whole-hearted obedience versus pride, and about respecting God’s appointed order and authority in worship?
10. Looking across the lives of Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham, name one specific way the Lord is calling you toward whole-hearted, humble, ordered faithfulness, and how Jesus is forming that in you.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Matthew 22:37, the great command to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind, the whole-hearted devotion Amaziah lacked; Proverbs 16:18, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall, the pattern of Uzziah; 1 Samuel 15:22–23, obedience is better than sacrifice, and rebellion against God’s word is as the sin of divination; Colossians 3:17, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, acting only by His authority in worship and life; Revelation 2:10, be faithful unto death and receive the crown of life, the steady endurance pictured in Jotham.

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