

2 Chronicles Chapter 25

Verses 1-28

The reign of Amaziah (ca. 796 – 767 B.C.; compare 2 Kings 14:1-20).

Verses 1-13

“Amaziah”, the eighth legitimate king of Israel, initially did what God wanted, yet “not with a perfect heart”.

Even though Amaziah would follow certain commands of God (compare 25:3-4 and Deut. 24:16), he later abandoned worship, exposing the shallowness of his devotion.

God’s words it seems, were planted in rocky, thorny soil (Matt. 13:20-22).

2 Chronicles 25:1 "Amaziah [was] twenty and five years old [when] he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name [was] Jehoaddan of Jerusalem."

"Twenty and five years old ... reigned twenty and nine years":

Glance at notes (on verses 1, 15, 17), of the foregoing chapter, from which it appears that Joash died at the age of forty-seven.

And Amaziah was now twenty-five, he must have been born when his father was twenty-two years old.

And Jehoaddan correspondingly likely to have been one of the two wives Jehoiada selected for Joash, at the age of twenty-one years.

"Of Jerusalem":

This affix to the mother's name may perhaps carry credit to the memory of Jehoiada, for having been careful to select a woman of the honored city rather than of any provincial or even less worthy city.

Joash must have been 22 years old when Amaziah was born.

Jehoaddan, was chosen by Jehoiada to be the wife of Joash.

Since Jehoiada was a Godly influence on Joash during his life, we know he must have chosen a Godly wife for Joash.

Possibly the reason that Amaziah was a believer in the LORD was because of the training he got in the home from his mother.

2 Chronicles 25:2 "And he did [that which was] right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart."

"Not with a perfect heart":

This is illustrated by his coming "to set up the gods of Edom" (verses 14-16, 20).

Also by what the parallel supplies, that he resembled Joash rather than David, and did not suppress "the high places, sacrifices, and incense-burning" (2 Kings 14:3-4).

In almost all cases, the not perfect heart speaks of that which began well, but did not "endure unto the end."

It appears that Amaziah started out as a king seeking God's own heart, but strayed in the latter part of his reign as his father did.

2 Chronicles 25:3 "Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father."

We remember, from the previous lesson, that Joash was sick and in his own bed when the servants came and killed him.

Amaziah sought out the servants out who killed his father and killed them.

2 Chronicles 25:4 "But he slew not their children, but [did] as [it is] written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin."

"But he slew not their children":

Which is an instance of his clemency and goodness, and of his strict regard to justice, and to the law of God.

Though he might fear these being spared, would at one time or other revenge their fathers' deaths.

"As it is written in the law in the book of Moses (see Deut. 24:16).

"Where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers":

To which command Amaziah was obedient.

"But every man shall die for his own sin":

Literally, But each for his own sin, shall they be put to death.

Compare (Ezekiel Chapter 18).

We see from this, that Amaziah knew the law and observed it in this instance.

He seemed to want to please God in the judgements he made.

Verses 5-16

This section is an elaboration (of 2 Kings 14:7).

In verses 5-13 Amaziah gathered his army, which was small compared to the army of Jehoshaphat, which was over one million (compare 17:14-19).

This shows how the southern kingdom had declined in 80 years.

2 Chronicles 25:5 "Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of [their] fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice [men, able] to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield."

The inhabitants thereof.

"And made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin":

He divided the people, according to their families throughout his kingdom, into thousands and hundreds, and out of their respective families appointed captains over them.

"And he numbered them from twenty years old and above":

The usual age men were numbered at for war, to the fiftieth, according to Josephus.

The Roman law obliged none to be soldiers after fifty, nor might any be dismissed before.

The age of military men with the Romans was from seventeen to forty six, or, as some, forty five.

But with the Persians from twenty as here to fifty.

"And found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield":

Which shows that their number was greatly decreased since the times of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17:14).

Occasioned by the wars under Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Joash; some copies of the Vulgate Latin have only 30,000.

The army had been greatly scattered after the attack by the Syrians.

This is a re-grouping of the army.

300,000 men would be a fairly large army for such a small land.

2 Chronicles 25:6 "He hired also a hundred thousand mighty men of valor out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver."

"A hundred talents of silver":

This wealth was paid to the king of Israel, Jehoahaz, who ordered the mercenaries of Israel to aid Amaziah against Edom.

2 Chronicles 25:7 "But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD [is] not with Israel, [to wit, with] all the children of Ephraim."

"Man of God":

This is a technical term used about 70 times in the Old Testament, always referring to one who spoke for God.

He warned Amaziah not to make idolatrous Israel his ally because the LORD was not with Ephraim, i.e., Israel, the capital of idolatry (see note on Deut. 33:1).

We saw in the last lesson, that God continued to send warnings to Judah by the prophets.

The man of God here, is a prophet sent to warn them.

2 Chronicles 25:8 "But if thou wilt go, do [it], be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down."

"God hath power":

See note on 2 Chron. 24:24.

The man of God reminded the king sarcastically that he would need to be strong, since God wouldn't help.

This is the message that the prophet gave to Amaziah.

It would be up to Amaziah to heed this warning.

So many times, a man of great worldly power will not change a decision he has made, for fear of looking foolish to his people.

If Amaziah heeded this message from God under this great pressure, it would indicate that he was seeking to do God's will.

Verses 9-10

The man of God told Amaziah to cut his losses and trust the LORD.

The king obeyed and sent the Israelite mercenaries home in anger.

2 Chronicles 25:9 "And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this."

They will be lost, there is no demanding them back again.

This he spoke with some concern, as loath to lose so much money.

"And the man of God answered, the LORD is able to give thee much more than this":

Whose is the earth, and the fullness thereof including the gold and silver, and all the riches of it.

And therefore he had no need to trouble himself about the loss of his money, which, if obedient to the will of God, he might expect it would be abundantly repaid him.

He had already paid Israel the silver to help him.

Now he would lose his silver, if he sent them home.

That little amount of silver is nothing to the LORD who owns everything.

If he would step out in faith and do the will of the LORD, he would receive many times that amount of silver from the LORD.

This would take a great deal of faith that this message was from God.

2 Chronicles 25:10 "Then Amaziah separated them, [to wit], the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger."

From his army, among whom they were incorporated and ranked.

"The army that was come to him out of Ephraim":

Which he had hired of the ten tribes, these he singled out.

"To go home again":

To their own country.

"Wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger":

It being a great slight put upon them, and a reproach to them, to be thus dismissed, as they thought.

And especially if they understood that it was because they were idolaters.

And the rather as they might have hoped to have had their share in the plunder of the Edomites.

The Israelites, specifically from Ephraim, did not want to be sent home.

They possibly thought they would get some of the spoil of the battle if they stayed.

It also was an affront to them that they were no longer needed in this battle.

2 Chronicles 25:11 "And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand."

"Valley of salt":

Most likely this is located at the southern end of the Dead sea, where David had several centuries before been victorious (compare 1 Chron. 18:13).

"Seir":

Another name for Edom.

For the historical background of this incident (see the notes on 2 Kings 14:7 and 14:9).

2 Chronicles 25:12 "And [other] ten thousand [left] alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces."

“Top of the rock:

This mode of execution was common among pagan nations (compare Psalm 137:9).

The top of the rock here, is speaking of Petra.

Even after Amaziah sent the troops of Ephraim home, he still depended upon his own strength instead of the strength of God.

He went to battle near the Dead sea.

The ten thousand he smote at the sea, were in addition to those he threw off of the rock and killed.

2 Chronicles 25:13 "But the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil."

“Samaria”:

This was the well-known town of Israel from which they launched their attacks.

“Beth-horon”:

See note on 2 Chron. 8:5.

Those of Ephraim, that Amaziah had sent home, took advantage of Amaziah's troops being gone to war and attacked the villages of Judah.

It appears, they killed 3,000 of Judah's people.

Verses 14-28

After “Amaziah” returned “from the slaughter of the Edomites”, he gave up his pretense of following God and publicly turned to idol worship.

He also refused to listen to the “prophet” God sent to warn him against idolatry (2 Kings chapter 14).

We can pretend to be “good Christians” for just so long; eventually our words or our actions will give us away to others.

And we can never pretend before God; He knows who we really are.

Verses 14-19

How often spiritual defeat and pride go together!

Amaziah did the unthinkable from both a biblical and political perspective, he embraced the false gods of the people whom he had just defeated.

Perhaps he did this because he was seduced by the wicked pleasures of idolatry and because he thought it would help him in assuring no future threat from Edom.

However, it only brought destruction to the king, who just wanted to silence the voice of God.

2 Chronicles 25:14 "Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up [to be] his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them."

Instead of returning thanks to God for the victory obtained, and giving him the glory of it.

"That he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods":

What were the gods of the Edomites is nowhere said in Scripture.

Only Josephus speaks of the priests of Coze, which he says was a god of the Idumeans.

"And bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them":

Which was the greatest piece of stupidity imaginable, to worship the gods of a nation conquered by him.

That where he should have praised God for his benefits and great victory, he fell from God and most vilely dishonored him.

For since they could not save them, what help could he expect from them?

This was a terrible thing to do.

It appears that the faith Amaziah had in God was short lived.

He could not have had deep convictions, or else he would not have brought these false gods home from Edom with him.

2 Chronicles 25:15 "Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?"

Idolatry being always highly displeasing to the LORD.

And this was a most provoking instance of it, that when the LORD had given him victory over his enemies, that he should forsake him, and worship their gods.

"And he sent unto him a prophet":

Whether the same as before, is not certain.

"Which said unto him, why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?"

And therefore it was madness in him to seek after them, and worship them.

This was a very good question.

If those false gods had any power, they would have saved the people who worshipped them.

2 Chronicles 25:16 "And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that [the king] said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel."

He was not indeed one of his privy council, made so by him, but he was appointed a counsellor to him by the LORD, the King of kings, to expostulate with him about his idolatry.

And to advise him to relinquish it, to whose counsel he ought to have hearkened.

"Forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten?":

Bidding him hold his peace, and threatening him, that if he did not, he must expect to be smitten.

That is, with death, as Zechariah the prophet was by the order of his father.

"Then the prophet forbare":

Left off speaking, only added this at parting.

"And said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee":

Being given up to hardness of heart, so as to pay no regard to the LORD and his prophets, which was a sure presage of destruction.

"Because thou hast done this":

Committed such idolatry, and persisted in it.

"And hast not hearkened unto my counsel":

To reform from it.

Amaziah warned the prophet to stop speaking if he wanted to live.

The prophet had already spoken what the LORD had sent him to say, and there was nothing more to say, so he did stop.

He did not stop because Amaziah threatened him, but because he had already given the message God had given him.

He told Amaziah that God would destroy him for bringing the false gods back and worshipping them.

Verses 17-28

See notes on 2 Kings 14:8-19.

2 Chronicles 25:17 "Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face."

Not of God, nor of his prophets, but of some of his nobles like himself.

"And sent to Joash ... king of Israel":

Of his message to him here, and his answer in the two following verses.

See the following notes (on 2 Kings 14:8; 14:9; 14:10).

Amaziah was so proud of himself for his victory over Seir, that he now thought he could win over Israel.

This was a challenge to Joash of Israel to come to battle with him.

2 Chronicles 25:18 "And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that [was] in Lebanon sent to the cedar that [was] in Lebanon, saying, Give thy

daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that [was] in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle."

By the return of his messengers.

"Saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon":

Intending by this proverbial way of speaking to humble the pride of Amaziah.

Comparing him to a thistle or thorn.

A low, mean, abject, weak, prickly, and troublesome shrub.

And himself to a cedar, a tree high and lofty, strong, large, and spreading.

"Saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife":

Signifying, that if in a peaceable manner he had desired to contract affinity with him, and so establish a mutual friendship.

He should have despised him as being as much below him as the thistle is below a cedar.

And therefore, should still more despise and defy him, who addressed him in a hostile manner, and in such haughty language.

"And there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle":

And so, there was an end put at once to its pride and ambition, and to its treaty with the cedar.

Intimating hereby, that his soldiers would as easily vanquish and destroy the army of Amaziah as a wild beast can destroy a thistle.

2 Chronicles 25:19 "Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to [thine] hurt, that thou shouldest fall, [even] thou, and Judah with thee?"

We see that Joash of Israel had no love for Amaziah.

He told Amaziah that just because he had won a battle with Edom, did not mean that he could fight against Israel.

He was speaking of Judah as the thistle and Israel as the cedar.

He warned Amaziah not to go to battle with Israel.

Amaziah and Judah would be severely hurt in a battle of this nature.

2 Chronicles 25:20 "But Amaziah would not hear; for it [came] of God, that he might deliver them into the hand [of their enemies], because they sought after the gods of Edom."

What the king of Israel advised him to, not to meddle to his hurt.

"For it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies":

Amaziah and his army into the hands of Joash and his.

This was the will of God, and was brought about by his providence.

And that it might be, Amaziah was given up to blindness and hardness of heart, as a punishment of his idolatry.

"Because they sought after the gods of Edom":

He and his nobles, and many of the people following his example.

God put it in the heart of Amaziah to go against Israel, so that He could punish him for bringing back the false gods of Edom and worshipping them.

God was jealous.

He would not allow the worship of false gods.

2 Chronicles 25:21 "So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, [both] he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh, which [belongeth] to Judah."

"So Joash the king of Israel went up":

Being given up to a judicial hardness of heart through pride.

For this was of God, and by his overruling providence, that he might be punished for his idolatry, in setting up the gods of Edom to be his gods, and offering to them (2 Chron. 25:14).

"And they saw one another in the face":

From Samaria to the land of Judah, which was higher ground.

And he and Amaziah looked one another in the face; in the field of battle.

"At Beth-shemesh, which [belongeth] to Judah":

Which is observed, not merely to distinguish it from another Beth-shemesh in Naphtali, but to observe.

That the king of Israel waited not for him to give him the challenge, but met his adversary in his own country.

Whither he carried the war, not suffering him to come into his.

2 Chronicles 25:22 "And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent."

Could not face them.

But, as Josephus says, a sudden fear and consternation seized them, and before they joined battle with the Israelites, turned their backs.

"And they fled every man to his tent":

To their cities, as the Targum, and left their king alone.

It is interesting to me, that this battle took place in Judah.

It appears that Israel might have been the aggressor here.

God punished Judah by Israel winning the battle.

The soldiers of Judah ran home to their own tents.

2 Chronicles 25:23 "And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits."

"And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh":

And then they looked one another in the face indeed, but Amaziah must look very silly.

"And brought him to Jerusalem":

The metropolis of Judah, with his royal prisoner.

"And brake down the wall of Jerusalem":

In at the breach of which he went with his chariot, as Josephus says, in triumph.

"From the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits":

The gate of Ephraim was to the north of the city, towards the tribe of Ephraim, from whence it had its name.

And the corner gate as that which joined the northern and western walls together.

Or rather the northern and eastern walls.

For Rauwolff says, there is still the corner gate in its old place, where the north and east walls meet on large and high rocks, and is still called by some the gate of Naphtali.

It was as if Joash wanted Amaziah to see the destruction of Jerusalem.

He tore down 600 feet of the wall in front of Amaziah.

2 Chronicles 25:24 "And [he took] all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria."

Who he, and his family, had the care of them by lot (see 1 Chron. 26:15).

"With Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house":

Which were also spoiled and plundered.

"The hostages also, and returned to Samaria":

Either such as the king of Judah had taken from Edom.

As pledges of their fidelity, that they might not rebel; or which the king of Israel took of Judah, even sons of the princes.

As the Targum, for security, that they would give him no more trouble.

"And returned to Samaria":

without attempting to bring the kingdom of Judah into subjection to him.

Which he might suppose he could not hold, and having enough to do with the Syrians, his avowed enemies.

The person who was in charge of the treasures in the temple at this time, as it seemed to be Obed-edom.

Joash of Israel robbed the temple.

He did not keep Jerusalem.

He just took the people, who had been captives there and all of the wealth of the land.

2 Chronicles 25:25 "And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years."

Which, with the fourteen he reigned contemporary with him, made the twenty-nine years he reigned (2 Kings 14:2).

The Vulgate Latin version is, "twenty-five years".

See the note on (2 Kings 14:17-19).

It appears that Amaziah of Judah out-lived Joash of Israel by fifteen years.

2 Chronicles 25:26 "Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, [are] they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?"

Not in the canonical book of Chronicles.

Though there are some things of him recorded there, which are not here.

But in the annals of each reign, written by the king's historian appointed for that purpose.

Again we see that more details on the reign of King Amaziah are found (in the book of Kings in the Bible).

2 Chronicles 25:27 "Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the LORD they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there."

A group of devote priests may have been the men who conspired to remove "Amaziah" from the throne of Judah, just as the priest Jehoida had worked to remove the wicked Athaliah from the throne and replace her with Joash (23:1-3), although it is not clear that such is the case.

Once again, a king of Judah did not finish well.

This was speaking of Amaziah's own people turning against him and killing him.

It appears the conspiracy had been growing in strength, since he came back from his battle, when he brought the idols from Edom.

He did not feel safe in Jerusalem and ran to Lachish where he was killed.

2 Chronicles 25:28 "And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah."

He had an honorable burial in Jerusalem.

The people who killed him, brought him back to Jerusalem on his horses that he had fled on.

2 Chronicles Chapter 25 Questions

1. How old was Amaziah, when he began to reign?
2. How long did he reign?
3. How old was Joash, when his son, Amaziah, was born?
4. Who had chosen the wives of Joash of Judah?
5. Amaziah did that which was _____ in the sight of the LORD.
6. Who did Amaziah kill, as soon as he was established in his kingdom?
7. Why did he not kill their families?
8. How many men of war in Judah and Jerusalem did he bring together?
9. Who did he hire to help his troops?
10. What message did the man of God bring him?
11. What does verse 8 say, God has the power to do?
12. What question did Amaziah ask the prophet of God?
13. What was the answer he gave?
14. How did the Israelites, who had been hired, feel about being sent home?
15. Who strengthened Amaziah?
16. The top of the rock, in verse 12, is speaking of _____.
17. How many did Amaziah smite at the Dead sea?
18. The soldiers that Amaziah sent back, did what, instead of going home?
19. What terrible thing did Amaziah do, when he came from the slaughter of the Edomites?
20. What message did God send Amaziah by a prophet?
21. Why did Amaziah want to go to war again?

22. Who does he challenge to a war?
23. What did Joash of Israel tell him he should do?
24. Where did the two kings meet in battle?
25. Who won?
26. What did the king of Israel take from Jerusalem?
27. Who had been in charge of the temple treasures?
28. How long did Amaziah live, after Joash of Israel?
29. How, and where, was Amaziah killed?