

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GOLDEN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

I and II Kings - Session 6 / Wednesday, September 19, 2018

UZZIAH AND HEZEKIAH

II Kings 15 to 18

1 I am slipping over several chapters as they give synopsis of several kings, both of the
2 north and south kingdoms. Instead I want to spend some time on two kings, both of the
3 southern kingdom of Judah, who were truly outstanding.

4
5 2 Kings 15:1-7 NLT

6 **Uzziah son of Amaziah began to rule over Judah in the twenty-seventh year of the**
7 **reign of King Jeroboam II of Israel. [2] He was sixteen years old when he became**
8 **king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother was Jecoliah, from**
9 **Jerusalem. [3] He did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight, just as his father,**
10 **Amaziah, had done. [4] But he did not destroy the pagan shrines, where the people**
11 **offered sacrifices and burned incense. [5] The Lord struck the king with leprosy,**
12 **which lasted until the day of his death; he lived in a house by himself. The king's son**
13 **Jotham was put in charge of the royal palace, and he governed the people of the**
14 **land.**

15 **[6] The rest of the events in Uzziah's reign and all his deeds are recorded in The**
16 **Book of the History of the Kings of Judah. [7] When Uzziah died, he was buried**
17 **near his ancestors in the City of David. Then his son Jotham became the next king.**

18
19 Isaiah 6:1-8 NLT

20 **In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and**
21 **the train of his robe filled the Temple. [2] Hovering around him were mighty**
22 **seraphim, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two**
23 **they covered their feet, and with the remaining two they flew. [3] In a great chorus**
24 **they sang, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty! The whole earth is filled with his**
25 **glory!" [4] The glorious singing shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire**
26 **sanctuary was filled with smoke.**

27 **[5] Then I said, "My destruction is sealed, for I am a sinful man and a member of**
28 **a sinful race. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord Almighty!"**

29 **[6] Then one of the seraphim flew over to the altar, and he picked up a burning**
30 **coal with a pair of tongs. [7] He touched my lips with it and said, "See, this coal has**
31 **touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven."**

32 **[8] Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to my**
33 **people? Who will go for us?"**

1 **And I said, "Lord, I'll go! Send me."**

2
3 **UZZIAH - FROM ROYALTY TO LEPROSY**
4 **II Chronicles 26**

5
6 Uzziah (also known as Azariah) reigned over the southern Kingdom of Judah (in
7 Jerusalem) for 52 years, starting around 750 years before Christ. Only Manasseh
8 (northern kingdom) lasted longer –55 years.

Try to imagine, if you can, a president of the United States being elected - and is still in office in 2018! That would have been Uzziah.

9 Early in his career he was victorious over all his enemies. We know he was a brilliant
10 military tactician (2 Chron. 26:15 **And he produced machines mounted on the walls**
11 **of Jerusalem, designed by brilliant men to shoot arrows and hurl stones from the**
12 **towers and the corners of the wall. His fame spread far and wide, for the Lord**
13 **helped him wonderfully until he became very powerful.**)

14
15 There are no better success stories than that of Uzziah. Sadly, his biography does not
16 end on the note of success - but of failure. Instead of being buried in the sepulcher of
17 kings in Jerusalem, he was buried in a field outside the city. Why? Because of acts of
18 pride late in life, he became a leper.

19
20 Let's take a good look at this king.

21
22 **HIS YOUTH**

23
24 2 Chron. 26:1-5

25 **The people of Judah then crowned Amaziah's sixteen-year-old son, Uzziah, as**
26 **their next king. [2] After his father's death, Uzziah rebuilt the town of Elath (*a town***
27 **on the Gulf of Aquaba in Edom, which he probably designed to be a seaport) and**
28 **restored it to Judah. [3] Uzziah was sixteen when he became king, and he reigned in**
29 **Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother was Jecoliah, from Jerusalem. [4] He did**
30 **what was pleasing in the Lord's sight, just as his father, Amaziah, had done. [5]**
31 **Uzziah sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of**
32 **God. And as long as the king sought the Lord, God gave him success.**

33
34 Remember, his father was King Amaziah (who did right in the sight of the Lord: 2

1 Chronicles 25:2). Every boy should have the privilege of a Godly father! What a head
2 start in life!

3

An illustration of Amaziah's obedience to God can be found in a story found in 2
Chron. 25:6-9

He also paid about 7,500 pounds of silver to hire 100,000 experienced fighting men
from Israel.

[7] But a man of God came to the king and said, "O king, do not hire troops from
Israel, for the Lord is not with Israel. He will not help those people of Ephraim! [8] If
you let them go with your troops into battle, you will be defeated no matter how well
you fight. God will overthrow you, for he has the power to help or to frustrate."

[9] Amaziah asked the man of God, "But what should I do about the silver I paid to
hire the army of Israel?"

The man of God replied, "The Lord is able to give you much more than this!"

4 But here's a footnote on Amaziah. He was dedicated to God, YET NOT WITH A
5 WHOLE HEART. This doubtless had an effect on Uzziah later in his life.

6

7

UZZIAH AS A STATESMAN

8

9 2 Chron. 26:6-15 NLT

10 **He declared war on the Philistines and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and**
11 **Ashdod. Then he built new towns in the Ashdod area and in other parts of Philistia.**

12 **[7] God helped him not only with his wars against the Philistines, but also in his**
13 **battles with the Arabs of Gur and in his wars with the Meunites (*a group of people***
14 ***who lived near Petra*). [8] The Meunites paid annual tribute to him, and his fame**
15 **spread even to Egypt, for he had become very powerful.**

16 **[9] Uzziah built fortified towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley**
17 **Gate, and at the angle in the wall. [10] He also constructed forts in the wilderness**
18 **and dug many water cisterns, because he kept great herds of livestock in the foothills**
19 **of Judah and on the plains. He was also a man who loved the soil. He had many**
20 **workers who cared for his farms and vineyards, both on the hillsides and in the**
21 **fertile valleys.**

22 **[11] Uzziah had an army of well-trained warriors, ready to march into battle, unit**
23 **by unit. This great army of fighting men had been mustered and organized by Jeiel,**
24 **the secretary of the army, and his assistant, Maaseiah. They were under the**
25 **direction of Hananiah, one of the king's officials. [12] Twenty-six hundred clan**
26 **leaders commanded these regiments of seasoned warriors. [13] The army consisted**
27 **of 307,500 men, all elite troops. They were prepared to assist the king against any**

1 enemy. [14] Uzziah provided the entire army with shields, spears, helmets, coats of
2 mail, bows, and sling stones. [15] And he produced machines mounted on the walls
3 of Jerusalem, designed by brilliant men to shoot arrows and hurl stones from the
4 towers and the corners of the wall. His fame spread far and wide, for the Lord
5 helped him wonderfully until he became very powerful.

6
7 Uzziah's leadership yielded great successes. He had an amazing military mind. Even
8 leaders in other lands studied his strategies and maneuvers and copied them. His fame
9 spread throughout the entire known world.

10
11 TROUBLE!

12
13 Jesus (through John) sent word to the seven churches in Asia Minor (Turkey) that it
14 would be those who endured to the end who would receive eternal blessings (Revelation 2
15 and 3). Unfortunately, sadly, Uzziah's amazing life was troubled near the end. He
16 had been tutored by a prophet named Zechariah who had passed away. Prosperity and
17 success blurred Uzziah's vision and he failed to see that God was the One responsible for
18 his incredible success. Uzziah apparently began to think it was his brilliance, his sharp
19 skills, that brought it all about. Pride causes disaster.

20
It was through pride that Satan became the devil. Pride leads to every other vice. A
proud man is always looking down on things and people. As long as you are looking
DOWN, you have stopped looking UP.

21 One day he dared enter the great Temple (built by Solomon several hundred years earlier)
22 and usurp the position of a priest by offering incense. 2 Chron. 26:16 (NLT) **But when**
23 **he had become powerful, he also became proud, which led to his downfall. He sinned**
24 **against the Lord his God by entering the sanctuary of the Lord's Temple and**
25 **personally burning incense on the altar.**

26
27 Uzziah had apparently come to think he could modify God's expressed commands...that
28 he knew better than God. Great successes, world renown, fantastic prosperity - all were
29 lost when Uzziah failed to follow God's commands.

30
31 The result? 2 Chron. 26:19-23

32 **Uzziah was furious and refused to set down the incense burner he was holding.**
33 **But as he was standing there with the priests before the incense altar in the Lord's**
34 **Temple, leprosy suddenly broke out on his forehead. [20] When Azariah and the**
35 **other priests saw the leprosy, they rushed him out. And the king himself was eager**

1 to get out because the Lord had struck him. [21] So King Uzziah had leprosy until
2 the day he died. He lived in isolation, excluded from the Temple of the Lord. His son
3 Jotham was put in charge of the royal palace, and he governed the people of the
4 land.

5 [22] The rest of the events of Uzziah's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded
6 by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. [23] So Uzziah died, and since he had leprosy, he
7 was buried nearby in a burial field belonging to the kings. Then his son Jotham
8 became the next king.

9
10 So what do we draw from Uzziah's life?

- 11
- 12 • Never deviate from God's plan for your life or His directives
- 13 • God's blessings on our lives can be short-circuited by pride and self-will
- 14

15 KING HEZEKIAH

16
17 2 Kings 18:1-6

18 Hezekiah son of Ahaz began to rule over Judah in the third year of King Hoshea's
19 reign in Israel. [2] He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he
20 reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother was Abijah, the daughter of
21 Zechariah. [3] He did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight, just as his ancestor
22 David had done. [4] He removed the pagan shrines, smashed the sacred pillars, and
23 knocked down the Asherah poles. He broke up the bronze serpent that Moses had
24 made, because the people of Israel had begun to worship it by burning incense to it.
25 The bronze serpent was called Nehushtan.

26 [5] Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. There was never another king
27 like him in the land of Judah, either before or after his time. [6] He remained
28 faithful to the Lord in everything, and he carefully obeyed all the commands the
29 Lord had given Moses.

30
31 Some 700 years before Christ, Judah inaugurated King Hezekiah. For 29 years he gave
32 Judah its best governance.

33
34 It is interesting that for 700 years, the people had kept the bronze serpent from Numbers
35 chapter 21. Enroute to the Promised Land, they crossed an area where small but deadly
36 snakes hid in the sand. The people walking over caused many of them to be bitten and
37 many died. But all who looked at the bronze snake, erected by Moses, were healed. The
38 creature was meant as a temporary relief to those bitten, but the people had made it an
39 object of worship. 700 years later it still existed and was an affront to God. Hezekiah
40 had it destroyed!

HEZEKIAH'S WALL IN
JERUSALEM 2 KINGS
18:9-13



King Hezekiah had only ruled for four years when the King of Syria attacked Samaria, the capital city of the northern Kingdom of Israel. 2 Kings 18:11-12 **At that time the king of Assyria deported the Israelites to Assyria and put them in colonies in Halah, along the banks of the Habor River in Gozan, and among the cities of the Medes. [12] For they had refused to listen to the Lord their God. Instead, they had violated his covenant—all the laws the Lord had given through his servant Moses.** This was in 721 BC and marked the end of the northern Kingdom. To protect his southern kingdom, Hezekiah erected this wall. I can walk to it from our hotel in Jerusalem in 15 minutes or so and have done so many times. It does not seem very big, but it's the remnant of the original and even it stands ten feet high and it's very wide. In Hezekiah's time it must have been a massive undertaking.

It was at this point that Hezekiah missed it: Instead of just standing his ground at first, he offered (and paid) tribute to the Assyrian tyrant Sennacherib: 2 Kings 18:14-16 **King Hezekiah sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: "I have done**

1 **wrong. I will pay whatever tribute money you demand if you will only go away."**
2 **The king of Assyria then demanded a settlement of more than eleven tons of silver**
3 **and about one ton of gold. [15] To gather this amount, King Hezekiah used all the**
4 **silver stored in the Temple of the Lord and in the palace treasury. [16] Hezekiah**
5 **even stripped the gold from the doors of the Lord's Temple and from the doorposts**
6 **he had overlaid with gold, and he gave it all to the Assyrian king.**

7
8 The Assyrians mocked Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18:32-35

9 **"Don't listen to Hezekiah when he tries to mislead you by saying, 'The Lord will**
10 **rescue us!' [33] Have the gods of any other nations ever saved their people from the**
11 **king of Assyria? [34] What happened to the gods of Hamath and Arpad? And what**
12 **about the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Did they rescue Samaria from my**
13 **power? [35] What god of any nation has ever been able to save its people from my**
14 **power? Name just one! So what makes you think that the Lord can rescue**
15 **Jerusalem?"**

16
17 King Hezekiah did not respond but instead went into the Temple to pray. And he asked
18 Isaiah to intervene on their behalf before God: 2 Kings 19:6-7 **Isaiah the prophet**
19 **replied, "Say to your master, 'This is what the Lord says: Do not be disturbed by**
20 **this blasphemous speech against me from the Assyrian king's messengers. [7] Listen!**
21 **I myself will move against him, and the king will receive a report from Assyria**
22 **telling him that he is needed at home. Then I will make him want to return to his**
23 **land, where I will have him killed with a sword.' "**

24
25 Listen to Hezekiah's prayer:

26
27 2 Kings 19:15-19

28 **[15] And Hezekiah prayed this prayer before the Lord: "O Lord, God of Israel,**
29 **you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You alone are God of all the**
30 **kingdoms of the earth. You alone created the heavens and the earth. [16] Listen to**
31 **me, O Lord, and hear! Open your eyes, O Lord, and see! Listen to Sennacherib's**
32 **words of defiance against the living God.**

33 **[17] "It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all these nations,**
34 **just as the message says. [18] And they have thrown the gods of these nations into**
35 **the fire and burned them. But of course the Assyrians could destroy them! They**
36 **were not gods at all—only idols of wood and stone shaped by human hands. [19]**
37 **Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the earth**
38 **will know that you alone, O Lord, are God."**

39
40 What happened next is one of the most spectacular deliverences in all history:

1 2 Kings 19:35-37

2 **That night the angel of the Lord went out to the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000**
3 **Assyrian troops. When the surviving Assyrians woke up the next morning, they**
4 **found corpses everywhere. [36] Then King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and**
5 **returned to his own land. He went home to his capital of Nineveh and stayed there.**
6 **[37] One day while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons**
7 **Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with their swords. They then escaped to the**
8 **land of Ararat, and another son, Esarhaddon, became the next king of Assyria.**

9
10 **WHEN A DIVINE HEALING PROVED NEGATIVE**

11
12 2 Kings 20:1-6

13 **About that time Hezekiah became deathly ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz**
14 **went to visit him. He gave the king this message: "This is what the Lord says: Set**
15 **your affairs in order, for you are going to die. You will not recover from this**
16 **illness."**

17 **[2] When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the**
18 **Lord, [3] "Remember, O Lord, how I have always tried to be faithful to you and do**
19 **what is pleasing in your sight." Then he broke down and wept bitterly.**

20 **[4] But before Isaiah had left the middle courtyard, this message came to him**
21 **from the Lord: [5] "Go back to Hezekiah, the leader of my people. Tell him, 'This is**
22 **what the Lord, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and**
23 **seen your tears. I will heal you, and three days from now you will get out of bed and**
24 **go to the Temple of the Lord. [6] I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will**
25 **rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will do this to defend my honor**
26 **and for the sake of my servant David.' "**

27
28 I believe in divine healing. We pray for the sick. In this case, God healed Hezekiah
29 and gave him 15 more years of life. The king was delighted, of course, but made a
30 severe mistake in judgment. Messengers from Babylon visited him to congratulate him
31 and Hezekiah showed these pagans all the treasures God had given Judah.

32
33 2 Kings 20:14-21

34 **Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did those**
35 **men want? Where were they from?"**

36 **Hezekiah replied, "They came from the distant land of Babylon."**

37 **[15] "What did they see in your palace?" Isaiah asked.**

38 **"They saw everything," Hezekiah replied. "I showed them everything I own—all**
39 **my treasures."**

40 **[16] Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to this message from the Lord: [17]**

1 **The time is coming when everything you have—all the treasures stored up by your**
2 **ancestors—will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. [18]**
3 **Some of your own descendants will be taken away into exile. They will become**
4 **eunuchs who will serve in the palace of Babylon's king."**

5 [19] **Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "This message you have given me from the**
6 **Lord is good." But the king was thinking, "At least there will be peace and security**
7 **during my lifetime."**

8 [20] **The rest of the events in Hezekiah's reign, including the extent of his power**
9 **and how he built a pool and dug a tunnel to bring water into the city, are recorded**
10 **in The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah. [21] When Hezekiah died, his son**
11 **Manasseh became the next king.**

12
13 And, of course, that's what happened starting in 605 B.C. when the Babylonians under
14 King Nebuchadnezzar attacked Judah - taking the treasures from Solomon's Temple –
15 and then two more forays into the Holy City, taking not only loot but people as prisoners
16 back to Babylon.

17
18 Verse 21 though is the verse that stops me cold: During those 15 years of added life,
19 Hezekiah sired Manasseh who would rule for 55 years and be one of the most wicked
20 rulers of all time. Had Hezekiah died before being healed, Manasseh never would have
21 been born and Judah would have been spared decades of terror!

22
23 Should we not pray, "Lord, IF THIS BE YOUR WILL, let it come to pass?"

24
25
26 Next time we meet: JOSIAH!!