

Lesson 5 6 December, 2020

Amaziah Turns From the Lord

Lesson Scope: [2 Chronicles 25](#)

References in brackets relate to Lesson Scope unless noted otherwise

Lesson Focus

Amaziah became king upon the death of his father, King Joash. Like his father, he seemed to do right in the beginning of his reign. However, later in his reign, he became overconfident and followed his own way. Ultimately his life ended in tragedy.

Amaziah began his reign by executing the men who had assassinated his father. He was obedient to the Law in that he did not extend punishment to their children. Amaziah then organized an army to fight Edom.

He attempted an alliance with Israel, only to break it when warned by the man of God. His first thought seemed to be concern for the loss that breaking this alliance would involve an early indication of his imperfect heart. The Lord granted Judah victory over Edom, but Amaziah began worshiping their heathen gods, and his doom was sealed.

Amaziah's failure seems to have had its roots in tolerating idolatry in his realm of responsibility. While he may not have been involved in idol worship personally in the beginning of his reign, by allowing it, a thought process began that would involve him in the same sins later in his reign. The challenge to all of us is not to grow accustomed to the sins we see about us in society. Rather, we must always maintain God's view of abhorrence for anything contrary to His Word.

Amaziah was concerned about the loss involved in ending the alliance with the ungodly. We must be careful to keep ourselves free from the unequal yoke in business pursuits, even if it makes a business venture seem more complicated or less profitable. God will reward those who seek His way, not necessarily monetarily now, but with peace and future glory. The possibility of failure rests in the hearts of each of us. We must take personal responsibility to eradicate any longing in our hearts toward that which God rejects.

God deserves and requires wholehearted devotion. Reservation and disobedience reveal imperfections of the heart that lead to tragedy.

Lesson Aim: To see expressions and results of failing to serve the Lord with a perfect heart.

Theme Verse: [Proverbs 4:23](#). Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Lesson Text

Imperfect Devotion

[2 Chronicles 25:1-2](#) ^(KJV) 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. ² And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.

[2 Chronicles 25:6-10](#) ^(KJV) He hired also a hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver. 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. 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. 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. 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.

[2 Chronicles 25:13](#) ^(KJV) 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 Bethhoron, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.

Idolatry and Rebellion

[2 Chronicles 25:14-16](#) ^(KJV) 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. 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? 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 forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

Pride and Punishment

2 Chronicles 25:17-22 ^(KJV) 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. 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. 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? 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. 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 Bethshemesh, which *belongeth* to Judah. ²² And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.

2 Chronicles 25:27 ^(KJV) 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.

Questions for Study

Imperfect Devotion

1. What glimpses do we see of Amaziah's imperfect heart?
2. What are some alliances we need to resist today?
3. How is God able to "give . . . much more than this" today?

Idolatry and Rebellion

4. Why did Amaziah refuse to receive the prophet's message?
5. How might we be guilty of refusing to hear God's message?

Pride and Punishment

6. Whose advice was Amaziah taking (25:17)?
7. What is the result of turning away from God?

Analysing the Passage

It is not difficult to predict Amaziah's course when we read that his good beginning did not proceed from a perfect heart. Going through the motions will not compensate for lack of conviction. Proper action receives strength and endurance by a desire to please the Lord in all things. Second Kings 14:3-4 indicates it was not evil deeds, but failure to eradicate idolatry that reveals this lack of a pure heart.

The hiring of Israelite soldiers was initiated without divine direction, but Amaziah heeded the prophet's challenge and sent them home. This was not without cost however as the disgruntled Israelite soldiers took opportunity to plunder several Judean cities on their way home.

Amaziah's victory over Edom proved to be the turning point in his reign. He set up the idols of the nation his army had conquered, and he personally worshiped them. Instead of heeding the messenger from the Lord, he threatened him with violence.

The conflict with Israel may have been to settle scores for the damage done by the Israelite soldiers on their way home. To "see one another in the face" was likely a euphemism for facing off in battle. Amaziah was captured, his army routed, and his treasure taken.

After this ignominious defeat, Amaziah reigned for approximately fifteen more years. This appears to have been a time of turmoil, and was concluded by his assassination.

Principles and Applications

Imperfect Devotion

1. A sincere heart is essential for acceptable obedience (25:2). "No man can serve two masters." God desires complete obedience to His will and way. Lack of sincerity in service will set an individual up for failure when faced with temptation.
2. God's disapproval and condemnation will be on those who seek an alliance with the ungodly (25:6-7). Although Amaziah terminated his relationship with the Israelite mercenaries, their killing of three thousand Judeans out of revenge set the stage for further disaster. Amaziah's

proposal demonstrated a careless attitude toward separation, which brought the judgment of God on his nation. Likewise, we will not prosper spiritually if we seek to join efforts with those who have rejected truth. In Revelation 3:16, Christ warns the church that He is not indifferent toward half-hearted Christianity.

3. Material and financial concerns are of far less importance than spiritual welfare (25:9). Our sense of stewardship of the possessions God has entrusted to us will help us handle them carefully. However, the Christian will give priority to spiritual matters. We will not follow the advice or methods of the world that are contrary to God's teaching, even if rejecting worldly advice involves financial loss. God always rewards sacrifice for the cause of right. It may not be a financial reward in this life, but we are assured of an eternal reward if we are faithful.

4. Not seeking God's will bring many undesirable consequences (25:10, 13). The angered Israelite soldiers brought about much loss and heartache. Failure to seek God's will open our lives to further temptation. It also affects the lives of those close to us in our families or the church. Poor example has the potential to cause spiritual failure for successive generations.

5. God's approval is far more important than the approval of men (25:10, 13). We may be tempted to view our separation as something that will bring us conflict with others. At times it will. However, we must remember that seeking man's approval instead of God's will separate us from God, now and in eternity.

Idolatry and Rebellion

6. Deception results when one is not motivated by a pure heart toward God (25:14). How do we respond when the church seeks to give direction on an issue? We should not lightly esteem applications made to Bible truths or ignore admonitions against world-ward trends. Pride in our own reasoning will cause us to separate ourselves from God's people.

7. Self-will causes one to reject the Word of God and continue in evil (25:16). The path to deception becomes very accommodating when the Word is rejected as the infallible guide for all of life. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Pride and Punishment

8. Judgment will always be the result of taming away from God (25:20,

22, 27). We must recognize sin for what it is and deal with it. If we fail to allow the Lord to uproot sin in our lives, He will reject us when we meet Him in judgment.

Important Teachings

1. A sincere heart is essential for acceptable obedience (25:2).
2. God's disapproval and condemnation will be on those who seek an alliance with the ungodly (25:6-7).
3. Material and financial concerns are of far less importance than spiritual welfare (25:9).
4. Not seeking God's will brings many undesirable consequences (25:10, 13).
5. God's approval is far more important than the approval of men (25:10, 13).
6. Deception results when one is not motivated by a pure heart toward God (25:14).
7. Self-will causes one to reject the Word of God and continue in evil (25:16).
8. Judgment will always be the result of turning away from God (25:20, 22, 27).
9. An ungodly alliance is an indication of lack of faith in God (25:7).

Answers to Questions

1. What glimpses do we see of Amaziah's imperfect heart?
He failed to eradicate idolatry in the land (2 Kings 14:3-4). He formed an alliance with the northern tribes. When he was rebuked by the prophets, his first concern was for the loss it would involve, not of sorrow for failure.
2. What are some alliances we need to resist today?
We need to make sure we do not become involved in unequal yokes in business interests. The world may ask us to connect to their information pools in the name of easier communication. They may require insurance to do business with them. Health care professionals may want to sign us up to government health care programs for more benefits. Farmers may be encouraged to seek government aid to assist in times of crop failure or deflated prices.
3. How is God able to "give . . . much more than this" today?

God's way always brings peace in our lives. Following God's plan in our lives keeps us separate from worldly practice that could influence us for the wrong. Following God's plan will bring salvation to our own souls and provide a positive influence for those entrusted to our care.

4. Why did Amaziah refuse to receive the prophet's message?

He had just won a victory without the help of a neighbouring alliance. He failed to give God the credit for his victory. Perhaps he was bitter about the loss his former allies had caused and blamed this on previously heeding the prophet's advice.

5. How might we be guilty of refusing to hear God's message?

Is our mind open to truths as we read God's Word? When the church gives direction on a matter, do we act on it in a positive way? Or do we make excuses for our current practice? Are we open to the brotherly address, or do we see the faults of others and fail to consider our own?

6. Whose advice was Amaziah taking (25:17)?

The previous verse indicates that he rejected the Word of God's prophet, and therefore the counsel that he received here was not of God but of Satan. Having rejected God's Word, he seems to have been following the advice of others who had also rejected God.

7. What is the result of turning away from God?

Our soul is endangered in this life and ultimately will be lost if there is no repentance in this life. The opportunity to benefit and build up the work of God's kingdom is lost.

Summarizing the Lesson

The writer of Hebrews warns: "Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." We must acknowledge that the potential for failure lies in our hearts. We are thankful for a spiritual church to help preserve truth and give voice against the worldliness of the day. May we each make the choices that will bring us closer to God and will strengthen each other.

Research Guide

1. Read 2 Kings 14, a parallel passage with a few details not mentioned in 2 Chronicles 25.
2. Refer to the chapter on "Obedience" in *Doctrines of the Bible*.