

The King who Turned White - 2 Chronicles 26

If you could summarize your entire life, what words would you use? What kind of qualities can be written on your tombstone that describe your character? How would you like to be remembered for how you lived on this earth?

Today we are going to look at a king who had a bright future. He's a king who had a great start, but he did not have a good finish. Instead of being remembered for his accomplishments, he will forever be remembered as the king who turned white.

Background: King Uzziah could have been one the greatest kings in Israel's history.

He could've been up there with King David and Solomon. Verse 3-5 says,

"Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 52 years... He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father had done. He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God."

Keep on reading and you will see how King Uzziah was a successful builder. He was a successful military leader who conquered Israel's arch enemy, the Philistines. He even had engineers who invented catapults that could throw large stones down upon the enemy (vs 14-15).

His military might was so strong that the Ammonites to the East paid him tribute, which spread his fame as far as Egypt (vs 8).

How was King Uzziah able to be so successful? Verse 5 reads, "As long as he sought the Lord, God blessed him."

Verse 15 says, "Uzziah was wonderfully helped until he became strong." Pride brought the man down.

Uzziah had a good start but in the end, he was unfaithful and disobedient to God. I believe there are some valuable lessons we can learn from the king who turned white. Let's see what they are.

Lesson #1: Pride goes before destruction:

Pride seems to be such a little thing, but it's one of those little things God hates the most.

Proverbs 16:5 says, "Everyone who has pride in his heart is disgusting to the Lord: he will certainly not go free from punishment." Verse 18 says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a stiff spirit before a fall."

And Peter warned, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

Lesson #2: God means what He says and says what He means:

Uzziah was a king but he was not a priest. One day Uzziah decided that – “as king, I’m going to worship the way I want to.” The High Priest along with 80 other priests tried to stop him. They probably stood in his way and explained, “God said you can’t do this. Only the priests are allowed in the temple.”

I can picture Uzziah forcing his way past the priests and lighting the incense thinking, “God won’t mind.” But God did mind and struck his forehead with leprosy. This made the king’s head turned white. With fear he fled from the temple and lived the rest of his life in an isolated house.

Why did he do it? The Bible doesn’t say. But I’ve got a sneaking suspicion that Uzziah thought, “I don’t have to abide by God’s silly rules, I think they’re outdated.”

From the N.T. we learn to follow God’s specific instructions, so we don’t end up like King Uzziah.

Lesson #3. Listen to Godly People: 2 Chron 26:5

One of the reasons why Uzziah had so much success was because of the fact that he had a great mentor. Verse 5 says, “Uzziah sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the vision of God.”

Being with good people will influence us to do good, but there is a warning here. A mentor does not guarantee success. After verse 5, Zechariah is no longer mentioned. It seems to be that after Zechariah died, Uzziah began to drift. Good mentors are not going to be around forever, so make sure you listened well and continue to apply what they say even after they are gone.

Our texts says, “as long as Uzziah sought the Lord, the Lord gave him success.” That’s what we need to teach our families. “Seek first the kingdom of God.” “Hunger and thirst for righteousness” and you will do well.

Close: Let’s close by looking at one last verse 2 Chron 26:23.

“So Uzziah rested with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings, for they said, "He is a leper."

Think of all the wonderful accomplishments and prosperity this king had. His fame was everywhere. The people loved him. For 52 years he was the leader of God’s chosen people. All of that did not matter because of these 4 little words: “He is a leper.”

If you had to sit down and write your eulogy today, what would it say? What do you want written on your tombstone? How will you be remembered?