

Uzziah

2 Kings 14:23 – 15:38

2 Chronicles 26 - 27

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Jeroboam II king of Israel reigned in Samaria for many years. Even though he was an evil man, the Lord used him to defeat the enemies of Israel and to retake lands for both Israel and Judah. After Jeroboam there came a long line of evil kings in Israel. They did what they wanted to do rather than serving the Lord. Most of them met violent deaths at the hands of their successors.

Meanwhile, in Judah, Uzziah son of Amaziah became king. He feared the Lord and served the Lord. And as long as he sought the Lord's guidance, he was successful. Uzziah had a magnificent army and defeated Judah's enemies. He grew wealthy and powerful, and his fame spread even to distant countries.

But with success and power and fame came pride and arrogance, which led to his downfall. One day Uzziah went into the Temple to burn incense. The high priest and eighty other priests went together to confront the king. "It's wrong for you to burn incense to the Lord. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who are consecrated for the task. Leave this place. The Lord will not honor for what you're doing."

Uzziah was livid. Standing in front of the altar of incense, he raged at the priests. Suddenly, leprosy broke out on his forehead. Immediately, the priests hurried him out of the Temple. He went with them willingly, knowing the Lord had struck him for his sin.

The leprosy never left him. Uzziah lived the rest of his life in isolation. His son Jotham succeeded him as king of Judah.