

Kings Amaziah and Jeroboam II

2 Kings 14

2 Kings 14:1-22 - *"In the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, became king. He was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like his father David. He did everything as his father Joash had done. However the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.*

Now it happened, as soon as the kingdom was established in his hand, that he executed his servants who had murdered his father the king. But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the LORD commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin." He killed 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and took Sela by war, and called its name Joktheel to this day.

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us face one another in battle." And Jehoash 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 your daughter to my son as wife'; and a wild beast that was in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle. You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Glory in that, and stay at home; for why should you meddle with trouble so that you fall—you and Judah with you?" But Amaziah would not heed. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went out; so he and Amaziah king of Judah faced one another at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. And Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. Then Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh; and he went to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate—four hundred cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, all the articles that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash that he did—his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Jehoash rested with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then Jeroboam his son reigned in his place.

Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And they formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. Then they brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the City of David. And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, Azariah, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built Elath and restored it to Judah, after the king rested with his fathers."

Background Notes for 2 Kings 14:1-22

2 Kings 14 tells us that Amaziah, the son of Joash, was also one of the good kings of Judah. *“And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord”* (v3). However, he didn’t remove the high places; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. This doesn’t mean that Amaziah promoted idolatry in Judah, but he allowed sacrifices and the burning of incense to the Lord to take place in places outside of Jerusalem. Under the Law, sacrifices to the Lord were to take place *only* at the Temple in Jerusalem. Read Deuteronomy 12 in this connection.

So Amaziah was not perfect, but he was a good king. Notice his respect for the Law of the Lord (v5-6) when he did not execute the sons of those evil men who had murdered his father, Joash. Unlike most kings of that day, Amaziah honored the law of Deuteronomy 24:16 which said, *“Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.”*

God gave Amaziah success over the Edomites, Judah’s enemy, in the Valley of Salt, south of the Dead Sea. *“He killed ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt, , and took Sela by war, and called its name Joktheel to this day”* (v7). Sela, named Joktheel by Amaziah, later was named Petra (as we know it today).

2 Chronicles 25 says that Amaziah, in his victory over the Edomites, cruelly had ten thousand Edomites thrown to their deaths over a cliff. After this victory over Edom, Amaziah was lifted up with pride.

Doctrinal Point for 2 Kings 14:1-22

Pride goes before a fall.

Proverbs 16:18 says, *“Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”* This biblical truth is certainly illustrated in the record of King Amaziah of Judah. After his military victory over the Edomites, Amaziah’s heart was filled with pride. As a result he challenged Jehoash, king of the northern kingdom of Israel, to war.

Jehoash sent back his answer in a parable, or fable. In the story, Amaziah and Judah were likened to a scrawny little thistle bush challenging a large stately cedar tree, which represented Jehoash and the northern kingdom of Israel. The little thistle even had the audacity to try to arrange a political marriage between the two nations by having Jehoash give his daughter to Amaziah’s son in marriage (v9). While the thistle was making all this proud talk, a wild beast came along, stepped on it, silenced it and trampled it to death.

But Amaziah would not listen to the parable, and he continued his challenge. So Jehoash brought his army down to Judah and defeated Amaziah at Beth Shemesh, about fifteen miles west of Jerusalem. *Pride goes before a fall.*

2 Chronicles 25:20 provides some more of the details of the story: *“But Amaziah would not listen, for God so worked that He might give them into the hands of Jehoash, because they sought the gods of Edom.”* Amaziah and the people of Judah had actually begun to worship the pagan gods of Edom! But God has ways of bringing down people who, in their pride, turn away from Him and allow foreign gods into their lives.

Do you see the lesson? Today, the foreign gods are materialism, and intellectualism, and hedonism - and other gods that take the place of God in our lives. All of these things are an indication of selfish pride. Be warned; God's Word says that pride goes before a fall.

2 Kings 14:23-29 – *“In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher. For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. And the Lord did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.*

Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did - his might, how he made war, and how he recaptured for Israel, from Damascus and Hamath, what had belonged to Judah - are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Jeroboam rested with his fathers, the kings of Israel. Then Zechariah his son reigned in his place.”

Doctrinal Point for 2 Kings 14:23-29

Prosperity does not infer God's pleasure.

The King Jeroboam mentioned in 2 Kings 14 was Jeroboam II. His reign was about a 150 years after the reign of Jeroboam I. Remember, Jeroboam I was *“the king who made Israel to sin”* by setting up two golden calves in idolatrous shrines in Dan and Bethel. Verse 24 tells us that Jeroboam II did evil in the sight of the Lord. *“He did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.”*

Now, if we didn't have verse 24 as part of the biblical record, we might infer that Jeroboam II was a good king, and that God was pleased with his reign. After all, he had a long reign of 41 years, and he was able to restore territory to Israel that had been lost to the Syrians. And this was in fulfillment of the prophecies of Jonah, the prophet of God.

By the way, notice here that ***Jonah was a real prophet from Israel.*** The story of Jonah and the big fish was not some Old Testament parable or fable, but real history!

Furthermore, in reference to Jeroboam's record, verses 26-27 say that the Lord had compassion on Israel. He relieved their distress and granted them prosperity during Jeroboam's reign. So we might infer that God was pleased with Jeroboam II and the northern kingdom of Israel - but nothing could be further from the truth!

Read the prophecies of Hosea and Amos. Hosea and Amos were prophets to the northern kingdom at this time. They denounced the people of the nation for their moral, spiritual, and social sins. Even though the nation was experiencing great material prosperity, the nation was under God's judgment. The Syrian takeover was on the horizon.

Prosperity does not imply God's pleasure - then or today. Many people today, including some Christians, think that their material prosperity and problem-free lives is an indication that God approves of their lives and their lifestyle. God may - or may not - be pleased with their lives. It is not our material prosperity, but **our obedience to God's Word** that is the measure of whether or not God is pleased with our lives.

What is the lesson for us here? Prosperity does not mean God is pleased with our lives!

Practical Application

Let's remember to thank the Lord for our godly mothers!

Did you notice the obvious difference between what is said about good King Amaziah's heritage compared to bad King Jeroboam II's heritage? Amaziah's mother's name is given. This is typical of the records of the **good kings** of Judah. Why? Because the influence of a godly mother greatly affected whether or not the king would become a good king.

Do you, or did you, have a godly mother? Mothers have a great influence on the future lives of their children. Let's remember to thank the Lord for our godly mothers!