

## 2 Kings Lesson 15

### 2 Kings Chapter 15

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Memory verses for this week: *Rom 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

**Introduction:** In chapter 14, we studied about the reign of Amaziah. I mentioned that he took the throne at the age of five, but it was 25 as clearly mentioned in verse 2 of the chapter. Chapter 15 is a chronological touching upon the reign of two kings of Judah and five kings of Israel.

### I. Reign of Azariah

*2Ki 15:1 In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.*

*2Ki 15:2 Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.*

*2Ki 15:3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;*

*2Ki 15:4 Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.*

The Azariah named here is one and the same with Uzziah who is described in greater detail in II Chronicles 26. Azariah (Uzziah) like other kings of Judah never put a stop to the casual and indiscriminate sacrifice upon high places which was the root for greater idolatry. We saw this same failure in Chapter 14 by Amaziah.

*2Ki 14:3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did.*

*2Ki 14:4 Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places.*

*2Ki 15:5 And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.*

The LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land. II Chronicles 26:16-21 presents the details of Uzziah's sin which was prompted by pride. God "therefore smote" is interpreted from (*chophshuwth*) which has the sense of a 'separate' house. His son, Jotham, took care of the administrative details in his place.

*2Ch 26:21 And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.*

*2Ch 26:22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.*

*2Ch 26:23 So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.*

*2Ki 15:6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

*2Ki 15:7 So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.*

*2Ki 15:8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.*

*2Ki 15:9 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Verse 5 records the death of Azariah. Upon the death of Azariah (Uzziah), Jotham his son ascended the throne of Judah. In verse 8, we shift back to the northern kingdom, Israel. The reign of this next king (Zachariah) of Israel was short lived which exemplifies the principle of Proverbs 28:2, He continued in the idolatry begun by Jeroboam many years before.

*Pro 28:2 For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.*

*2Ki 15:10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.*

*2Ki 15:11 And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

*2Ki 15:12 This was the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation. And so it came to pass.*

Zachariah's tenure as king was short because Shallum not only conspired against him, but killed him. As God had spoken to Jehu, four generations of his sons followed in his dynasty. That final phrase "and so it came to pass." has great significance. God's Word always comes to pass. Jehu had been promised four generations. That is exactly what came to pass. It is an impossibility that God will ever lie. He simply can not as it is in his attributes to always be holy. God can not be tempted to sin as man can.

*Tit 1:1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;*

*Tit 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*

*Tit 1:3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;  
Tit 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

*2Ki 15:13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.  
2Ki 15:14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.  
2Ki 15:15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

Things got even worse in Samaria, the then capital of Israel. Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. The instability and chaos which results from unrighteousness was manifesting itself in Israel.

The principle of Proverbs 28:2 which we read earlier is continued. Shallum managed to reign for a total of one month. Though no other details are provided, the conspiracy of Shallum evidently refers to his treachery in the death of Zachariah, his predecessor.

*2Ki 15:16 Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.  
2Ki 15:17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria.  
2Ki 15:18 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

In verse 16, Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all of its inhabitants. The location of Tiphshah is not clear. However, it apparently was at the border with Syria. In any event, Menahem with barbarity killed the inhabitants thereof, including pregnant women whom he ripped open. In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel. He did *that which was evil in the sight of the LORD*. As did his forefathers, Menahem continued in the national abomination of the golden-calf worship begun by Jeroboam. Spiritual sin (idolatry) leaves the way open for other abominations such as the barbarity done by Menahem at Tiphshah. Menahem's reign lasted ten years.

## **II. Pul, King of Assyria Comes Against the Land**

*2Ki 15:19 And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the*

*kingdom in his hand.*

*2Ki 15:20 And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.*

God did not leave this wicked king unpunished. God allowed and may have even sent the Assyrians to attack Israel. In turn, Menahem paid Pul, king of Assyria, one thousand talents of silver to back off. The text notes this was to “confirm the kingdom in his hand.” Evidently, the rule of Menahem was tenuous. He had seized the throne through treachery and the kingdom was not stable.

Apparently, Menahem hoped that by paying off the Assyrians that his own reign would be prolonged. He extracted the monies from various wealthy men of his kingdom.

What one thousand talents of silver would translate into modern money is difficult to say. However, a talent could be as much as one-hundred pounds, English weight. Therefore, one thousand talents was a very substantial amount of silver. In being paid off, Pul, king of Assyria, backed off. It is of interest that this is the first mention of the Assyrian empire in the Bible. Assyria was an empire which arose between the ninth and seventh centuries before Christ. Its territory, at least initially, would approximate the modern State of Iraq. The Assyrians for several centuries would dominate the Middle East as a ‘super power,’ ruling primarily from Nineveh.

*2Ki 15:21 And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

*2Ki 15:22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.*

*2Ki 15:23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.*

*2Ki 15:24 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

The reign of Menahem ended with his son Pekahiah succeeding him. In verses 23-24, we find the reign of Pekahiah was short. For only two years did he reign.

Details of his demise will be provided directly. Like his predecessors in the northern kingdom, Pekahiah continued the idolatrous abomination of the golden calves of Bethel and Dan, begun by Jeroboam.

*2Ki 15:25 But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.*

*2Ki 15:26 And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

*2Ki 15:27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.*

*2Ki 15:28 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Principle and integrity were of little value in the northern kingdom. One of Pekahiah's officers conspired against him, killed him in his palace, and usurped the throne. This arrogant new ruler was Pekah. Verse 27 records the reign of Pekah. Sadly, the reign of Pekah was little different from his predecessors. Though ruling for twenty years, Pekah continued the idolatry characteristic of the northern kingdom in the golden calves.

*2Ki 15:29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.*

*2Ki 15:30 And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.*

*2Ki 15:31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

During the reign of Pekah, the next Assyrian ruler to the north and east, *Tiglathpileser*, began to expand his empire. He began to move southward from Syria and Lebanon into northern Israel. He captured much of the northern section of Israel including the territory of Naphtali, the region of Galilee, and Gilead to the east. The beginnings of the Assyrian captivity were under way. The long prophesied dispersion of Israel because of apostasy was about to begin. More information is available in Leviticus 26:32 and Deuteronomy 28:58. Though the full Assyrian captivity against the northern kingdom was still about seventeen years away, the prelude of it was already looming.

Verse 30 shows how Hoshea rose to power through treacherous conspiracy. Pekah succumbed to the same when one of his subordinates, Hoshea, the son of Elah, led a conspiracy against him. Thus, Pekah passed into oblivion as an unjust king of Israel.

*2Ki 15:32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.*

*2Ki 15:33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.*

*2Ki 15:34 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.*

*2Ki 15:35 Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.*

The focus of the narrative now returns to the southern kingdom of Judah. After the death of Uzziah at Jerusalem, his son Jotham ascended the throne.

Though briefly described here, Jotham was one of the righteous kings of Judah.

II Chronicles 27:6 notes that “Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God.” Notwithstanding, he, like his father, failed to remove the high places from Judah. He also is remembered for notable renovations and improvements to the Temple and its main gate.

*2Ki 15:36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

*2Ki 15:37 In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.*

*2Ki 15:38 And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.*

More details are recorded concerning the reign of Jotham in II Chronicles 27. Though Jotham was a relatively righteous king, the nation itself was becoming increasingly corrupt.

*2Ch 27:2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the LORD. And the people did yet corruptly.*

The years of compromise were beginning to catch up with them. God Himself sent Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, against the southern kingdom. It is in this context that the notable prophecy of Isaiah 7:1-17 takes place. The ministry of Isaiah was now also underway in Judah.

*Isa 1:1 The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.*

With the death of Jotham, his son, Ahaz ascended the throne of Judah.

Conclusion: God may for a season suffer wickedness that it may of itself carry away the wealth and honor which might have been retained if God had been recognized. One wicked man is made the scourge of another and every wicked man sooner or later ruins himself.

Ahazariah suffered because he persisted in the sacrilegious endeavor to be both Priest and King. This is the exclusive prerogative of Christ.

*Zec 6:13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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