

## **II CHRONICLES**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Chronicles chapter 24 as we continue out study through the Word of God. If you remember from our previous studies we have seen that the Southern Kingdom was in a very dark period of time in regards to their spiritual condition. Now, as we move into II Chronicles chapter 24 tonight there is a light that shines forth in the kingdom. We are moving away from this dark period for the Southern Kingdom of Judah and towards a short period of spiritual reform.

Let me give you just a little recap of what we have seen. We saw that Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram was a wicked king, and because of that God brought judgment upon him in the form of some kind of deadly intestinal disease, which took his life after 8 years of his reign.

Then, in his death his son, Ahaziah became king, and he too was evil. And he listened to the council of wicked men. He was also judged for his wickedness and only after 1 year on the throne, he was assassinated by Jehu, a military leader from the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

With the death of Ahaziah we saw that Athaliah, his mother, instead of mourning over the death of her son, kills all the royal heirs to the throne, and now, for the next 6 years she is the king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. But in destroying all her grandsons, she missed one. Joash was only a year old at this time and he was hidden away by Jehoshabeath, sister of Ahaziah. And both Jehoshabeath and her husband, Jehoiada, hid Joash away in the Temple apartments for 6 years, and now it was time to make this child king.

Now, as they crowned this 7 year old boy as the next king in Judah, word gets back to Athaliah on what is happening, and she cries out, “**Treason! Treason!**” Not that she saw what she was doing as treason, but what they were doing with Joash was treason to her. But in the end she is put to death for her actions. And Joash is now king, being trained by the high priest, Jehoiada, who was the real power behind the throne at this time. And thus, the false worship was destroyed, and the true worship of God was brought back to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Light was shining forth, the light of God through this young man named Joash. With that as our background, let’s begin reading in II Chronicles chapter 24, starting in verse 1 and lets see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

## **II CHRONICLES 24**

### **VERSES 1-3**

1. Jehoiada, who was the high priest, was truly the power behind the throne. He brought a godly influence back into the land and was influencing young Joash in the things he should do. He was a good role model for this child king. And the people of Judah were blessed by the actions of this man. It is as Solomon said in Proverbs 29:2, “**When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.**” Make no mistake about it, leaders of nations, leaders at work, leaders in the home and-so-on, influence those around them either for good or evil. And make no mistake about it, we are all leaders in one capacity or another and thus, may we influence people in a positive way and bless them because of our actions!

2. Notice that it says, **“Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.”** What that tells me is that after the death of Jehoiada we see that the positive influence in Joash’s life was gone and he did not develop that deep relationship with the Lord and thus, he did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord. And we will see that as we go through this chapter tonight.

3. We are also told that the high priest, Jehoiada gave to Joash two wives and in saying that we need to understand that God is not endorsing polygamy. All God is saying is that this is what transpired, it was not right, God was not endorsing it and even though it was far less than what the kings of his day had as wives, it was still wrong!

#### VERSES 4-7

1. You have to love the heart of Joash here. He sees that the House of God, the Temple is a mess and he wants to repair it. You see, during her 6 years on the throne, Athaliah built a temple for Baal and she obtained many of the materials for her project by dismantling parts of the Temple of God. Now Joash wants to rebuild and repair the Temple of God and he sets the Levites in charge of this project. But they don’t do it quickly, they are dragging their feet, moving at a snails pace. They had no heart to restore the worship of God.

Payne gives us this perspective on why they dragged their feet. He wrote, “‘But the Levites did not act at once,’ both because of natural inertia (still true even of Christian workers), and because of the priestly demands that seem to have exhausted the normal revenues on current operations and their own support.”

Because nothing is being done to repair the House of God, Joash lets Jehoiada have it. He can't understand why the work has not been started. Athaliah and her sons plundered the House of God, and now it is time to restore and rebuild what she destroyed.

2. Many leaders in the church today are doing the same thing. They have no concern for the house of God; to them it is a job and not a calling. And if your heart is not in it, then don't get involved. Don't do it for the money, recognition or whatever. If you can't do it out of love, knowing that God has called you into the ministry, then you don't belong in that ministry. Today we see shepherds or pastors that are nothing more than hirelings, more concerned with self and what they will make and less concerned for the sheep that God has entrusted to them. They don't have a heart for God or the things of God as we have seen here with these Levites, and thus, we will see Joash take charge and get things moving.

VERSE 8

1. So Joash takes this matter into his own hands since the Levites were dragging their feet and he has a box placed outside the Temple so that the people could give to God for this restoration project. We are told of this in II Kings 12:9, “**Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of the Lord; and the priests who kept the door put there all the money brought into the house of the Lord.**” So Joash puts Jehoiada in charge and regarding the location of this chest, Dilday wrote, “Then he placed a collection chest in a strategic location on the right side of the altar, giving the repair project a high priority and a corresponding high visibility.” Joash had his priority right; the Lord was first and foremost in his life, at least at this time!

VERSE 9

1. Now we are told that this money that they collected was what Moses collected during their time in the wilderness. What collection did Moses impose on the children of Israel in the wilderness? First of all, in II Kings 12:4-5 we are told exactly what the children of Israel were giving for this repair of the Temple. We are told, “**And Jehoash said to the priests, ‘All the money of the dedicated gifts that are brought into the house of the Lord - each man’s census money, each man’s assessment money - and all the money that a man purposes in his heart to bring into the house of the Lord, let the priests take it themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the damages of the temple, wherever any dilapidation is found.’**”

Thus, let's look at what Moses set forth in regards to these taxes. First of all in Exodus 30:14-15 we see that a half-shekel was to be given by every male who was 20 years old and up every year. This money was then used for the upkeep of the tabernacle, and now it was to be used in the upkeep of the Temple. This was the census money.

Also, there was the money that was received from personal vows, anywhere from three to fifty shekels. (Leviticus 27:1-8 and Numbers 18:15-16). This was the assessment money or substitutionary redemption payments.

And then there was the money that was brought voluntarily to the Temple, the people could freely give to the work of God above what was required of them. How did this work? Let's read on and see.

#### VERSE 10

1. Now I think I can safely say that most if not all of us dread those phone calls in which people are begging you for money for some cause, and many times we just give in so we can get off the phone. But here we see that there is no pressure to give, no guilt trips on the people that if they don't give the work of God will stop. What we see here is all the people wanting to give to the Lord. They rejoiced in it. No one made them feel guilty; no one said the work of God was going to stop. They gave out of a joyful heart. And to get things into proper perspective, God owns everything anyway. All He is asking us to do is freely give back to Him that which He has given to us for the work of the kingdom. If your heart gives just to get in return, you know, your hundred-fold or whatever, keep your money, God doesn't need it. Give because you want to give, and the reality is, we are blessed when we give, not always physically or monetarily, but definitely spiritually.

In fact, that is what Paul says we, as New Testament believers are to do, give out of a joyful, a hilarious heart because it is good to give back to the Lord that which He has given to us in the first place. Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 9:6-7, **“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”** The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, **“[Remember] this: he who sows sparingly and grudgingly will also reap sparingly and grudgingly, and he who sows generously [that blessings may come to someone] will also reap generously and with blessings. Let each one [give] as he has made up his own mind and purposed in his heart, not reluctantly or sorrowfully or under compulsion, for God loves (He takes pleasure in, prizes above other things, and is unwilling to abandon or to do without) a cheerful (joyous, "prompt to do it") giver [whose heart is in his giving]. [Prov 22:9.]”**

You see, we are not to give **“grudgingly”** or reluctantly. God does not want us to give complaining as we do. We are not to give **“of necessity”** or **“compulsion.”** Again Paul is saying that we are not to allow ourselves to be manipulated to give. If I were to tell the elders, Steve and Conrad, to go to all your homes to find out how much you were going to give next year to the church, you may not want to look like a cheapskate so you put down more than you can afford. Or if you say too little, they may shake you down to give more, Steve is a big guy! Kind of a tithing mobster mentality! Thus, each week as you write the check for the offering, you grumble, and mumble and complain because you were forced into giving. Don’t worry we don’t do that here!

You see, Paul tells us “**God loves a cheerful giver.**” The Greek word that Paul uses for “**cheerful**” is HILAROS, and it is used only here in the New Testament and it is where we get our English word “hilarious” from. How much do you give? As much as you want! You see, God wants your giving to be with joy; cheerful, hilarious as you rejoice in what God is going to do as you give to Him! It is as Morgan tells us, “It must be hilarious giving, giving out of the heart, because you love to give, not because you are bound to give.” If you want to follow the Old Testament tithe, it was about 23%, not just 10%. You can give 10%, 20%, 30%, even 50% if you want, it is not the amount you give, but it is that you give as you purpose in your heart and cheerfully give but also remember, what you sow is what you will reap, that is the principle!

And folks, we need to remember that our giving goes far beyond money. It speaks of our time, our talents, and our gifts. And here with the people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, they gave joyfully to the Lord and so should we!

#### VERSES 11-14

1. When God works on the hearts of the people, there is such an abundance of giving, not only of money, but of time, investment in the lives of others, and-so-on. We see here that the people gave so much to the work of God that this box had to be emptied daily. And notice that the work of God was done not by one or two people, but as all the people came to gather. What a great lesson for us. That we work together with our brothers and sisters in the Lord for the work of the Lord, for the building up of His kingdom!



2. Notice what took place here. First we see that the worship was restored and then service unto the Lord began. We can't do anything apart from Him and yet many times we try. Here's the thing, if your heart is not filled with the worship of God, then your service is empty. We will see that come to life when we look at the next king, Amaziah, in chapter 25. He was doing the work but his heart was far from the Lord. It was empty, there was the motion without the emotion and God will not honor that.

3. Once again the Holy Spirit is showing us that it was Jehoiada who influenced Joash in his service to God. He kept him moving in the right direction, on the right track. But as we will see shortly, that is all going to change.

#### VERSES 15-16

1. Now we come to the end of the life of this priest named Jehoiada. And please understand that he did not die because of some illness, but because he was full of days. He completed the work he was called to do and God was gracious in allowing him to live for 130 years, for he was a positive influence in the life of Joash and because of that the nation was blessed by God. In fact, God was very merciful towards King Joash and the Southern Kingdom of Judah and as we will see, once this man is gone, things turned downward for Joash and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

2. And I want you to notice how the people respected him, what they thought of him.

Look at the way he was buried and you will see a sharp contrast to that of Jehoram. When Jehoram died no one cared and they had such a lack of respect for this king, that they did not even bury him in the tombs of the kings, there was no great burning of incense for him. Because of his evil influence, the people were glad he was dead. But Jehoiada, the high priest and not a king, was buried with the kings because the people loved him for bringing spiritual reform to the nation, by putting God back on the throne. It was a sad day when this man died. Of this Spurgeon wrote, "See the influence of one man. One man can sway a state. One man can check sin. One man can be the head of a host who shall serve God, and honor his name." May we have that kind of influence upon people's lives because of our love for the Lord!

#### VERSES 17-19

1. This just tells me that Joash was a weak man and was easily influenced by those around him and that is not always a good thing. Look at how quickly Joash changed after the death of Jehoiada. He loved the honor of men and was molded by their influence. In a sense Joash was like a spiritual chameleon, changing his behavior to fit those that were around him. This just tells me that Joash never really had a heart for the Lord, he was just influenced by those around him as I have said, and in the end his true colors came out, and as we will see, they are not pretty.

2. Peter picks up on this idea of people looking good outwardly, but in the end their true heart is revealed. He said in II Peter 2:22, **“But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’”** You see, you can wash a pig up all you want, but in the end it will return to the mud for it is a pig and pigs love mud. The same is true of the lost, you can clean them up outwardly, but in the end they will return to their evil ways for they are sinners. Only Jesus can give you a new heart and change you into a new creation. Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 5:17, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”** For Joash, it was not a true relationship with God, it was only a show for those that were around him, and in the end he returned to his evil ways. He was influenced by those around him but never developed a true relationship with the Lord it seems.

3. Let me share with you a few remarks by some great teachers regarding what is going on here. First of all we are told by Trapp, “In most fawning and flattering manner did these court parasites present themselves before him . . . persuading him that during the days of Jehoiada he had been a king without a kingdom, a lord without a dominion, a subject to his subjects.” What a lesson for us to learn, not to be lead away by others but to imitate Christ, follow Him and those who are following after Him! Not to be influenced by those who have a form of righteousness by deny its power!

Spurgeon said, “All that Joash had done was to give his heart to Jehoiada, not to Jehovah. It is very easy to be outwardly religious by giving your heart to your mother, or your father, or your aunt, or your uncle, or some good person who helps you to do what is right. You are doing all this out of love to them, which is at best but a very secondary motive. God says, ‘My son, give me thine heart.’” Again, it is not someone else’s faith that you live off of, but your own faith!

And notice how Poole sees the seduction of these men upon Joash and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. He wrote, “That they might not be confined to unnecessary and troublesome journeys in coming to Jerusalem to worship, but might have the liberty which their forefathers enjoyed of worshipping God in the high places; which liberty, when once they had obtained, they knew they could then worship idols without observation or disturbance, which was the think at which they aimed.” Lessons for us to learn, to be wise in our walk with the Lord knowing that the days are evil!

4. Now here is the great thing about our God. God’s desire is not to bring judgment and destroy Joash and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, but to see their king and the nation turn from their evil ways and live. So he sends prophets to warn him, but he refuses to heed their warnings. Joash refused to listen to these prophets and as the leader did, so do the people, they refused to listen to what God was saying to them, warning them through these prophets.

VERSES 20-22

1. And now God sends Joash another prophet, the son of Jehoiada. And think about this for a minute. Zechariah must have been like a brother to Joash, they grew up together. And now this brother is coming to warn Joash of his ways, to call him back to the Lord as he tells him, **“Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you.”** It is a wake up call to Joash and he can head the warning and turn back to the Lord or he can ignore the warning and face the judgment of God!

2. Instead of listening to what Zechariah had to say Joash orders Zechariah to be put to death and this will be carried out at the very place that Jehoiada anointed Joash to be king in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. How quickly he forgot the love that was shown him by Jehoiada, as he executes the son of Jehoiada for speaking the truths of God. And as he died, Zechariah called for God to repay the wickedness of Joash and as we will see in a minute, He did. Clarke tells us, “And so he did; for, at the end of that year, the Syrians came against Judah, destroyed all the princes of the people, sent their spoils to Damascus; and Joash, the murderer of the prophet, the son of his benefactor, was himself murdered by his own servants. Here was a most signal display of the divine retribution.” Joash was warned and he refused to listen but tried to silence this prophet of God and he may have succeeded, but he could not stop the judgment of God from coming upon him for his wickedness because he refused to repent and return to the Lord!

3. Folk's, this is a good lesson for us to learn. When you reach out to someone, try to help them, correct them, and-so-on; you would expect them to love you in return. That does not always happen. And many times they do as Joash did, they kill you. No, not physically, but with an assassination upon your character. And our immediate response is to strike back, as David said in Psalm 58:6, **“Break their teeth in their mouth, O God! Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD!”**

But that is not how we are to respond. We are to love them, not because they deserve it, but for Jesus. If you do everything for Him, no matter what happens, you won't lose anything. Put things in proper perspective, God loved us when we didn't love Him, when we did not deserve it, and so we should reach out to others with that same kind of love, no matter how they treat us, ***DO IT FOR JESUS!*** But if you can't reach out with that kind of love, what ends up happening is you only become bitter, angry, frustrated and full of hatred.

4. It is also interesting to note that as we move to the New Testament, the Jews began to almost worship their fathers. And yet it was their fathers that turned from God, persecuted and killed the prophets. And Jesus rebuked them for placing the worship of man over God. In Luke 11:47-52 we read, **“Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore the wisdom of God also said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,’ that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”**

An example today is the Roman Catholic Church who put to death millions of Christians for turning to the true God instead of a man-made organization. These people loved the Word of God and were willing to die for the Word of God. It was not something like we have today where so many people have the Bible in their homes, on their phones and laptops. And yet, with all the murder that was done against Christians by the Roman Catholic Church, these so-called church fathers are looked upon and worshiped. Jesus did not accept it then and He still doesn't, we are to worship Him alone!

VERSES 23-24

1. God brings judgment by the hands of the Syrians, who only had a small company of men compared to Judah, and yet they were victorious. And look at these wicked leaders who lead Joash away from the Lord, they were now destroyed and their spoil was plundered. And this was the result of turning away from the Lord and not listening to the prophets of God who warned them to get right with God. You see, God promised to bless His people if they followed after Him and their success would far outweigh their numbers – Leviticus 26:8. But, if they turned from the Lord then they would suffer a disproportionate defeat as we see here with the Syrians – Leviticus 26:17, 37.

VERSES 25-27

1. Joash is wounded in this battle and he is then assassinated by his own servants because he killed the son of Jehoiada. And just like the other evil kings, no fan fare was given in his death; he was not even buried with the other kings. In his death, Amaziah, his son is now king over the Southern Kingdom of Judah.



2. Let me close this chapter out with these remarks from Morgan, who wrote, “The study of the story of Joash offers a striking illustration of how a weak man is easily influenced. It emphasizes the need of strong individual character, which can only be created by direct dealing with God.” And he said, “However valuable the influence of a good man may be, it remains true that if a man have nothing more to lean on than that, if it should fail, collapse is almost inevitable. All foundations fail, save one.” Let us be strong in the Lord and depend upon Him instead of others, because, in the end, you will only have yourself to blame for what you have done!

## **II CHRONICLES 25**

### **VERSES 1-2**

1. This verse sheds some light on a works theology. You can do good things, help all kinds of people, and yet if your heart is not right before God, it is meaningless. You can even serve God but if your heart is far from Him, if you don't have a relationship with Him, then all the work you do is meaningless. Amaziah did good things but his heart was far from the Lord. Yes it was far better for Amaziah to do good rather than evil, the people benefited from that. But he was still lost; his heart was far from the Lord. And that my friend is a sobering thought! God is interested in our hearts and out of that relationship our service will flow. May we have an undivided heart!

VERSES 3-4

1. The pagan kings, if they uncovered an assassination plot against them, they would not only put to death the person responsible for this plot, but also their families and sometimes even their friends. They showed no mercy. Amaziah executed only those who murdered his father, just as God had said in Deuteronomy 24:16. And understand, that by leaving family members still living, they could conspire against the king and kill him, but Amaziah did what was right, giving it to the Lord!

VERSES 5-8

1. We will see that Judah is coming against the Edomites and they only have 300,000 men. So Amaziah hires another 100,000 mercenaries from Israel to assist him in this battle. But a prophet of God warns him not to receive help from Israel for God is not with them. If he uses Israel to help him, they will be defeated. But if they don't rely on Israel for help, even though they will not have as many soldiers, God will give them the victory.

2. There are many well intentioned Christians and Christian organizations that are trying to fight against the ungodliness of this nation. Organizations like pro-life and the Christian Coalition are out their fighting and in their zeal for help, they allow all kinds of people to join forces with them from Mormons to Catholics and anyone else that will help them fight against the forces of evil. We see John Hagee and his organization, Christians United for Israel that has sided with Glenn Beck for their stance with Israel even though Glenn Beck is a Mormon! Like it or not, that is wrong. You never join forces with the world to do battle, God is telling us not to be unequally yoked!

VERSE 9

1. Did you notice the concern of Amaziah here? It is the money he is going to lose if he lets these men go. Amaziah wants God's help but he also wants the money. And God is telling Amaziah not to worry about the money, God is not broke. Meyer wrote this regarding this situation that Amaziah was in, "But you say that you have already entered into so close an alliance that you cannot draw back. You have invested your capital, you have gone to great expenditure. Yet it will be better to forfeit these than Him." May we not lose sight of this truth! Don't join forces with the enemy and don't worry about what resources you do have, God will supply all your needs, He can do that!

VERSES 10-13

1. Now why in the world were these mercenaries from Israel so angry? Yes they were dismissed from the battle but they should have rejoiced, they still got paid for doing nothing. Some feel that the money was not enough to go around, which could have been true. But I see more to it than that. You see, if you were victorious in battle you would take home with you much spoil from the victory as you plundered the troops and the cities. Thus, they had lost lots of money by being dismissed and they were not happy about it, and they will try to get even with Amaziah and I think they do.

You see, on their way home to Israel, these mercenaries attack some of the cities and villages in Judah, getting back some of the spoil that they would have gained if they were able to fight against the Edomites. And in obtaining all this spoil, they killed 3,000 people. What we learn here is that there are consequences to the evil or ungodly alliances that we make and sometimes they are even deadly. Learn the lesson.

2. Now we see that even without these mercenaries from Israel God gives Amaziah and the children of Judah a great victory over the Edomites. They kill 10,000 around the area of the Valley of Salt, which is down by the Dead Sea, and another 10,000 are taken captive and then thrown off some of the many high hills in that area, to their death. In this victory you would think that Amaziah's faith has got to grow. You would think that his relationship with God has to be strengthened by this victory. Not so as we shall see.

#### VERSES 14-16

1. As you read this of Amaziah you wonder how he could have turned from the Lord after this great victory over the Edomites. It truly is amazing and yet how many people do the very thing today. For Judah, they were outnumbered and yet God has just given him this great victory over the Edomites, with less troops!

Thus, on the heels of this victory you would think Amaziah would gather the people together to worship the Lord but, instead of doing that he gathers the gods of the people he has just defeated, and brings them home with him. In doing this, he is now worshipping these gods. And you think, "Why in the world would he do something as stupid as that?"

It is really quite simple for we see it done all the time today. When your back is up against the wall and you have no other place to turn, you turn to the true and living God for help. But after the trouble is over you turn back to the gods of this world, the gods of the flesh. They appeal to you, even though you know they can't help you just as they could not help the Edomites, but they can satisfy your flesh. Amaziah does just that, he went to the gods of this world, the gods of the Edomites, for he no longer needed the true and living God. Well, he may have thought that way, but the reality is, he needed God more than ever in his life, and so do we!

2. Once again we see that our God is so gracious, even when Amaziah turned his back on the Lord, He sends him a prophet to warn him of his destructive ways. And I love what this prophet has to say. He tells him, and I am paraphrasing, "Why in the world did you turn to the god's of the Edomites - they lost the battle!" How foolish we are at times. But as Amaziah, we too refuse to listen to what God has to say and we become angry at His representatives and come against them. The more you harden yourself to God, the farther you will be moving from Him till you finally reach a point of no return. Amaziah had reached that point.

VERSE 17

1. As you read this you may wonder why he wanted to attack the Northern Kingdom of Israel, especially after he sought their help in battle. The reason is simple. He found out that those mercenaries that he let go, the ones he did not use in battle, attacked his people, killing some of them and taking the spoil from these battles. And thus, on the heels of this great victory against the Edomites, this battle against Israel should not be a problem, or so he thought!

VERSES 18-19

1. Here we see Joash, the king in the Northern Kingdom of Israel tell him, “Look, you may have had victory against the Edomites, but you are still nothing in my eyes son. You are not even in the same league as me! Go home boy, you bother me!” That was my paraphrase of course. And the King James Version makes it very clear when it says, “Why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt.” To put this in our own vernacular, “Don’t go looking for trouble because you will find it!” Or, “If you play with fire you will get burned!”

VERSES 20-22

1. Here we see that Judah was defeated because of its sin and the reality is, we too are defeated when we play with sin, when we meddle in places we should stay away from. And like Amaziah, we are warned, may we listen and obey what the Lord is saying and not follow in the foolish footsteps of Amaziah who refused to listen to God!

VERSES 23-24

1. Not only do we find ourselves defeated when we meddle where we don't belong, but sin also has a way of destroying our defenses, just as Israel destroyed 600 feet of the wall of Jerusalem. And what I mean by that is the more you sin, the harder it becomes to resist it the next time. And the more you give in to sin, the easier it becomes until one day you have become a slave to sin. You can't meddle just a little and not be affected by it!

2. Not only was the house of God plundered, but so too was the king's house, and many were taken away captive as slaves. Sin too robs us of the preciousness of worship; your worship will decrease the more you sin. Also, it not only affects your worship of God, but it destroys and robs you of your character. Sin destroys your witness. And lastly, you become a slave to sin. All this came about because Amaziah did not heed the warnings of God.

VERSES 25-28

1. We see here that the people are so upset by what Amaziah has done that he flees away to Lachish, and while there, they catch him and murder him. Again, this all happened as a result of Amaziah not serving God with a whole heart and then not heeding the warnings that God was sending by the prophets. Of this incident, Clarke wrote, “He no doubt became very unpopular after having lost the battle with the Israelites; the consequence of which was the dismantling of Jerusalem, and the seizure of the royal treasures, with several other evils. It is likely that the last *fifteen* years of his reign were greatly embittered: so that, finding the royal city to be no place of *safety*, he endeavoured to secure himself at Lachish; but all in vain, for thither his murderers pursued him; and he who forsook the Lord was forsaken by every friend, perished in his gainsaying, and came to an untimely end.”

2. Let me close this evening with this because this is a good lesson for all of us to learn and apply to our lives. It is this simple, “This book, the Bible, will keep you from sin. And sin will keep you from this book!” May we read it, learn from it and then apply it to our lives, the Word of God!