

## **Strength, Success, and the Snare of Pride**

In chapter 26, we're introduced to Uzziah, who became king of Judah at just sixteen years old. He reigned for fifty-two years—one of the longest reigns in Judah's history. Early on, Uzziah showed great promise.

*"He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper."*—2 Chronicles 26:4–5 NKJV

## **As Long As He Sought the Lord**

That phrase is key: *"As long as he sought the Lord..."* That was the secret to Uzziah's success. He put God first. He surrounded himself with godly counsel. He leaned into the Lord's direction—and because of that, God made him prosper.

Application: The principle still stands today. Jesus said, *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you"* (Matthew 6:33 NKJV). When we put God first in our lives—before career, money, success, or reputation—He guides our steps and provides what we need. But the moment we stop seeking Him, our foundation begins to crack.

Uzziah experienced great success. He won battles against the Philistines and Arabians. He built defenses, fortified cities, dug wells, cultivated vineyards, and invented powerful weapons with skilled engineers.

*"His fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong."*  
—2 Chronicles 26:15 NKJV

He wasn't just a good king—he was a strategic builder, a military innovator, and a wise administrator. People admired him. They felt secure under his leadership. His name was respected even as far as Egypt. Everything seemed to be going right.

## **But Then Came the Fall**

*"But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense."*  
—2 Chronicles 26:16 NKJV

Here's the turning point. Uzziah's success led to pride. He overstepped boundaries and tried to take on a priestly role that God had not given him. Burning incense was the priests' duty—not the king's. When the priests confronted him, he got angry. And right there, in the presence of the Lord, leprosy broke out on his forehead. He was rushed out of the temple, and he lived as a leper until the day he died—isolated and cut off.

## **Application: Success is a Test Too**

We often think failure is the greatest test of our character, but success may be even more dangerous. When things are going well—our plans are working, our name is being praised, our

influence is growing—it's easy to start believing our own press. It's easy to lose the humility that once kept us close to God.

Uzziah's story is a warning: *don't let success take your eyes off the One who gave it to you*. The moment Uzziah thought he could cross spiritual boundaries and act outside of God's design, his fall began.

Pride will always put us at odds with God. James 4:6 reminds us, *"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*

### When the Hero Falls

Uzziah was a national hero. People had placed their hope and confidence in him. That's why Isaiah's vision in Isaiah 6 is so significant:

*"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple."* —Isaiah 6:1 NKJV

It's as if God was saying to Isaiah (and to the nation), *"Yes, Uzziah is gone—but I'm still on the throne."*

**Application:** People will fail you. Leaders come and go. Even good men can lose their way. But God is still sovereign. He doesn't step off the throne when our earthly heroes stumble. When your "Uzziah" dies—whether it's a leader, a dream, or a season of life—lift your eyes. God's still reigning. He's not shaken. He's not absent.

### Devotional Takeaways:

1. Seek the Lord continually – Uzziah prospered *as long as* he sought the Lord. Our walk with God isn't just about how we start, but how we finish.
2. Stay humble in success – Success isn't an invitation to pride. It's a call to even greater dependence on God. The higher you go, the more dangerous the fall.
3. Don't cross the lines God has drawn – Uzziah stepped into a role God hadn't given him. Stay in the lane God's assigned to you, and honor the boundaries He's set.
4. Keep your eyes on God, not people – Uzziah was admired, but even good leaders can falter. Don't let any person become so big in your life that they block your view of God.
5. God is still on the throne – When a leader falls or a season ends, remember: *the throne of heaven is never empty*. Look up. God is still ruling. His glory still fills the temple.