

2 Chronicles 25

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[0 : 00] Amen. 2 Chronicles 25. It's one of those repetitive passages, but it adds a little bit more details to the passage in the reign of Amaziah.

! You see the parallel passage to this. I believe it's 2 Kings chapter 14. But again, we have a little bit more information here. As a matter of fact, I believe when we preached through the book of 2 Kings, we were dealing with the 14th chapter.

We use this chapter as kind of our background information to kind of help us to understand and decipher what is going on. Because when we read it in 2 Kings, we kind of, we scratch our heads and say, why is he doing that?

And we'll notice it here with some clarity. The Word of God says, Amaziah was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoadan of Jerusalem.

He did right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a whole heart. Now it came about, as soon as the kingdom was firmly in his grasp, that he killed his servants who had slain his father, the king.

[1 : 05] However, he did not put their children to death, but did, as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, which the Lord commanded, saying, Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, nor sons be put to death for fathers.

But each shall be put to death for his own sin. Moreover, Amaziah assembled Judah and appointed them according to their father's households under commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds throughout Judah and Benjamin.

And he took a census of those from 20 years old and upward and found them to be 300,000 choice men able to go to war and handle spear and shield. He hired also 100,000 valiant warriors out of Israel for 100 talents of silver.

But a man of God came to him, saying, O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the Lord is not with Israel, nor with any of the sons of Ephraim. But if you do go, do it.

Be strong for the battle, yet God will bring you down before the enemy, for God has power to help and to bring down. Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the 100 talents which I have given to the troops of Israel?

[2 : 12] And the man of God answered, The Lord has much more to give you than this. Then Amaziah dismissed them, the troops which came to him from Ephraim, to go home. So their anger burned against Judah, and they returned home in fierce anger.

Now Amaziah strengthened himself and led his people forth and went to the valley of salt and struck down 10,000 of the sons of Seir. The sons of Judah also captured 10,000 alive and brought them to the top of the cliff and threw them down from the top of the cliff so that they were all dashed to pieces.

But the troops whom Amaziah sent back from going with him to battle raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Bethlehem, and struck down 3,000 of them and plundered a much spoil.

Now after Amaziah came from slaughtering the Edomites, he brought the gods of the sons of Seir, set them up as his gods, bowed down before them, and burned incense to them.

Then the anger of the Lord burned against Amaziah, and he sent him a prophet who said to him, Why have you sought the gods of the people who have not delivered their own people from your hand?

[3 : 16] As he was talking with him, the king said to him, Have we appointed you a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be struck down? Then the prophet stopped and said, I know that God has planned to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel.

Then Amaziah, king of Judah, took counsel and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, the king of Israel, saying, Come, let us face each other. Joash, the king of Israel, sent to Amaziah, king of Judah, saying, The thorn bush, which was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar, which was in Lebanon, saying, Give your daughter to my son in marriage.

But there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon and trampled the thorn bush. You said, Behold, you have defeated Edom, and your heart has become proud and boasting. Now stay at home, for why should you provoke trouble, so that you, even you, would fall in Judah with you? But Amaziah would not listen, for it was from God that he might deliver them into the hand of Joash, because they had sought the gods of Edom. So Joash, king of Israel, went up, and he and Amaziah, king of Judah, faced each other at Beth Shemesh, which belonged to Judah.

Judah was defeated by Israel, and they fled each to his tent. Then Joash, king of Israel, captured Amaziah, king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth Shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, 400 cubits.

[4 : 42] He took all the gold and silver and all the utensils, which were found in the house of God with Obed-Edom, and the treasurers of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria. And Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived 15 years after the death of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel.

Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, from first to last, behold, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. From the time that Amaziah turned away from following the Lord, they conspired 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 buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah. Did you see this evening the testimony of partial devotion? A testimony of partial devotion. For the key to the passage is found that he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with all his heart. It is a testimony of partial devotion.

Now, admittedly, he does better than some of the kings who went before him. He is much like his father who went before him, who began good in his reign.

[5 : 56] But once the high priest, Jehoiadaia, passes away, then his father begins to seek the counsel and be influenced upon those around him and turns from the Lord and reintroduces idolatrous worship.

It is then that his servants conspire against him and kill him. And we would think that Amaziah, after seeing all of this, would at least take notice and respond. And he does respond somewhat. But as the Bible tells us, it is not with his whole heart.

It is a partial devotion. And what a testimony it is. For we see a number of things here. The first thing that we notice of the partial devotion is that the word is understood.

That is, he understands the word of God and at least has some comprehension of it, which brings the tragedy at the end even more so. Because it tells us that Amaziah was 25 years old when he became king and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem.

He was alive, at least during the good years of his father's reign. And therefore had the influence of the high priest that had lived for 130 years with so much voice of wisdom.

[7 : 00] And he would have at least heard a little bit of it. But it says that he did what was right in the sight of the Lord. So he had a good beginning. But as we said with his father, it does not matter how we begin. But rather, it matters how we end.

And we understand that this ending comes because even that which he understood did not affect his whole heart. It says not with his whole heart. Now we know that he at least partially understands the word of God because of this very first action.

When he strengthens himself in his kingdom and he establishes his throne. He brings judgment upon those two servants which conspired against his father. Now if you remember from the chapter prior to this, those two servants are not Israeli people.

They are people brought in from other lands. An Ammonite and Anidamite. And there are those who were serving the king. But they were also those used of the Lord God to bring judgment upon the king because of his disobedience and revolt.

But yet now here we have Amaziah being the instrument of judgment upon these two individuals.

Now we say that he understands the word because contrary to what would have been the norm for the kings of his age, he limits his vengeance.

[8 : 14] That is, he does not annihilate their entire families. It tells us that he slew the two men, but he did not kill their children. He is gracious in his judgment. Now it doesn't seem very gracious, but he judges those men who did that.

Though God used them as an instrument of judgment, it does not remove their guilt for the fact that they conspired and murdered an individual who was asleep on his bed.

But Amaziah shows wisdom and discernment because he does not go after the house. And it tells us the reason he didn't do it is because he did as the word of God declared through Moses, the servant of God, that each man should die for his own sin.

That the father should not die for the sins of the sons, nor shall the sons die for the sins of the father. But each man would die for his own sins. Now that's good news and bad news.

It's good news in that God looks at us individually. And we are not held accountable for the sins of others. And it's bad in the fact of reality that we are accountable for our own sins and our own actions.

[9 : 18] And what we see here is that Amaziah understands this principle. And he applies this principle in his judgment, his very first act of king. And what that should declare to us was that at least he had some comprehension of the word of God.

There was an understanding and a grasp because the natural vengeance of man would be to annihilate completely the households of these two individuals. And that would have been the normative action of the kings of that time.

It would have been to annihilate their families. But yet with this understanding of God's word, he limits that. Now I think the passage tells us this so that we can see just how far he falls.

Though he at least understands the word. And he understands it to the point that even he begins to number and assemble the people of Judah according to households and sizes of families.

And he appoints judges and rulers over them. He becomes commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. This should be repetitive in our mind because this is something that we see even after the nation of Israel comes out of the captivity of Egypt.

[10 : 27] It is the counsel that Moses' father-in-law Jethro gave him. I believe it's in Deuteronomy 18 where so many people were standing before him. And he didn't know. He was wearied all day long. And Jethro says, don't do that.

You need to have people ruling over them by hundreds and thousands. And it is this common order.

So, again, these things remind us that Amaziah knew at least portions of the word of God.

He knew the writings of Moses. What we would declare as the law. Now, that shouldn't be a surprise because the kings of Israel and in particular the kings of Judah were commanded to read the law.

To commit to memory the book of Deuteronomy. To rewrite the law. We don't have any record of that. But that was the command that God gives them.

That they should have an understanding. And they should rule according to the law. So, don't let the reality that the word of God is at least partially understood escape your notice.

[11 : 28] Because the sad truth is that even though he understands the word, the devotion is still partial. Second, we notice that not only does he understand the word, we know that he also witnessed the power.

So, it is one thing to see the word of God declared. It is a whole other thing to see the power of God displayed. He witnessed the power of God.

It tells us in our text that when he assembled Judah, the southern kingdom. And he put the army together that there are 300,000 able-bodied men that could wield the shield and the spear.

Now, this should also remind us of just how far the power of Judah has deteriorated. Because if we only go back just a few kings, we'll see that the kings of Judah were fighting with a one-million-man army.

But now, because of the kings who had done wickedly. Now, because of the kings who had neglected the Lord God. Now, because of the kings who had forsaken worship. The army is down to 300,000 people.

[12 : 46] And since he has an army of 300,000 people and he knows there are enemies to face, he does what most kings would do. And he hires mercenaries. It says that he went and hired 100,000 other soldiers.

Now, he hired those from the northern kingdom of Israel. But then it tells us in our passage, But a man of God came to him. And this is early in his reign. But a man of God came to him and declared to him that he should not, he says, Do not rely upon them.

Why? For God is not with them. Someone has said this ought to be the test of every one of our allegiances. Is the Lord God with these people we are trusting and relying upon and leaning upon? Are we going to unite with those whom God is not living in union with? He says, Do not let the army of Israel go with you. For the Lord is not with Israel nor with any of the sons of Ephraim.

And so he reminds them of this danger which took place in the past. We do not ally ourselves with those who are the enemies of God. But he says, He says, If you're going to do it, Then be sure to be strong.

[14:00] Be sure to prepare yourself. Because you're going to go to battle, But you're going to lose the battle. I mean, The prophet is very clear. He says, Be strong. Do it. But you're going to lose. Why? Because God has the power to build up.

But God also has the power to put down. And if you ally yourself with someone whom God is not with, Though your numbers may be large, Your power will be small.

Now he has paid a great sum of money. If we take what is the standard measurement of money, By this time he would have paid multitude of tons of silver to these people.

It would have been an insurmountable amount of money to us in our day. And he says, What about the money? He said, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the troops of Israel?

And the man of God declares what? The Lord has much more to give you than this. So notice this. While he is doing what is right, He understands that faithfulness to God is greater than whatever he's going to lose materially or in manpower.

[15:16] Because he sends them home. He counts his losses. And he understands that being faithful to God is worth more than going with a large army.

Or making sure you get your money's worth out of what you've invested it in. The man of God says the Lord is able to give you much more. And he does. Because he goes, it says, And he strengthens himself.

And he led his people forth. And they went and they won the battle. Now what we notice from this is that when he diminished his military size. And he increased his reliance upon the Lord God.

The battle was won. And he witnessed the power of God. Don't miss that. Because he saw firsthand Exactly what the Lord God could do with those who are walking in faithful obedience.

He heeded the word of the man of God. And by his heeding of the word he witnessed the power of God. He saw God do on the battlefield what he did not think could be done.

[16:25] And they come back with plunder. But also in witnessing the power of God He also witnesses the horrible action of man. Because these soldiers he sent home Are upset.

And they're angry. And they go through the regions of Judah and plunder them. And maybe that's what leads to the third thing. Though the word is understood. And though he has witnessed the power of God.

Number three. We have a willing disobedience. Now we say it is willing because he knew the word. He knew the power of God.

And yet he made a decision. It tells us. Now after Amaziah came from slaughtering the Edomites. How did he slaughter the Edomites?

Because he trusted in the power of God rather than the numbers of man. So after this victorious battle. It says. He brought the gods.

[17:19] Lowercase g. Of the sons of Seir. And he set them up as his gods. And he bowed down before them. And burned incense to them. That is willing disobedience.

He wasn't misled. He wasn't misguided. Rather he made an intelligent choice. To disobey. He chose to worship the wrong thing.

And this was not a choice of ignorance. Because he has clearly already displayed for us. That he understood the word by his actions. He has already heeded the warning of the man of God.

And he's seen God be faithful. He's won the battle. And yet he willingly chooses to bring these false gods. Into his house. And not only bring them into his house.

But to set them up as his gods. It is astounding. At the choice he made. But it says in verse 15. Then the anger of the Lord burned against Amaziah.

[18:18] And why shouldn't it? For God has shown himself faithful. And it says. And he sent him a prophet. Who said to him. I'm astounded. Each time we read the historical writings.

Or any portion. Of the Old Testament in particular. It's just how gracious. And merciful. God is. Because.

The man of God. Has already stood before this king. Now this is a second prophet. Because he's referred to by a different title. This is a second individual.

Being sent of God. Because of his willing choice. To disobey. And to walk into idolatrous worship. We've said this before. When we understand the character of God.

And we need to get this. God is not. Constrained. To send warning. He chooses. In his mercy. In his grace.

[19:15] To declare warning. The anger of God. Burned against him. For his disobedience. Because he made the choice. And rather than respond. To his anger. We have to.

Kind of put human attributes. To a holy God. So that we can kind of. Wrap our mind around it. Rather than responding. To his anger. He sends the prophet. To bring warning. That's grace. That's mercy. That's patience. Rather than bringing vengeance. Instantly. He sends the prophet. And the prophetic word comes.

And the word is clear. And we can read the story. And say well it doesn't make sense. Because of the reality. He says why have you sought. The gods of the people. Who have not delivered. Their own people from your hand. These are the gods.

Of the very people. He's just led to the top of the cliff. And pushed them off. The Lord God. Has went with him in battle. And made him victorious. And yet what he brought back. Was the lowercase g gods.

[20:11] That were defeated. In the midst of the battle. It makes no sense. We can't. Really. Describe why he did it.

Maybe. He was so distraught. Because of what had happened. To his own people. When the powers of Israel. Went back. Maybe. He was just confused. And hoping that these. Lowercase g gods.

Would keep the people. From coming back. And fighting against him. For he still knew. That his military. Was small. Or maybe. He was just mankind. And he understood. That he was going after his own desires.

And his own lust. And his own ambitions. And he saw something. Much like Achan. That appealed to his flesh. He saw it. And he looked at it. And it was beautiful. And he took it. And he took it home. And he set it up. And he began to worship it. He made a willing choice. No one. Forced it upon him. But even in his willing choice. God is gracious.

[21:07] And God is merciful. And God says. Why are you doing this? And he begins to question. And begins to bring conviction. But rather. Look how far. This man has went. Look at the testimony. Of partial devotion.

A short time prior to this. When the man of God. Comes to him. And says. Don't do it. He responds accordingly. Now. When the prophet. Comes before him. He interrupts the prophet. Because it says.

That while the prophet. Was speaking to him. As he was talking with him. In verse 16. The king said to him. Have we appointed you. A royal counselor. Stop. He interrupted the warning.

And told him to be quiet. And he didn't want to hear a word. From God anymore. He wanted a God. That he could hold. And one that he could sit on the shelf. And one that he was in control of.

And it is then. That the prophet declares these words. I know that God has planned to destroy you. Because you have done this. And have not listened to my counsel. So what follows.

[22:04] Again. One is a result. Of the willing choice. Of Amaziah. He chose. The false gods. And he chose. To disobey God.

And he chose. To silence. The warning. Of God. He was making these. Willing choices. Which brings us. To the fourth and final thing. There is the welcomed.

Discipline. By this. Partial devotion. He welcomes. Discipline. Into his own life. You say. Well how do you mean. He welcomes that. Well because of his choices.

Because of what he was doing. And because of the counsel. He was accepting. Because it tells us. In verse 17. Then Amaziah. King of Judah. Took counsel. Now prior to this.

God has been so good. He sent the man of God. With counsel. Don't hire those. Soldiers. He sent the prophet of God. With counsel. Don't trust in those. False gods. One he responded to accordingly.

[22 : 59] The second. When he had went so far. He told him to be quiet. And he silenced him. And kicked him out. And now he seeks the counsel of man. He doesn't want the counsel of God anymore. And he sought counsel.

And he received that counsel. And he's puffed up from his victory. And he wants to pick a battle. With the big brother up north. That's the very soldiers. That he just sent home. He's probably upset. Because they plundered. But we shouldn't. And you say. Well maybe he should pursue them. Well there are consequences. For every sin choice. When he hired them.

To be the soldiers. In his own army. He was accepting the consequences. Of that outcome. Even though he sent them home. He still had paid them. He still had hired them. He should have never invited them.

But now he wants to. Settle the accounts. And he wants to go. Fight against Joash. Joash. Gives this riddle. This proverb. If you will.

[23 : 55] And says. You're puffed up. Just stay home. He warns him. This is a battle. You don't want to fight. But it tells us here. In verse 20. But Amaziah would not listen. Why wouldn't he listen?

For it was from God. That he might deliver them. Into the hand of Joash. His heart. Had been set in stone. God gave him. The desire of his heart. It was from God.

Much like when the Lord. Speaks of Pharaoh. That Pharaoh. Hardened his own heart. And then we find. In the very next passage. That God hardened Pharaoh's hearts. God was allowing Pharaoh.

To go the way he wanted to. Now he's allowing. Amaziah. To go the way he wants to. He is allowing Amaziah. To welcome this discipline. Into his own life. Rather than intervening.

He's going to allow him. To take it. To his fullness. It says. It was from God. That he might deliver them. To Joash. And deliver him. He did. Because when they went to battle.

[24 : 51] They lost the battle. And not only did they lose the battle. They were humiliated. We looked at this. When we went through 2nd Kings. Because Joash. Captures Amaziah. Takes him back to Jerusalem. Sure. Amaziah reigns another 15 years.

After Joash dies. But he reigns. Being humiliated by Joash. Because Joash. Comes in. And tears down a portion of the walls. Those walls. Which were to stand for security. And permanence. And having a position in the world.

Those walls. Who would say. The yes. We are a people. He destroyed a major portion of them. 400 cubits. It tells us. And by destroying them. He was telling.

Amaziah. Anytime I want to. I can come into your city. He took out the goods. From the temple. He took out the goods. From the king's house.

He humiliated him. But that was not the only discipline. That came upon Amaziah. Amaziah. Because it tells us. Though he reigned. Another 15 years. And again.

[25 : 49] I believe God is patient. And it was God. Preserving. The seed of David. Waiting for the successor. To be present. It tells us.

In verse 27. This is very telling. From the time. That Amaziah. Turned away. From following the Lord. They conspired against him. In Jerusalem. So discipline.

Originated. At the moment. He decided. To walk away. From the Lord. From the time. It tells us. That Amaziah.

Turned away. From following the Lord. They began. Conspiring. He welcomed. Discipline. The moment. He walked away. From the Lord God. It took a number.

Of years. For that discipline. To finally come. To fruition. But it did come. Because. Though he fled. To Lachish. It tells us. That they went to Lachish. And they killed him there. And they brought him back.

[26 : 46] The moment. An individual. Walking. In partial devotion. Determines. They no longer. Want to walk. After the Lord. They are welcoming. Into their lives.

The just discipline. That would come upon them. For Amaziah. Was not walking. In ignorance. Rather. He knew. What he should do. But rather. He made willing. Choices. To quit.

Following. After the Lord God. And from that very moment. Though God was patient. Though he was kind. And though he was long suffering. Discipline was determined.

And just like the prophet says. I know. That the Lord God. Has planned. To destroy you. And that plan. Came about. Christ. Why? Because.

This is the testimony. Of partial devotion. Partial devotion. Does not take us. To complete faithfulness. Though Amariah. Did some things right. The tragedy of it is.

[27 : 43] Is in the end. He still welcomed. The discipline. That was due him. Because he did not. Follow the Lord. With a whole heart. Scripture calls us what? To love the Lord your God.

With all of your heart. With all of your soul. With all of your mind. With all of your strength. Never once in scripture. Do we find. The praising of a. Partial devotion.

Never once. Do we say. Well at least you did some things. That are right. That little phrase. But not with his whole heart. Makes all the difference. In the world. In the life and testimony.

Of Amariah. It is only those. Who do it with a whole heart. With all of their strength. And all of their might. That end up. Walking faithfully. Until the end. Let's pray.

Oh Lord God. We thank you for this day. We thank you for your word. And we know that the standard. That is set. Is a high standard. But we know you are worthy.

[28 : 41] You are worthy. Of our. Complete and total devotion. In our humanity. We are weak. But in Christ. You give us the ability.

To walk faithfully. Before you. For your glory. Lord Jesus. We can't thank you enough. For the price. That you have paid. We can't thank you enough. For redemption. That is found.

At the foot of the cross. For the blood. That cleanses us. It makes us. As white as snow. Lord. May we thank you. With the living of our lives. With the whole heart.

Of devotion. Yes. not so focused on what we do, but focused on who you are. We praise you as a church for seeing those come forward who you're drawing, desiring to follow you in believers' baptism.

We praise you for the way you're moving and working among us. We praise you for the opportunities we have to share Christ with our vacation Bible school or their back-to-school bash.

[29 : 45] We pray that you would bless those events for the glory of the kingdom. May they be so much more than just exercises of obedience, but may they be lives of surrender where we could say, let us show you the love of Christ through our actions.

We ask in the weeks and days ahead that you help us to walk in that faithful obedience, looking to our own hearts and our own minds and saying, yes, Lord, we want to follow you. However you lead, we want to follow you as individuals and as a corporate body of believers.

Thank you, O God, for all that you're doing among us. And we ask it in Jesus' sweet and holy name. Amen. Amen. Amen.