

2 Chronicles 27

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Date: 20 July 2025

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[0 : 0 0] 2 Chronicles chapter 27. 2 Chronicles chapter 27. A fairly short chapter, really it's a brief chapter, only nine verses that we'll be looking at this evening.

! It has an equally short parallel passage in the book of 2 Kings chapter 15. It's not a standalone chapter there, it is in the midst of the 15th chapter of 2 Kings.

The account is just as brief. There may be one or two more details given to us here than are given to us there, but still not very rich in what we would say with details and technical issues, but hopefully we'll see the application that it has to us this evening.

So let's pray. Father, we thank you so much. We thank you for this day you've given us. We rejoice in your goodness and we rejoice in your faithfulness to us, and we are just excited to be able to open up the Word of God with one another.

So thank you for the opportunity. Thank you for the opportunity to be still. Thank you for the opportunity to read your Word and to see your Word, and we pray that you speak to us through it.

[1 : 1 6] We pray that the truth of Scripture would be clear, and that it would have its application in our lives for your glory and honor. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. It's been a very busy day, but we'll take some time just to see the Word of God and encourage you to continue to be in prayer for the men's event. I know I keep saying that, but also be in prayer for the back-to-school bash, two things we have coming up this next weekend, so we'll be in prayer for those.

All right, let's get into the Word. 2 Chronicles chapter 27. If you remember, let's put it in a little bit of context, Uzziah has this extended reign in Jerusalem.

It is in the year of King Uzziah's death that Isaiah is commissioned in Isaiah chapter 6. Uzziah has this extended, long reign, and it is mostly a faithful reign until Uzziah is strong and gets a little prideful and begins to usurp the authority and the place of the priest and thinks that he can enter the temple and burn his own incense in the temple without the priest.

He is chastised and disciplined of the Lord. Lord, leprosy breaks out upon his forehead. He's confined to a house of isolation because he's a leper until his death, and his son begins to assume responsibilities while Uzziah is still alive, and that will be important in just a moment.

[2 : 4 3] So his son assumes the responsibilities for the last several years, more than likely about five years of his life, while Uzziah is isolated because of his leprosy, and then he dies.

So now we're here in chapter 27. Jotham was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehurashah, the daughter of Zadok.

He did write in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Uzziah had done. However, he did not enter the temple of the Lord, but the people continued acting corruptly.

He built the upper gate of the house of the Lord, and he built extensively the wall of Ophel. Moreover, he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and he built fortresses and towers on the wooded hills.

He fought also with the king of the Ammonites and prevailed over them, so that the Ammonites gave him during that year 100 talents of silver, 10,000 cores of wheat, and 10,000 of barley.

[3 : 43] The Ammonites also paid him this amount in the second and in the third year. So Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the Lord his God. Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, even all his wars and his acts, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

He was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and Ahaz his son became king in his place.

Again, very brief chapter, but I want you to see this evening. Hopefully we'll figure it out. The shortcoming of good. The shortcoming of good. We're now really in this time where the book of Chronicles is going back and forth between the kings which do right and the kings which do evil.

Jotham is the 11th king in the lineage of David's dynasty, and counting him, there are 10 more kings, and out of those 10 kings, three of them are quantified as doing that which is good in the sight of the Lord.

So of the remaining 10, Jotham included there, only three of them are declared to be good. And so we're really at this turning point, if you will, in which we know that the nation, we know it, and even the author knows it, and the recipients of the original writing knew that they were on their way to Babylonian captivity.

[5 : 15] And so because we understand that this is post-Babylonian captivity writing, so it's written to people who've come out of that captivity, and they are looking back. Some scholars say that there's only one passage in all of 1 and 2 Chronicles that looks present or future, and the rest of it looks back.

And it is intentionally done that way. It is to reinforce what is declared to be a kingless society, what it looks like to have a king reign over you, what that king should be, to prepare them for the coming king, and that would be who we know is Jesus Christ, and to show them what true worship looks like as the priests minister before the people of God.

And so in looking how they should anticipate the future, they are looking back at what had happened in the past. And in that looking back, they are reminded of the kings which did right and the kings which did wrong, and each one of them are highlighted.

Now, if you remember, it is not the purpose of the chronicler to elaborate on the wicked. He does not spend a lot of time declaring all the bad things and the judgments he states them, but he doesn't spend really a large amount of time upon them because the judgment has already passed.

There's also no discussion about what's going on in the northern kingdom because coming out of Babylonian captivity, they are a unified nation. God sees them as one. We see that because when Ezra comes out, Ezra and Nehemiah, when you look at those two books together, when Ezra comes out and he leads the people out, they build the altar anew, and they worship, and they use the 12 stones signifying the unity of the nation, and God sees them as one peculiar particular people.

[7 : 00] So we are looking at a good king. We understand that. He is one of the last three that are quantified or qualified as being good. But yet, what I want you to see is the shortcoming of that good and really the impact that it has.

The first thing that we notice about Jotham is that there are lessons that were learned, and this is why we need to pay attention to this, that he reigned in his father's place for probably the last five years of Uzziah's life because Uzziah was confined to this house of leprosy.

But when he was 25 years, he became king. It says Jotham was 25 years old when he became king. So at the age of 20, he assumed the responsibilities of the king, but at the age of 25, he officially became king.

His father has died. It says he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. His mother is a descendant from that area of Jerusalem, and he has his lineage traced in the proper way, so we're no longer looking at this descendants that are from the household of Ahab.

They are no longer there. He did right in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Uzziah had done. So he paid attention to the right things. The extended reign, 52 years of Uzziah's kingdom, was filled with a lot of good.

[8 : 26] He did a lot of things right, and he walked before the Lord, and he reestablished worship and temple worship and all of these matters. And Jotham, it says, he saw that, and he did that.

With this one exception, the one exception is that he did not enter the temple of the Lord. So we have to give credit where credit is due, that Jotham learned the lesson of reverence for a holy God.

And why wouldn't he have learned it? Because he had filled the position of king for the last several years of his father's life, though his father was the rightful king because of the judgment that had fallen upon his father when he decided to go into the temple and burn incense.

So he didn't discount the reality of God's holiness. He did not discount the worthiness of the priest that God had called to worship, to lead the nation in worship before them.

Rather, he followed the good examples of his father, and he learned from the bad mistakes of his father. See, it is very becoming of us to be those individuals who learn the lessons from the saints who go before us.

[9 : 40] One of the things that encourages me over and over again is I read a lot of biographies. Someone told me at one time, a call to preach is a call to prepare, and a call to prepare is a call to study. And so I read and read and read and read, and I've done it for years, and sometimes I read things that challenge me.

Sometimes I read things I can learn from, and I've read a lot of biographies. And one thing I've noticed is I've never found a saint who did it all completely right. And I want to find a biography that wants to write all the faults and all the shortcomings, and warts and all is the way Martin Lloyd-Jones said it.

He said, if someone's going to write my biography, make sure that they paint the warts and all. I want it all there. Why? Because we can learn from what they did right, but we can also learn from what they did wrong.

One of my favorite writings in all of Christian history, and some of you know it, is A.W. Tozer. I love the writings of Tozer. I love the preaching of Tozer. I don't necessarily love the voice of Tozer, if you ever hear him. He has kind of a whiny voice, a nasally voice that speaks through his nose.

But I love his sermons, and I love the challenge of his sermons. But Tozer is a notoriously, or was a notoriously bad dad. He just wasn't there.

[10 : 50] He didn't like vacations. He didn't like spending time with his family. He liked the pulpit. And I appreciate that, because the challenge that is revealed in his story reminds you that the calling is more than just preaching.

And so we need to learn those lessons, not only the faithfulness of the saints who went before us, but we also ought to learn the lessons of even their mistakes, and their challenges, and the difficulties.

Jotham paid attention to that. Right? He paid attention to, this is what my father did right, and so I want to imitate that. And these are the mistakes that he did.

So I want to avoid that. And we ought to live with such transparency that others understand that we are fallible human beings, and people can learn from the things which we did right, and we hope also they learn from the things which we did wrong, and we want to impart that to the generations that come after us, but we ought to learn that from others.

So I caution you, when you read your history, your church history in particular, make sure you're reading it accurately. I know many people who like to point to historical church figures and say, oh, that man was awesome.

[12 : 05] I said, but do you know that he burned his best friend at the stake? Do you know they had this fault? Not because we have to be careful not to magnify any individual above humanity.

And we're learning these lessons. And we're learning them because God is so gracious and kind and faithful that he uses broken, sinful beings for his glorious purposes.

And so we can walk accordingly. We see this as a lesson learned. We also see from Jotham that he has a life well-ordered. Look at what it says. It declares to us here that not only did he do what was right, he didn't enter into the temple.

It says in verse three, that he built the upper gate of the house of the Lord. That is, he had a focus on the construction around the temple. And that shouldn't surprise us that the author of Chronicles records that because one of his focuses is the temple.

He built the upper gate and he built extensively the wall of Ophel. Now, what is the wall of Ophel? And you can go on kind of a rabbit hole really quick in scripture if you want to. You see this mentioned again.

[13 : 16] In the book of Nehemiah, Nehemiah chapter three. And it is the priests that are laboring in that wall of Ophel. And it's again mentioned in Nehemiah chapter 11. And the priests again are connected to that wall of Ophel.

And it is the wall that surrounds that region where the temple and Zion, the hill of Zion and the temple and the city of David is really around. So it's around the temple area.

It was considered a weak area of that time. So he was well fortifying this vulnerable position. Some declare that this is a sign of his faithlessness because he is trusting in a fortification of walls rather than trusting in the presence of the Lord God.

As a matter of fact, if you were to read the prophetic book of Hosea, he says that Judah trusts in the walls, but the Lord would bring a consuming fire to the city. But yet we see that he's well ordered.

He's not only doing this, he fortifies the walls, he builds fortresses and towers and cities and the wooded hills. So he is a builder by trade. He is doing some magnificent things.

[14 : 20] The Jewish historian Josephus writes, now it's extra biblical, so we don't say it's the word of God, right? But it is accurate and it's trustworthy as far as historical writing goes.

When Josephus is writing to this period, he makes this one comment. I want you to kind of hold on to it. That Jotham paid very close attention to the needs of his community.

That he worked and he labored and if there was a need in the city, he would meet it. He speaks highly, he praises him. Now he's a non-believer, he's a Jewish historian for the Roman Empire and he writes this thing, he says, and all of his people lived happily.

He was taking care of the people. He was meeting their needs. He was fortifying their towns. And all of the people during Jotham's reign, they all lived, quote, happily.

And then we find that he also ordered himself right in battle because he went and fought against the Ammonites whom Uzziah had defeated before and they rebelled during the reign of Jotham, thinking, well, this king who reigned so long, Jotham's reign will rebel.

[15 : 31] Jotham goes and he fights the Ammonites, the enemy of God's people, and he defeats them and he puts this great charge to them. So they begin to bring him wealth. I mean, a really grand amount of wealth.

And it tells us in verse 6, so Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the Lord his God. So one of the realities that we notice is that unlike his father, the position of the king never usurped the position of the Almighty.

He had his life well ordered, right? He was building, he was providing, he was fighting against the people, the enemies of the people of the Lord God.

He was ordering his ways according to the Lord his God. He did not ever try to assume the position that was to be held only by the Lord God.

And God was enabling him. It says that he became mighty. He had a well ordered life. But here's where we get into the problem of it all because when we read this chapter, we're like, wow, that's amazing.

[16 : 38] So why is this chapter even here? We see this. He has learned his lessons, his life is well ordered. But I want you to see third and finally, the limitation of his impact. The limitation of his impact.

Two times it tells us that Jotham was 25 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. It's kind of unique. It ought to stand out to you when you read it. It opens up in this chapter that when Jotham was 25 years old, he became king and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem.

And at the end of this chapter, it says that Jotham was 25 years old when he became king and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. He is either the only or one of the only kings that is declared twice how old he was when he became king and how long he reigned.

Usually we are introduced to the reality that he was this old when he became king and he reigned this amount of years. So I ask myself in reading that, why am I told twice Jotham's age and the length of his reign?

Now I don't really know that there's a solid answer to that other than the fact that there was nothing else to write about him other than he was 25 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. But I believe the word of God is inspired so it's not just there to fill space.

[17 : 56] And I think what we are being told is that it was a rather uneventful 16 years. There was nothing inherently wrong that Jotham did.

He did what was right in the sight of the Lord. As Josephus says, the people lived happily. But there's also nothing wondrously great about this reign.

There's no renewed worship. There's no turning over of hearts. There's no revived temple worship. There's no awakening of spirits.

There's no teaching of the word of God. Really, there's very, very little impact. He was 25 years old and he reigned 16 years.

His son will be 29 and he will reign 16 years and he would be one of those kings who does what is wickedly in the sight of the Lord his God. And I will tell you the impact he has far exceeds the impact that his father had in the same amount of time.

[19 : 05] Now his impact is for bad. But if he can do so much harm in 16 years then the question begs to be asked how did Jotham not do any more good?

Now catechisms aren't a very big thing in the Baptist life. But in the larger catechism it asks the question what is the chief and highest end of man?

It's the very first question. What is the chief and highest end of man? That is, what is man's sole purpose? And the answer to that is man's chief end is to glorify God and to fully enjoy him forever.

The chief end of man is not to fortify walls. It is not to build cities. It is not to build towers. It is not to make sure your people live happily.

The chief end of man the greatest end of man and the highest attainment he could ever have is to glorify God and to fully enjoy him forever.

[20 : 14] So that is and that's the same response to us, right? Without that we really don't have good theology or good doctrine. If we do not know that our chief end that is the one thing that is the highest goal of our life is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever then everything else is secondary, right?

Everything else falls under that glorifying God and enjoying him forever. So if what we are doing is not bringing him glory or causing us to enjoy him more then it is not fulfilling of our chief end.

It is not aligned with our purpose. Paul would say I'm intent on one purpose. So what we see here is Jotham reigns but notice there's this one phrase that I did not read and it's the phrase found at the end of verse 2.

And I told you to hold on to the fact that his people lived happily according to the historians but at the end of verse 2 it says but the people continued acting corruptly.

But the people continued acting corruptly. you say well that's not Jotham's fault because what we see here is the fallacy of man that people are going to do what they want to do, right?

[21 : 46] but you had an individual who was at least at the opportunity had the opportunity to impact. Think of how many other reforms were done. Think of the grand scale that we could be doing and now we see here that though the king was good he had little impact spiritually upon anyone around him.

Because it seems as if his chief goal was just to maintain. He was caught up in the good. We're going to build the upper gate we're going to fortify the walls we'll establish cities where we need to I'm not going to do anything wrong.

But there's also not the challenge to push others to do right. And too often we get caught up in being good and even doing good that we fail to realize that we're not accomplishing the chief end.

We're not leading others to glorify God and to enjoy him fully. Rather we're just maintaining and it is the the soil that I told you that scares me the most that third soil the joys and concerns and the pleasures of this life.

The good things. Right? The good things that can choke out what is the grand and great thing. And Jotham is one of those prime examples of the Old Testament.

[23 : 14] The reason the chronicler declares to us twice that he was 25 years old when he became king and he reigned 16 years is because it's a span of time in which it was peaceful it was pleasant there was nothing bad done but also there's nothing great to talk about.

He built some stuff. Some of the wicked kings were good builders. I mean Herod the Great was referred to as Herod the Great because he was a good builder not because he was a good guy. Right?

Herod the Great in the New Testament he developed underwater concrete and built the first seaport of the Jewish nation by developing underwater concrete and creating this false seaport.

He ran the aqueduct to Jerusalem from the sea of Galilee. I mean He ran it the aqueduct over and it I think it brought water to Jerusalem to like the 1940s early 1940s so from like 4 BC 4 or 5 BC into 1940s that's pretty amazing right?

This gravity flow water system that He brought all the way from the sea. I mean He was an astounding builder but He also declared the slaughter of children. Here we have Jotham and we agree with Testimonial Scripture that He did right He did good in the sight of the Lord His God and He did not do what His Father done He learned His lesson He ordered His life and God made Him mighty.

[24 : 39] But what impact did the mighty have on society? It was really just the shortcomings of His good. Because see what the chronicler is showing us is that even the good kings fall short of the king we need.

we're not looking for a good king we can find those we're looking for the great king of kings and lord of lords and when the chronicler is writing to the people he's reminding them we had bad kings and we know we don't want bad kings but in the past we also had good kings and guess what we don't even want a good king right?

we need one better than good we need one who will truly genuinely deliver us and redeem us not just one that's going to maintain us we need the king of kings we need one that is great and splendors above all creation we need Jesus Christ and there's the reminder is that the good falls short of the grand need of man because if we have a good king all the people will still do corruptly but it's only when that great king comes who redeems us and sets us free from our enslavement to sin and calls us to follow him and to live in holiness and reverence before him people were looking for a king during the time of Christ and they were looking for a king that would feed them and build their kingdom and establish things they were looking for some jothams and Jesus didn't fit that mold because he came to do so much more than that he came to fulfill the chief end of man so that man can glorify

God and enjoy him forever in our own life we don't need to let the good call us to fall short of the grand and the great and the things that he's called us to do but here in this short chapter found in 2nd chronicles 27 we see the shortcoming of good we see that it can be a deterrent and even a distractant to those around us from doing what it is that God's called them to do and while we ought to do what is good and we ought to do what is right and the people around us ought to live happily that shouldn't be the one thing we're aiming at right we're aiming at bringing God the greatest glory and the grandest splendor and that people may enjoy him forever that they may worship and celebrate who he is the reason I read that parallel passage this morning in the book of Psalms Psalm 65 there are many Psalms that cry out to the fact that God causes the seas to be still there are a lot of them we can find a lot of those but Psalm 65 says that he declares the waves to be still he tells the seas and all the people stand in awe and fear and we see the fulfillment of that found there in the gospel of Mark where he makes the sea go calm and everybody's afraid and we're seeing exactly they were not afraid because he did something astounding they were afraid because they realized who he was he is the one who spoke the mountains into existence he is the one who can calm the seas and we begin to see these transitions when people come to this understanding now he is so much worthier of more than just our good he's worthy of our life and so we learn those lessons even in 2nd chronicles in 2nd chronicles chapter 27 let's pray father we thank you for this day we thank you for our time together we thank you for your word and god we praise you for the truth it contains we do thank you for those that we can read throughout the history of your people who did what is good for it is worth rejoicing over but god we know you call us to do so much more than just what is good you call us to follow you and obey you and worship you and adore you so help us to be those people help us to be those people that others are impacted by our presence that you draw people to you by the light that we cast not that we may get the glory not that we may get the recognition but that our lights might shine so father we pray that you help us to be those lights on a hill father for this week before us we pray in particular for the men's event coming up on saturday i pray that matters would come together as they ought to that it would be a time of encouragement be a time of purpose we pray for the back school bash coming up next sunday i know there's a lot of preparation that's going into that we pray your blessings upon it even for the provision of the school supplies we pray that you meet those needs we thank you for the opportunity we have to labor for the king in the field of harvest we rejoice in the reality that we've been able to come together and worship today we rejoice that we were able to observe and celebrate the lord's supper today we rejoice in the observation of baptism today there's so much to be thankful for so fathers this has been a full day a day of filling lord help us to live this week intentionally and help us to live it for your glory and that we may enjoy you to the fullest of our being lord jesus we thank you so much for your grace and your mercy for the love that you extend to us we thank you

for forgiveness and lord may we give our lives for your glory we ask it in christ's name amen thank you guys really appreciate your time you