

**(2 Chronicles 26:1-15)** - 2 Chronicles 26:1-15 describes the reign of King Uzziah which began when he was sixteen years old. *“And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD”* (2 Chron. 26:4) - He was faithful to seek the Lord and lead the people in God’s ways.

*“Zechariah”* was a prophet during Uzziah’s reign (2 Chron. 26:5). Isaiah was called of God to be a prophet during Uzziah’s reign (2 Chron. 26:22; Isaiah 6:1). Uzziah reigned for fifty-two years, and Isaiah wrote of this from first to last (*Isa. 1:1*). This was around 750 years before Christ. Uzziah’s fame spread, and he was helped by God *“TILL HE WAS STRONG* (2 Chron. 26:15).” Uzziah began his reign trusting and walking in the strength of the Lord. But, at some point in his success, he began to turn from God’s help and began to trust in his own strength. He failed to realize that the reason for his success was God’s power and help. He failed to continue to listen to the words of his ancestors King David and King Solomon (*Psalms 121:1-2; Prov. 3:5-6*).

**(2 Chronicles 26:16)** - We are told here specifically what Uzziah did in his own pride, self-righteousness, and strength. His sin was the same as with us all especially when, in our own sinful human nature, we think about eternal salvation and all blessings and benefits of salvation. We become so proud and self-righteous that we refuse to admit that all salvation, with all its blessings and benefits, is by God’s grace and power in the glorious Person and finished work of Christ. We foolishly and proudly think that salvation (in some way, to some degree, and at some stage) is conditioned on our own power and goodness rather than all by God’s grace based on the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Uzziah *“was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.”* Here, Uzziah committed a serious and fatal sin which led to his utter destruction and death. *“When he was strong,”* he trusted in his own strength and became proud of what he imagined to be his own accomplishments. His heart was so overcome by his own importance that he went into the temple, into the holy place, where the altar of incense stood, and into which none but the priest were allowed to enter, to offer incense himself upon the altar. Uzziah ignored and violated God’s law of the priesthood and true worship. He also violated what had become a general principle in God’s dealing with Israel - that no king should also be a priest, and that the offices of prophet, priest, and king should not be combined except in one man, the Messiah, Who fulfilled all three offices.

**(2 Chronicles 26:17-18)** - Azariah, the priest, and eighty priests of the Lord withstood King Uzziah, declaring unto him the seriousness of his act. Only the priests of God, the sons of Aaron, were consecrated by God to burn incense to the Lord. No man, not even a king, was permitted to offer sacrifices for sin (*Heb. 5:1-5*). They told Uzziah that such an act could not honor him before God. No matter how sincere nor how great and successful a man may be, it is folly to violate the holiness of God.

**(2 Chronicles 26:19-23)** - Instead of listening to the priest and leaving the temple, Uzziah became angry and held to the censer to burn incense. God struck the proud king with leprosy, took away his office, and he died in disgrace as a common leper. When they buried him, they said, *“He is a leper.”* It is obvious that in this matter, being lifted up with pride and self-righteousness, Uzziah did not do *“that which was right in the sight of the LORD.”* For any sinner to take it upon himself to approach God in that sinner’s own merits is death. The Apostle Peter said, *“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him”* (*Acts*

10:34-35). “*Worketh righteousness*” is NOT approaching God based on our own works which are far from the perfection of righteousness that can only be found in Christ. “*Worketh righteousness*” is approaching God as a sinner seeking mercy and grace in the righteousness of Christ freely imputed and received by God-given faith. This is what Uzziah failed to do when he disregarded God’s commands, ignored the priests, and took it upon himself to burn incense before the Lord. Isaiah evidently learned much from the death of King Uzziah. It is recorded in *Isaiah 6:1-7*.

**(Isaiah 6:1-4)** - Isaiah must have thought much of King Uzziah. In the year of Uzziah’s death, the Lord God revealed Himself to Isaiah in the glory of His sovereignty and holiness. The Lord is on His throne and in complete control of all matters. His “*train*” represents His royal majesty and divine sovereignty. He is also the righteous judge Who judges according to truth. The seraphims (ministers and messengers of the Lord, bright and glorious, fervent in zeal for God’s service and glory) covered their faces out of profound reverence, covered their feet, owning their own imperfections, and did fly to execute God’s commands. They cried, “*Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.*” God is infinitely, eternally, and immutably holy in all His ways. It is repeated for the greater assurance and establishment of the fact. If there is one attribute used most frequently or one word to emphasize the nature of our God, it is “*God is holy*” (1 Tim. 6:15-16), unapproachable by sinful creatures.

**(Isaiah 6:5)** - Isaiah responded to the vision, “Woe is me, for I am cut off from God. I am an unclean branch of an unclean tree. I am a great sinner, especially by my lips, which reveal my heart. There is no hope for me nor those about me, before God’s awful holy presence.” In light of God’s holiness and justice, Isaiah saw his sinfulness and depravity. He saw that he deserved nothing but condemnation and death. He saw that he had no righteousness to recommend himself unto God. He saw that God is unapproachable except through God’s appointed Mediator and based on His righteousness. He saw that this held true for all people who are fallen in Adam and born spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. We are all sinners, and there are none righteous or good in God’s sight (Rom. 3:10-12,23).

**(Isaiah 6:6-7)** - Isaiah then saw that there is a way to God! Our God in mercy and grace has determined to redeem, sanctify, and receive a people of His choice out of every nation but only in a way consistent with His holiness, righteousness, and truth. He will be both just and justifier; He will be both merciful and righteous; He will be a just God and a Savior (Isa. 45:20-25). This way is symbolized in the “*live coal ... from off the altar,*” which represents the way God takes away the iniquities of His people and purges their sins - the sacrifice of our Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. CHRIST IS THE WAY! Jesus Christ came to earth, was made of woman, made under the law to redeem. He is our Surety by divine decree; He is our righteousness by obedience unto death; He is our sacrifice, sin-offering, and God is reconciled to us and us to Him by His death; He is our risen justifier and our great High Priest who intercedes at God’s right hand. No man can come to God but by Christ Jesus and the ground of His righteousness imputed and received by God-given faith (John 14:6). The seraphim laid the live coal on Isaiah’s mouth indicating a change heart and a change of message - the Gospel of God’s grace in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. When King Uzziah tried to usurp the authority of the priest and burn incense to God in the holy place, he ignored God’s promise of forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life by His grace through the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. God destroyed him, as he will all who reject the Redeemer. Would you approach God for mercy, forgiveness, and acceptance? Then receive, bow to, and confess Christ Jesus. Do not come any other way (Heb. 10:11-22).