

Forget Not Jehovah

“And his name spread abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God: for he went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense” (2 Chronicles 26:16).

Within this text, the term “strong” is used twice, however, the original language uses two terms: (1) “chazaq” (*kha-zak*) denoting courageous, strengthen, cure, help, repair, fortify and (2) “chozqah” (*khoz-kaw*) denoting “vehemence” (usually in a bad sense).

Uzziah had degenerated from a condition before God described as, “he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. And he set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah” (2 Chronicles 26:3-4), to a condition of “his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly.” What caused such a change?

There are numerous times when a rise to the top of the heap has resulted in the demise, or curse of an individual. Moses warned against arrogance, saying, “Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day” (Deuteronomy 8:11). Within this text, Moses warned against being confident in their material wealth, saying, “then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt...and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth” (Deuteronomy 8:13-14, 17).

What is especially detestable about the arrogance of Uzziah was his disregard for the holy things. He, having risen to such a stature, not only in his own eyes, but also, “his name spread far abroad” (2 Chronicles 26:15), so that he was not afraid to engage in that which did not pertain to himself, and his arrogance resulted in his demise, in that, “he went into the temple of Jehovah to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of Jehovah, that were valiant men: and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It pertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto Jehovah, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from Jehovah God. Then Uzziah was wroth; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy brake forth in his forehead before the priests in the house of Jehovah, beside the altar of incense. And Azariah

the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out quickly from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because Jehovah had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a separate house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of Jehovah: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land” (2 Chronicles 26:16-21). Has your heart ever been lifted up to the point that you believe every good thing man has to say about you?

Remember the words of Solomon, saying, “Two things have I asked of thee; Deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lies; Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is needful for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is Jehovah? Or lest I be poor, and steal, And use profanely the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:7-9). ret