



Summer Study Discussion Guide #8

Sermon Title: Temporary Prosperity

Biblical Reference: 2 Chronicles 26

Date Preached: Sunday, July 31st, 2022 @ 11am

Summer Study Date: Wednesday, August 3rd, 2022

Sermon Summary

In 2 Chronicles 26, we can see the rise and fall of Uzziah, one of Judah's most popular kings. Uzziah's reign was marked by success and prosperity, but in the end, he died a leper who was isolated from the community of faith and society. What led to his staggering success? The Bible says, *"as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper."* What led to his stunning fall? The Bible says, *"he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction:"*

Uzziah's prosperity was only temporary. The definition of prosper, according to the Webster's dictionary, is "to grow or increase; to thrive; to make gain". The Lord wants us to prosper. We can learn from the story of Uzziah how not to lose all the Lord has allowed us to gain.

Quick Review

Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything you heard for the first time or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Were you able to apply something you learned from the sermon this week?

My Story

This past Sunday we heard about how Uzziah became king at sixteen years old. Can you tell us about a time in your life when you were put in a situation, and you felt inadequate to the task?

Discussion Tip: Not everyone will have an answer to this question, but those who do will undoubtedly have a good story to tell.

Digging Deeper

1. Why We Must Seek Him

Ask a volunteer to read:

2Ch 26:15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

2Ch 26:1 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.

2Ch 26:3 Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

What were you doing when you were sixteen? Imagine overseeing an entire kingdom and military at this age. Uzziah recognized he needed help and was inadequate to the job. He did the right thing, he turned to the Lord for help instead of turning to man.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it so important for us to acknowledge we are inadequate to the task?
- Which areas of responsibility the Lord has given you do you feel most overwhelmed by or inadequate to perform?
- When you have a job to do, and you know you are inadequate to perform it. What verse or spiritual truth encourages you?
- Can you give us an example in your life, or the life of another person, where it was obvious that the person was inadequate to the task, but God helped them to a wonderful result?

2. How We Must Seek Him

Ask a volunteer to read:

2Ch 26:4 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did.

2Ch 26:5 And 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 to prosper.

In these two verses there are at least four examples of how Uzziah sought the Lord. These are important for us to remember as we seek the Lord:

1. He had a heart to do right
2. He followed the example his father set when he was serving the Lord.
3. He looked to the “visions” or the revealed and written will of God.
4. He recognized the spiritual authority of the prophet Zechariah in his life.

Many people who are not prospering would say they are seeking the Lord in their lives. The problem many times is they are not seeking the Lord in the proper way. Do they have a heart to do right? Do they follow the godly examples in their lives? Do they look to the Lord’s Word? Do they have someone in their lives that is ahead of them spiritually? Do they obtain counsel from that person?

Discussion Questions:

- Can you tell us about a time when you tried to seek the Lord but not in the proper way?
- What does seeking the Lord look like in your life?
- Why is it significant that 2 Chron 26:4 says, “He did right in the sight of the Lord”?
- Can you give us an example of how a truth from God’s written Word kept you from significant harm?
- Zechariah had understanding in the visions of the Lord and helped Uzziah. In our culture it is popular to have a business mentor or a life coach while the position of a spiritual advisor or a pastor is shunned in our culture. Why do you think that is?
- The Bible teaches very clearly on the position of a leader, yet many say they do not need a spiritual leader and they have enough with the Bible. How does someone overcome this kind of thinking?
- Can you give an example from your life how a spiritual leader has helped you prosper?

3. The Proof of Seeking Him

Ask a volunteer to read:

2Ch 26:6 And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

2Ch 26:7 And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims.

You can see from examining the life of Uzziah that he was seeking the Lord. You could see it by what the Lord was helping him to accomplish. The Lord helped him defeat the enemy and put garrisons of soldiers in those areas previously controlled by the enemy. We should be able to see the Lord prospering us in some of these areas if we are seeking Him.

Discussion Questions:

- In verse seven we read “And God helped him against the Philistines.” Can you give us an example of how seeking the Lord, helped you conquer a spiritual stronghold?

Ask a volunteer to read:

2Ch 26:8 And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.

One of the ways Uzziah prospered was by his influence and favor increasing. As we seek the Lord one of the ways we should prosper is by our influence increasing.

- What are some of the reasons a Christian would not be growing in their influence for the Lord?

Ask a volunteer to read:

2Ch 26:9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them.

2Ch 26:10 Also he built towers in the desert,

The Lord showed Uzziah he needed to build towers to see what was coming over the horizon. This way he would be prepared if the enemy came to attack him. The towers helped him continue to prosper. As we seek the Lord, we should be able to see the far-reaching consequences of our decisions. We should be able to see evil coming and hide ourselves from it.

Discussion Questions:

- Share a reason you have used to avoid getting in the tower with the Lord and looking over the horizons in your life?
- Uzziah could see from the tower the enemy approaching. In the same way Many of us know what is coming over the horizon of life such as death or the judgment seat of Christ. What are the reasons we do not prepare for these things?

4. God How We Lose All

Ask a volunteer to read:

*2Ch 26:15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.
2Ch 26:16 But when he 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.*

We read in verse five, “*and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.*” We then read in verse fifteen and sixteen, “*for he was marvelously helped till he was strong but when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction.*”.

Uzziah felt that he arrived, and he no longer needed God as he once did. He now had it figured out he could run the kingdom without God. He was strong.

Discussion Questions:

- Looking at your life you will see the evidence of God’s marvelous help. What are the things for which you are most thankful?
- Why do we feel like we need God less when we become successful?
- In what ways do we steal glory from the Lord by portraying ourselves to be strong?
- In what way can we remind ourselves that we are never strong?
- Uzziah stopped seeking the Lord, but he did not stop going to the temple. Why do you think that was?

Ask a volunteer to read:

*2Ch 26:17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:
2Ch 26:18 And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, 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 honour from the LORD God.
2Ch 26:19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.*

When Uzziah was confronted by the priests, he refused rebuke and was smitten of the Lord with leprosy.

Discussion Questions:

- Why are most people reluctant to confront a leader?

Uzziah was the last person to see his problem because it was on his forehead. However, since he was angry it was difficult to show him this devastating information.

- Can you tell us about a time when your sensitivity (pride) kept people from sharing information with you?

Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of hearing the message:

1. What point in this message was most impactful for you?
2. How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?