

2Kings 15:1 ¶ In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

2Kings 15:2 Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

2Kings 15:3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done;

2Kings 15:4 Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

In the 27th year of Jeroboam, king of Israel, Azariah/Uzziah became king in Judah. He was 16 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 52 years. He was the son of Jecholiah of Jerusalem.

JFB offers this historical note: "It is thought that the throne of Judah continued vacant eleven or twelve years, between the death of Amaziah and the inauguration of his son Azariah. Being a child only four years old when his father was murdered, a regency was appointed during Azariah's minority."

This seems to make sense in light of the special note in Chronicles about the influence that the prophet Zechariah (not the author of the book in the bible) had upon him. He must have been able to establish such influence as a primary teacher of the child until he ascended to the throne.

2 Chronicles 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."

Azariah followed in the footsteps of his father Amaziah and did that which was right before the LORD. However, he still did not remove the high places where the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense in disobedience to God's law.

2Kings 15:5 And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, judging the people of the land.

2Kings 15:6 And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

2Kings 15:7 So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

The LORD struck the king with leprosy, and he had to dwell in a separate house until he died. His son Jotham became coregent and took over the responsibilities of governing the people.

This historian closes his note on this king by noting that more about him was recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. This is interesting to me because Judah prospered greatly in relative peace during his rule. The Chronicler notes that Uzziah established quite a name for himself.

2 Chronicles 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."

Though Azariah was greatly influenced by the prophet Zechariah during the first part of his reign, he sadly fell victim to pride in the latter part of his reign. The chronicler tells us that it was in pride that he took it upon himself to enter the temple with the intent to usurp the position of the priest and burn incense on the altar of incense. The priests stood in his way, and he responded in anger. It was then that the LORD struck him with leprosy.

2 Chronicles 26:16–19 "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. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men: 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. 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."

The NIV Commentary makes a pertinent observation: "Times of plenty and ease too often lead to spiritual lethargy. God's abundant blessings can all too readily be taken for granted and become commonplace. In such circumstances a people's religious experience can degenerate into an empty formalism or, worse, erupt into open apostasy and moral decadence." It seems that also included an false sense of self-importance before the LORD in the case of Uzziah.

It is noted that when Uzziah died, he was buried with his fathers. The Chronicler notes however that he was buried in the field separate from the royal tomb because he was a leper.

2 Chronicles 26:23 "So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead."

Jotham, son of Azariah, officially became the king after the death of his father.

Personal note: I can't think of Uzziah with thinking of the prophet Isaiah. It was in the year that Uzziah died that the prophet had his vision of the LORD on His heavenly throne and received his commission to service.

Isaiah 6:1&8-9 "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple....Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go...."

2Kings 15:8 ¶ In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.

2Kings 15:9 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

2Kings 15:10 And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

2Kings 15:11 And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2Kings 15:12 This *was* the word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth *generation*. And so it came to pass.

In the 38th year of Azariah, king of Judah, Zachariah, son of Jeroboam, became king in Israel for 6 months. He followed in the footsteps of his forefathers and did evil before the LORD.

Shallum, son of Jabesh, plotted against him and eventually killed him and established himself as king.

The historian closes his account of Zechariah by declaring that more was written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

The historian notes that the reign of Zechariah fulfilled the LORD's promise to Jehu that his sons would reign as kings in Israel to the fourth generation.

2Kings 15:13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.

2Kings 15:14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

2Kings 15:15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

Shallum, son of Jabesh, became king during the 39th year of the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah. He reigned for one full month.

Menahem, son of Gadi, murdered Shallum and took over the throne. More about this is written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. (It would certainly be interesting to have access to this historical document.)

2Kings 15:16 Then Menahem smote Tiphseh, and all that *were* therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not *to him*, therefore he smote *it*; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

The NLT gives a clear understanding of this verse: "At that time Menahem destroyed the town of Tappuah and all the surrounding countryside as far as Tirzah, because its citizens refused to surrender the town. He killed the entire population and ripped open the pregnant women."

The implication is that though Menahem declared himself to be king, not all the people were willing to accept him as king. This verse describes his wicked response to those people.

2Kings 15:17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, *and reigned* ten years in Samaria. **2Kings 15:18** And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

It was in the 39th year of Azariah, king of Judah, that Menahem, son of Gadi, began his ten-year reign in Israel. He was yet another evil king of Israel that followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel.

2Kings 15:19 And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

2Kings 15:20 And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, *even* of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

2Kings 15:21 And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, *are they* not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

2Kings 15:22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

At this time Pul, king of Assyria, invaded the land of Israel. Menahem bribed him to go away with 1000 talents of silver. He raised the money by taxing the wealthy men of Israel 50 shekels of silver each. Pul was satisfied with the bribe and left when he received the silver.

Note: JFB (published 1871) noted that 1000 talents of silver equalled \$2,000,000.

Adam Clarke has an interesting note about Pul: "Dean Prideaux supposes that this Pul was father of the famous Sardanapalus, the son himself being called Sardan; to which, as was frequent in those times, the father's name, Pul, was added, making Sardanpul of which the Greeks and Latins made Sardanapalus; and this Pul is supposed to be the same that reigned in Nineveh when Jonah preached the terrors of the Lord to that city."

The historian closes the record on Menahem by noting that more was recorded about him in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. When Menahem died, his son Pekahiah became king.

2Kings 15:23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* two years.

2Kings 15:24 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

2Kings 15:25 But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

2Kings 15:26 And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

It was in the 50th year of Azariah, king of Judah, that Pekahiah, son of Menahem, became king in Israel—a reign that lasted two years. He too was an evil king that followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam.

A plot was made against Pekahiah by a group of men led by Pekah, son of Remaliah, a military captain under the king. This group of men included Argob, Arieah and 50 men of Gilead. Pekah murdered Pekahiah and established himself as king.

JFB offers an alternate understanding about Argob and Arieah: “Many commentators view these as the captain's accomplices. But it is more probable that they were influential friends of the king, who were murdered along with him.”

Again it is noted that more is written about Pekahiah in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2Kings 15:27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned twenty years.*

2Kings 15:28 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

2Kings 15:29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

2Kings 15:30 And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

2Kings 15:31 And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

It was in the 52nd year of Azariah, king of Judah, that Pekah, son of Remaliah, became king over Israel; his reign lasted 20 years. He was yet another evil king that followed in the sins of Jeroboam.

During the reign of Pekah, Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, came against Israel and took the people of several cities as captives to Assyria.

Hoshea, son of Elah, eventually conspired against Pekah and killed him, establishing himself as king. This occurred during the 20th year of the reign of

Jotham, son of Uzziah, in Judah.

Once again the historian closed the record on this king by noting that more is written about him in the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2Kings 15:32 ¶ In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

2Kings 15:33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.

2Kings 15:34 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

2Kings 15:35 Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the LORD.

It was in the 2nd year of Pekah, king of Israel, that Jotham, son of Uzziah, began his reign in Judah. He was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 16 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha, daughter of Zadok.

Jotham did that which was right before the LORD, following the example of his father before him. However, he still did not remove the high places at which the people made sacrifices and burnt incense in disobedience to God's law.

He was the one that built the upper gate to the house of the LORD. The Chronicler adds that he was actually noted for building much more.

2 Chronicles 27:3–4 "He built the high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of Ophel he built much. Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers."

2Kings 15:36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

2Kings 15:37 In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.

2Kings 15:38 And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

The historian closes his record on Jotham by noting that more is recorded about him in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. He also notes that it was during his reign that Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, son of Remaliah, joined forces against Judah. It's always interesting to note when the LORD declares Himself to be the moving force behind an enemy coalition.

When Jotham died, he was buried with his fathers in the city of David. His son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

Observation: With this chapter the historian summarizes at least 68 years of the history of the kings of Judah and Israel.