

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES: GAINING DIRECTION OUT OF THE AIMLESSNESS OF APOSTASY
Part V: Gaining Direction From God's Work In The Rest Of Judah's Davidic Dynasty, 2 Chronicles 13-36
K. Learning To Function Independently Of The Errant Examples Of Our Ancestors
(2 Chronicles 27:1-9)

I. Introduction

- A. We are taught in passages like 2 Timothy 3:10-11, 14 to heed the godly examples of past upright leaders.
- B. However, if a past leader who influenced us lived as a bad example in some way, we must free ourselves from that bad example and heed God lest we fail to obey Him for blessing.
- C. This lesson is dramatically apparent in the life of Judah's king Jotham (as follows):

II. Learning To Function Independently Of The Errant Examples Of Our Ancestors, 2 Chron. 27:1-9.

- A. When his father, king Uzziah acquired leprosy, Jotham began to govern the land, for his father needed to be quarantined from other people around him due to the nature of his disease, 2 Chronicles 26:21.
- B. Now, his leprosy was caused by Uzziah's proud assumption of a role God did not assign him, 26:16-20:
 - 1. We before learned that after Uzziah had been marvelously helped by the Lord as a reward for his heeding God and obeying His Word (2 Chronicles 26:3-4, 7a, 15c), instead of properly crediting God with his great achievements, Uzziah became proud, resulting in his downfall, 2 Chronicles 26:16a.
 - 2. Accordingly, he had entered the Holy Place of the temple where only the priests were permitted of God to be, and tried to offer incense on the altar of incense in the Holy Place that only the priests were to do, cf. 2 Chronicles 26:16b with Exodus 30:7-9; Numbers 4:18-21.
 - 3. When the high priest, Azariah with eighty other valiant priests confronted the powerful Uzziah about this sin, he raged at them, so God immediately struck him with leprosy, 2 Chronicles 26:17-20.
- C. However, instead accepting the fact that his father got what he deserved due to his sin, Jotham turned bitter against God for the judgment against his father, and so only partly obeyed God in his life, 27:2a,b:
 - 1. We read in 2 Chronicles 27:2b that regardless of Jotham's decision to heed God in life, he kept away from God's temple where his father, Uzziah had been struck by the Lord with leprosy.
 - 2. J. Vernon McGee suggests this lack of temple attendance revealed an attitude of bitterness toward the Lord for the severity of His judgment on Uzziah, Jotham's father, cf. Thru The Bible, vol. 2, p. 457.
 - 3. However, as McGee also noted, Jotham's lack of attendance was itself a poor example to Judah, for all the adult males of the land were to gather there at least three times a year before God, cf. Deut. 16:16.
 - 4. Jotham's failure to enter the temple was noted by the people, explaining why they continued to worship God in high places and not exclusively at the temple opposite God's will, 2 Kings 15:35; Deut. 12:1-5.
 - 5. Jotham tried to encourage the people to attend the temple regardless if he did not do so himself by building up the gate on the north side of the temple, 2 Kings 15:35; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 568.
- D. Accordingly, Jotham experienced a mix of blessings and trouble, 2 Chronicles 27:4-7 with 2 Kings 15:37:
 - 1. Positively, God enabled Jotham to build cities in the mountains and forts in the forests, 2 Chron. 27:4.
 - 2. He warred against the Ammonites, subduing them and gaining valuable tribute payments from them due to God's blessing for his obedience to the Lord, 2 Chronicles 27:5-6.
 - 3. However, Jotham did fail to remove the high places the people of Judah used in their syncretistic worship of the Lord (in the manner practiced by the pagans), cf. 2 Kings 15:35.
 - 4. So, though he enjoyed some success, due to partial obedience caused by bitterness against the Lord for not adjusting well to what God did to his father, in accord with Deuteronomy 28:15, 25, "the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin, the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah," 2 Kings 15:37.

Lesson: *Though Jotham generally obeyed the Lord, and though the Lord blessed him in what he did that was right, his FAILURE to REJECT the BAD EXAMPLE of his father, Uzziah led Jotham to be unjustly BITTER at GOD; he thus stayed away from the temple, becoming a bad example to the nation regardless of his efforts to the contrary, and so he knew a resulting mix of divine trouble with blessing!*

Application: *May we view our ancestors OBJECTIVELY, that we HEED their GOOD examples while REJECTING their BAD ones, that we might gain God's fullest blessings for obedience rather than being held back by ungodly overreactions of bitterness at God for His judgment on our forefathers!*