

King Amaziah

Serving God with a divided heart 2 Chronicles 25

“Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years” (v.1). We are told of Amaziah that “He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his **father David** had done. In everything he followed the example of his **father Joash**” (2Kings 14:3). Whatever situation you find yourself in, you also have examples you can follow. David made many mistakes in his life, some serious, but his heart was right, he “kept my commands and followed me with all his heart” (1Kings 14:8). Joash repaired the temple and served well as long as the priest Jehoiada stood next to him. Once he died, the wickedness in Joash’s heart became evident (2Chr 24:2,17). Is your heart divided? Knowing how we humans work, Jesus said “No-one can serve two masters” (Mat 6:24). Amaziah “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, **but not wholeheartedly**” (v.2). If we are to live for Him, our hearts must be devoted to only one Master. The life of King Amaziah illustrates the ups and downs of a divided heart.

1. He obeys the Holy Scriptures: v.3-4

After Amaziah is established as king, he kills those servants who assassinated his father. It was common to take revenge by killing whole families. But Amaziah refrained and “acted in accordance with what is written in the Law”. Obedience to God’s Word trumped custom, desire and emotion. A divided heart *sometimes* obeys God’s Word.

2. He serves God willingly: v.5-6

Judah, God’s people, had serious enemies. Amaziah was willing to fight the Lord’s battles. He assembled an army and, given the size of the enemy, he also hired one hundred thousand mercenaries. A divided heart *sometimes* shows willingness to serve, even at great personal cost.

3. He accepts correction: v7-13

The Lord sends Amaziah a messenger to point out a serious fault he has made: God was not with the mercenaries. If he would go into battle with the support of the mercenaries, “God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow”. But Amaziah had already paid the mercenaries more than 3 tons of silver! Correcting our mistakes can sometimes be very costly. Maybe you have already invested a lot in a wrong project, church or relationship. God’s messenger replies to Amaziah, “The LORD can give you much more than

that”. The mercenaries did not take kindly to being sent away. “They were furious with Judah and left for home in a great rage.” When we correct a mistake, not everyone will be supportive. Some will not agree. Some may take offence. As revenge, on their way home, the mercenaries raided some Judean towns. Even with such unexpected, painful reactions, correcting what is wrong is the only right thing to do. A divided heart *sometimes* recognises and corrects mistakes.

4. He worships other gods: v.14-16

Without the mercenaries, the Lord granted Amaziah victory in battle. “When Amaziah returned from slaughtering the Edomites, he brought back the gods of the people of Seir. He set them up as his own gods, bowed down to them and burned sacrifices to them”. Amaziah did not intend to reject Jehovah. But his actions revealed a diminished view of God, just like our decisions and way of living also reflect our view of God. Amaziah thought that the gods of the people of Seir might also be powerful. He considered it prudent to take them home and show them some respect. But Jehovah, the Creator, is unique. He stands alone. Placing other gods beside or under Him means rejecting Him. Maybe Amaziah’s diminished view of God caused him not to serve Him wholeheartedly. How big is your view of God? Do you consider Him worthy of your wholehearted devotion? Hudson Taylor, a pioneer missionary to China, explained this truth bluntly: “Christ is either Lord of all, or is not Lord at all”.

5. He always wants more – v.17-28

Instead of being content with the victory God had given him, Amaziah picks a fight with Israel. Victory has inflated his ego and he now longs for more. Contentment does not come naturally to a divided heart. James noticed that “a double-minded man” is unstable in all he does (James 1:8). The Dutch NBG refers here to an ‘inwardly divided person’. Most Spanish Bibles refer to ‘a man of two enthusiasms’. A divided heart wants to run in different directions. It is never truly satisfied!

Conclusion: King Amaziah illustrates the unstable life and sad end of someone who seeks to serve God without wholeheartedness. May we follow David’s advice to his son Solomon: “acknowledge the God of your father, and **serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind**, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts” (1Chr 28:9).