

2 Chronicles 26:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

The tragic turning point in Uzziah's reign: '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.' Strength led to pride ('heart lifted up'), and pride led to transgression - usurping priestly functions reserved for Aaron's descendants. The phrase 'to his destruction' shows pride's inevitable end. This demonstrates the spiritual danger of success and strength without accompanying humility. Uzziah's presumption - ignoring God's established order - brought leprosy (26:19-21). This warns that spiritual privilege and past faithfulness don't authorize disobedience. Christ alone perfectly combined strength with humility, never abusing His divine prerogatives.

Historical Context

Uzziah's pride (c. 750 BCE) after decades of success illustrates the pattern: humble beginning → God's blessing → success → pride → fall. His leprosy confined him to isolation until death, ending his effective reign and demonstrating that God resists the proud.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What areas of success or strength tempt you toward pride and presumption rather than humble dependence on God?
2. How can you maintain humility during seasons of blessing to avoid Uzziah's trajectory from faithfulness to pride to destruction?

Interlinear Text

וְכַחֲזָקָתוֹ	גָּבַהּ	לִבּוֹ	עַד	לְהַשְׁחִיתוֹ	
But when he was strong	was lifted up	his heart	H5704	to his destruction	
H2393	H1361	H3820		H7843	
וַיַּעַבְדֵּם	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי יוֹ	וַיֵּבֶא	אֶל	הַיֵּכָל
for he transgressed	against the LORD	his God	and went	H413	into the temple
H4603	H3068	H430	H935		H1964
יְהוָה	לְהַקְטִיב	עַל	מִזְבֵּחַ	הַקְטֹת:	
against the LORD	to burn incense	H5921	upon the altar	of incense	
H3068	H6999		H4196	H7004	

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 32:25 (Parallel theme): But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

Proverbs 16:18 (Parallel theme): Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

2 Chronicles 25:19 (Parallel theme): Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?

Habakkuk 2:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Deuteronomy 8:17 (Parallel theme): And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Deuteronomy 8:14 (References God): Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

Colossians 2:18 (Parallel theme): Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

2 Kings 14:10 (Parallel theme): Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this, and tarry at home: for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?

Numbers 16:18 (Temple): And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 16:7 (References Lord): And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.