

# CHAPTER 27

Here is a very short account of the reign of Jotham, a pious prosperous prince, of whom one would wish to have known more: but we may better dispense with the brevity of his story because that which lengthened the history of the last three kings was their degeneracy in their latter end, of which we have had a faithful account; but there was no occasion for such a melancholy conclusion of the history of this reign, which is only an account,

- I. Of the date and continuance of this reign (v. 1, 8).
- II. The general good character of it (v. 2, 6).
- III. The prosperity of it (v. 3-5).
- IV. The period of it (v. 7, 9).

## ~~1470E~~ 2 CHRONICLES 27:1-9

### THE REIGN OF JOTHAM

There is not much more related here concerning Jotham than we had before, ~~2152~~ 2 Kings 15:32, etc.

I. He reigned well. He *did that which was right in the sight of the Lord*; the course of his reign was good, and pleasing to God, whose favour he made his end, and his word his rule, and (which shows that he acted from a good principle) he *prepared his ways before the Lord his God* (v. 6), that is, he walked circumspectly and with much caution, contrived how to shun that which was evil and compass that which was good. He looked before him, and cast his affairs into such a posture and method as made the regular management of them the more easy. Or he established or fixed his ways before the Lord, that is, he walked steadily and constantly in the way of his duty, was uniform and resolute in it: not like some of those that went before him, who, though they had some good in them, lost their credit by their inconstancy and inconsistency with themselves. They had run well, but something hindered them. It was not so with Jotham. Two things are observed here in his character: —

**1.** What was amiss in his father he amended in himself (v. 2): He did *according to all that his father did* well and wisely; howbeit he would not imitate him in which he did amiss; for he *entered not into the temple of the Lord* to burn incense as his father did, but took warning by his fate not to dare so presumptuous a thing. Note, We must not imitate the best men, and those we have the greatest veneration for, any further than they did well; but, on the contrary, their falls, and the injurious consequences of them, must be warnings to us to walk the more circumspectly, that we stumble not at the same stone that they stumbled at.

**2.** What was amiss in his people he could not prevail to amend: *The people did yet corruptly*. Perhaps it reflects some blame upon him, that he was wanting in his part towards the reformation of the land. Men may be very good themselves, and yet not have courage and zeal to do what they might do towards the reforming of others. however it certainly reflects a great deal of blame upon the people, that they did not do what they might have done to improve the advantages of so good a reign: they had good instructions given them and a good example set before them, but they would not be reformed; so that even in the reign of their good kings, as well as in that of the bad ones, they were *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath*; for they still did corruptly, and the founder melted in vain.

**II.** He prospered, and became truly reputable.

**1.** He built. He began with *the gate of the house of the Lord*, which he repaired, beautified, and raised. He then *fortified the wall of Ophel, and built cities in the mountains of Judah* (v. 3, 4), took all possible care for the fortifying of his country and the replenishing of it.

**2.** He conquered. He prevailed against the Ammonites, who had invaded Judah in Jehoshaphat's time, ~~1~~2 Chronicles 20:1. He triumphed over them, and exacted great contributions from them, v. 5. He *became mighty* (v. 6) in wealth and power, and influence upon the neighbouring nations, who courted his friendship and feared his displeasure; and this he got by *preparing his ways before the Lord his God*. The more steadfast we are in religion the more mighty we are both for the resistance of that which is evil and for the performance of that which is good.

**III.** He finished his course too soon, but finished it with honour. He had the unhappiness to die in the midst of his days; but, to balance that, the happiness not to out-live his reputation, as the last three of his

predecessors did. He died when he was but forty-one years of age (v. 8); but *his wars and his ways*, his wars abroad and his ways at home, were so glorious that they were recorded in the book of the kings of Israel, as well as of the kings of Judah, v. 7. The last words of the chapter are the most melancholy, as they inform us that *Ahaz his son*, whose character, in all respects, was the reverse of his, *reigned in his stead*. When the wealth and power with which wise men have done good devolve upon fools, that will do hurt with them, it is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.