

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 25

Amaziah King of Judah

Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Jehoaddin^a; she was from Jerusalem.² He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, but not wholeheartedly.³ After the kingdom was firmly in his control, he executed the officials who had murdered his father the king.⁴ Yet he did not put their sons to death, but acted in accordance with what is written in the Law, in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded: "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sins."^b⁵ Amaziah called the people of Judah together and assigned them according to their families to commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin. He then mustered those twenty years old or more and found that there were three hundred thousand men ready for military service, able to handle the spear and shield.⁶ He also hired a hundred thousand fighting men from Israel for a hundred talents^c of silver.⁷ But a man of God came to him and said, "O king, these troops from Israel must not march with you, for the LORD is not with Israel—not with any of the people of Ephraim.⁸ Even if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow."⁹ Amaziah asked the man of God, "But what about the hundred talents I paid for these Israelite troops?" The man of God replied, "The LORD can give you much more than that."¹⁰ So Amaziah dismissed the troops who had come to him from Ephraim and sent them home. They were furious with Judah and left for home in a great rage.¹¹ Amaziah then marshaled his strength and led his army to the Valley of Salt, where he killed ten thousand men of Seir.¹² The army of Judah also captured ten thousand men alive, took them to the top of a cliff and threw them down so that all were dashed to pieces.¹³ Meanwhile the troops that Amaziah had sent back and had not allowed to take part in the war raided Judean towns from Samaria to Beth Horon. They killed three thousand people and carried off great quantities of plunder.¹⁴ 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.¹⁵ The anger of the LORD burned against Amaziah, and he sent a prophet to him, who said, "Why do you consult this people's gods, which could not save their own people from your hand?"¹⁶ While he was still speaking, the king said to him, "Have we appointed you an adviser to the king? Stop! Why be struck down?" So the prophet stopped but said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my

counsel.”¹⁷ After Amaziah king of Judah consulted his advisers, he sent this challenge to Jehoash^d son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel: “Come, meet me face to face.”¹⁸ But Jehoash king of Israel replied to Amaziah king of Judah: “A thistle in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, ‘Give your daughter to my son in marriage.’ Then a wild beast in Lebanon came along and trampled the thistle underfoot.”¹⁹ You say to yourself that you have defeated Edom, and now you are arrogant and proud. But stay at home! Why ask for trouble and cause your own downfall and that of Judah also?”²⁰ Amaziah, however, would not listen, for God so worked that he might hand them over to Jehoash, because they sought the gods of Edom.²¹ So Jehoash king of Israel attacked. He and Amaziah king of Judah faced each other at Beth Shemesh in Judah.²² Judah was routed by Israel, and every man fled to his home.²³ Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah,^e at Beth Shemesh. Then Jehoash brought him to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate—a section about six hundred feet^f long.²⁴ He took all the gold and silver and all the articles found in the temple of God that had been in the care of Obed-Edom, together with the palace treasures and the hostages, and returned to Samaria.²⁵ Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah lived for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel.²⁶ As for the other events of Amaziah’s reign, from beginning to end, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?²⁷ From the time that Amaziah turned away from following the LORD, they conspired against him in Jerusalem and he fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and killed him there.²⁸ He was brought back by horse and was buried with his fathers in the City of Judah.

25:1–28 Typically, the Chronicler has divided the reign of Amaziah into two parts: (1) the good years, marked by obedience, divine blessing and victory (vv. 1–13), and (2) the bad years of idolatry, defeat and regicide (vv. 14–28). (CSB)

Amaziah was co-regent with Uzziah. Though the Chronicler usually divides the reigns of kings into periods of good and evil, here he describes Amaziah as uncommitted (vv 1–4), giving a detailed report of Amaziah’s first battle (vv 5–13), apostasy (v 14), and prophetic rebuke (vv 15–16). (TLSB)

25:1 *Amaziah*. Tenth king in Davidic monarchy. (TLSB)

twenty-nine years. 796–767 B.C. (CSB)

25:2 The Chronicler does not indicate that Amaziah failed to remove the high places, which continued to be used as places for sacrifice by the people (see 2Ki 14:4). Also compare 24:2 with 2Ki 12:4, and 26:4 with 2Ki 15:4. The writer appears to be motivated by his outline, which covered the good years first and then the reversion to evil. Negative comments about these kings are held to the

second half of the account of their reigns, whereas in Kings the summary judgment about their reigns and the high places is given immediately. (CSB)

25:5–16 An expansion of 2Ki 14:7. The author of Kings mentions the successful war with Edom only as a prelude to Amaziah's challenge to Jehoash, but the Chronicler sets it in the framework of his emphasis on immediate retribution: Obedience brings victory over Edom, while the subsequent idolatry (vv. 14–16) brings defeat in the campaign against Israel. By expanding his account the Chronicler gives the theological reason for both the victory over Edom and the defeat before Israel. (CSB)

The Chronicler uses the warfare account to explain the theological reasons for the victory over Edom and the rejection of Israel. (TLSB)

25:5 *assembled*. A military census was taken to determine the forces available (cf 1Ch 21; 27:23–24; 2Ch 13:3; 14:8; 17:14–19). Though 300,000 troops could be mustered, the number was far fewer than Asa's 580,000 or Jehoshaphat's 1,160,000. (TLSB)

25:7 *man of God*. Unidentified prophet. (TLSB)

troops from Israel must not march with you. Another instance of the Chronicler's condemnation of alliances that imply lack of trust in the Lord. Cf. other prophetic speeches that call on the people to trust in God (20:15–17, 20; 32:7–8). (CSB)

all these Ephraimites. Such alliances imply a lack of trust in Yahweh. An important theme in the Chronicler's theology is the necessity of trusting in the Lord and rejecting all foreign alliances (cf 16:2–9; 19:1–3; 20:15–17, 35–37; 32:7–8), emphasizing the idea of the Lord fighting for the few against the many (cf Jgs 7; 1Sm 14:6; 1Ki 20:27; 2Ch 13:3–18; 14:8–15). (TLSB)

25:9 *much more*. Cf Pr 16:8. (TLSB)

25:10 Unique to 2Ch. Amaziah's response to the prophet's words was to discharge the mercenaries, only to have them ransack and murder throughout Judah (v 13). (TLSB)

25:11 *Seir*. Another name for Edom (cf 20:22). (TLSB)

25:12 *threw them down*. No reason is given for this massacre of prisoners—perhaps it is in retaliation for the Edomites' earlier attacks. (TLSB)

25:13 May be the inciting incident for the later war with the north. *Samaria*. A town by this name in the southern kingdom is not otherwise known. The reference may be a copyist's error. (CSB)

Beth-horon. C 10–12 mi NW of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

25:14–25 The Chronicler’s account of the war with the north is close to the parallel in 2Ki 14:8–14, except for some additions in line with his theme of immediate retribution. The Chronicler mentions Amaziah’s foolish idolatry and the prophetic speech of judgment, neither of which is found in Kings. He also adds notes in vv. 20, 27 to emphasize that the idolatry of Amaziah was being punished. (CSB)

25:14 Unique to 2Ch. Amaziah makes a bizarre choice, previously unparalleled by a Judean king (Ahaz would later worship the gods of the victorious enemy in 28:22–23). His idolatry explains his defeat by Jehu of Israel (vv 17–24; cf 1Ch 10:13–14; 2Ch 22:7–9). (TLSB)

25:15–16 Unique to 2Ch. Yahweh foretells Amaziah’s subsequent defeat through another unnamed prophet. (TLSB)

25:15 *did not deliver*. Worshiping gods who could not protect their devotees was as absurd as it was sinful. (TLSB)

25:16 *royal counselor?* Some prophets did serve as counselors. (TLSB)

Stop! Though Amaziah had begun well (v 2), had listened to another one of God’s prophets (vv 7–10a), and had won a victory on this account, he hardened his heart to God’s Word. Chem: “Satan is the efficacious cause in the sons of disobedience when they put the Word of the Lord out of their sight” (*LTh* 1:196). (TLSB)

struck down? Amaziah accuses the prophet of treason. (TLSB)

25:5–16 Though the Lord grants him victories, Amaziah continues in rebellion. Today, we likewise feel the constant pressure to compromise the truth and follow the Lord halfheartedly. By His faithful and gracious Word, the Lord, who has power to help, will unstop our ears and turn our hearts to hear Him. • Speak, O Lord, that I may know Your ways and walk in them by faith. Amen. (TLSB)

25:17–24 Amaziah, after gaining victory over the Edomites, challenges Joash of Israel (v 17) and is defeated. Challenge was prompted by the actions of the Israelite mercenaries (v 13). (TLSB)

25:17 *look one another in the face*. Have a conference to negotiate relations. (TLSB)

25:18 Cf. the parable in Jdg 9:7–15. (CSB)

25:20 *they had sought the gods of Edom*. The Chronicler blames the people as well as the king. (TLSB)

25:22 *every man fled to his home*. Expression for a complete rout (cf 1Sm 4:10). (TLSB)

25:23 *Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate*. Both gates were located in the northern wall of the city, the Ephraim Gate at the northwest and the Corner Gate at the northeast. (CSB)

On the road to Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom); called the Damascus Gate today. (TLSB)

Corner Gate. At the extreme west end of the wall, where it formed an “Angle” (26:9) with the wall from the south. (TLSB)

25:24 The family of Obed-Edom was the Levitical family into whose care the temple storehouse had been entrusted (1Ch 26:15). (CSB)

25:27 *they.* Likely refers to Judah’s leading families. (TLSB)

Lachish. One of the cities fortified by Rehoboam, Solomon’s son (11:5–12). (TLSB)

25:28 *upon horses.* Lit, “upon the horses.” Perhaps the assassins’ animals were used to transport the body back c 30 mi over the Judean hills. (TLSB)