

Starting, Continuing And Finishing Well

“And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper” (2 Chronicles 26:5).

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“And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son



of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you” (2 Chronicles 24:20).

This world is full of monuments of people who started well but never finished well. Often, these people fail to learn from History so History repeats itself in their lives. If God expects us to learn from ants and be wise (Proverbs 6:6), certainly we can also learn from fellow human beings and become even wiser. The divine purpose for learning from history is to impart hope, stability and success (Romans 15:4). Failure to learn from History renders one like the Israelites of Hosea 8:3 who earned the pursuit of enemies because they “... **cast off the thing that is good**”. God’s will for the righteous is that they “**shall be stronger and stronger**” (Job 17:9).

The life of King Uzziah as recorded in 2 Chronicles 26, furnishes great lessons for every one who is serious about finishing well - i.e. achieving and enduring success in this life and heaven at last.

- (1) He became a king at the age of 16 years and ruled for 52 years. (vs. 1-3). Age is no barrier to being used of God for any person who has prepared himself or herself. Joseph, David, Timothy and Mary were all youths who made themselves vessels of honour and God used them.
- (2) He did that which was right “according to all that his father Amaziah did” (vs. 4). But 2 Chronicles 25:2 tells us that “Amaziah **did what was right** in the sight of the Lord, **but not with a perfect heart**”. Refined / cultured actions are not synonymous with righteousness. When children think that their parents are right and copy what they do, they can also unknowingly copy their ‘secret’ sins. **A leader’s sin, is a leading sin!**

- (3) **“As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper”** (vs. 5). God is the source of success, progress and prosperity to those who seek Him (3 John 2).
- (4) Through “Help from above” (Psalm 121:2) he won battles, achieved fame, favour and wisdom to excel in buildings, inventions, administration, etc (vs. 2, 7-15). These propelled him to greatness and prominence **“for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong”** (vs. 15).
- (5) **“But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction...”** (vs. 16). Pride always goes before destruction (Proverbs 16:18). He sinned! **“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”** (1 Corinthians 10:12).
- (6) Instant divine judgment manifested in the form of leprosy, loneliness and a shameful dead (vs. 17-24). God is not a respecter of persons! Past righteousness did not exempt him from divine punishment when he sinned (2 Chronicles 24:20).
- (7) It is better to start well, run well and finish well. The end of a matter is better than its beginning (Ecclesiastes 7:8). How a person ends matters in life, time and eternity!