

Don't Blow it!

By Daniel Deininger

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Introduction:

In Thursday's (February 16th, 2023) Home Office Weekly Update, UCG President Rich Shabi shares one of his favorite scriptures in the Old Testament regarding the king of Judah, Uzziah. The story is in 2 Chronicles 26. His favorite verse is

2 Chronicles 26:5 NKJV - *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 prosper.***

I also like the New Living Translation:

2 Chronicles 26:5 NLT - *Uzziah sought God during the days of Zechariah, who taught him to fear God. And **as long as the king sought guidance from the LORD, God gave him success.***

The examples written in the Old Testament are there for us to learn from. The men in the Old Testament were not very different than we are... so we should learn from their mistakes.

1 Corinthians 10:11 NLT - *These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.*

1 Corinthians 10:12 NLT - *If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall.*

1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT - *The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.*

Specific Purpose of the Message today:

Today we will look at lessons from kings who started out well, but ended poorly, and then look at kings who although they made mistakes, ended well.

Need for us:

We need to look at these examples and be determined that we will "end well".

Kings who started well and ended "poorly":

Chronologically:	How we will look at them:
1. Saul	1. Joash
1. Solomon	2. Amaziah
2. Jeroboam	3. Uzziah
3. Joash	4. Saul
4. Amaziah	5. Solomon
5. Uzziah	6. Jeroboam

Kings who made mistakes, but ended well:

1. David

2. Hezekiah

From Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps & Time Lines

Page 111 - **What made a king “good” or “bad”**

The biblical writers were not as interested in a king's abilities as an administrator as they were in the king's desire to follow God's commandments. Kings that followed God's law and those who outlawed the altars to foreign gods, the high places, and idol worship were designated as good. Those who did not, were evil. The bible uses the phrase “He did evil in the eyes (or sight) of the Lord,” to evaluate the king's reign. In secular history, one of the important kings was Omri of Israel, who conquered the Moabites; but in the Bible this evil king's victories go unmentioned.

The story of Uzziah begins with his father Amaziah and grandfather, Joash

Joash

2 Chronicles 24:17 NLT - But after Jehoiada's death, the leaders of Judah came and bowed before King Joash and persuaded him to listen to their advice.

2 Chronicles 24:18 NLT - **They decided to abandon the Temple of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and they worshiped Asherah poles and idols instead!** Because of this sin, divine anger fell on Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 24:19 NLT - Yet the LORD sent prophets to bring them back to him. The prophets warned them, but still the people would not listen.

2 Chronicles 24:20 NLT - Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood before the people and said, "This is what God says: Why do you disobey the LORD's commands and keep yourselves from prospering? You have abandoned the LORD, and now he has abandoned you!"

2 Chronicles 24:21 NLT - Then the leaders plotted to kill Zechariah, and King Joash ordered that they stone him to death in the courtyard of the LORD's Temple.

2 Chronicles 24:22 NLT - **That was how King Joash repaid Jehoiada for his loyalty--by killing his son.** Zechariah's last words as he died were, "May the LORD see what they are doing and avenge my death!"

2 Chronicles 24:25 NLT - The Arameans withdrew, leaving Joash severely wounded. But his own officials plotted to kill him for murdering the son of Jehoiada the priest. **They assassinated him** as he lay in bed. Then he was buried in the City of David, but not in the royal cemetery.

2 Chronicles 24:27 NLT - The account of the sons of Joash, the prophecies about him, and the record of his restoration of the Temple of God are written in The Commentary on the Book of the Kings. His son Amaziah became the next king.

Amaziah

2 Chronicles 25:1 NLT - Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother was Jehoaddin from Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 25:2 NLT - Amaziah did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight, but not wholeheartedly.

God wants us to serve him with our whole heart!

2 Chronicles 25:3 NLT - When Amaziah was well established as king, he executed the officials who had assassinated his father.

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2 Chronicles 25:14 NLT - When King Amaziah returned from slaughtering the Edomites, **he brought with him idols taken from the people of Seir. He set them up as his own gods, bowed down in front of them, and offered sacrifices to them!**

2 Chronicles 25:15 NLT - This made the LORD very angry, and he sent a prophet to ask, "Why do you turn to gods who could not even save their own people from you?"

2 Chronicles 25:16 NLT - But the king interrupted him and said, "Since when have I made you the king's counselor? Be quiet now before I have you killed!" So the prophet stopped with this warning: "I know that God has determined to destroy you because you have done this and have refused to accept my counsel."

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2 Chronicles 25:20 NLT - But Amaziah refused to listen, **for God was determined to destroy him for turning to the gods of Edom.**

2 Chronicles 25:27 NLT - After Amaziah turned away from the LORD, there was a conspiracy against his life in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But his enemies sent assassins after him, and they killed him there.

The story of Uzziah

One item interesting to me about Uzziah is that he was only 16 when he became King. And it appears at that early time in his life he listened to his mother - mentioned below - and another wise, Godly person - Zechariah, mentioned above in verse 5:

2 Chronicles 26:3 NLT - *Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem.*

2 Chronicles 26:4 NLT - *He did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight, just as his father, Amaziah, had done.*

As his Father, Amaziah, in chapter 25, you will find that although Amaziah started out pleasing God, he turned away and started to serve idols later in life. Similar to his grandfather, Joash.

So when Uzziah took the throne at age 16 things were not going well for Judah. His father had done things that incurred God's displeasure and brought problems on Judah and Jerusalem. So Uzziah started out pretty humble and meek, and willing to listen to wise advice. And so he sought God, and did what was pleasing to God. And God BLESSED him for it.. exceedingly.

Unfortunately, the story doesn't end there. Uzziah lost his humility and meekness and became proud.

2 Chronicles 26:16 NLT - But when he had become powerful, he also became proud, which led to his downfall. He sinned against the LORD his God by entering the sanctuary of the LORD's Temple and personally burning incense on the incense altar.

The priests of God tried to stop him, but in his pride he became very angry with them. Verse 19 says he was "raging at the priests" when God caused him to break out with leprosy:

2 Chronicles 26:19 NLT - *Uzziah, who was holding an incense burner, became furious. But as he was standing there raging at the priests before the incense altar in the LORD's Temple, leprosy suddenly broke out on his forehead.*

So there are a number of lessons to be learned from this story. First, from his Father Amaziah, not to turn to idols.. (and, ironically, idols of a king and nation that God helped him destroy). Second, to STAY humble and CONTINUE to SEEK GOD your entire life. And third, after receiving God's blessings for obedience and seeking Him, NOT to become prideful and presumptuous.

Uzziah did what Saul did... became presumptuous.

Saul

1 Samuel 9:1 NLT - There was a wealthy, influential man named Kish from the tribe of Benjamin. He was the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, of the tribe of Benjamin.

1 Samuel 9:2 NLT - His son Saul was the most handsome man in Israel--head and shoulders taller than anyone else in the land.

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1 Samuel 9:15 NLT - Now the LORD had told Samuel the previous day,

1 Samuel 9:16 NLT - "About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be the leader of my people, Israel. He will rescue them from the Philistines, for I have looked down on my people in mercy and have heard their cry."

1 Samuel 9:20 NLT - And don't worry about those donkeys that were lost three days ago, for they have been found. And I am here to tell you that you and your family are the focus of all Israel's hopes."

1 Samuel 9:21 NLT - Saul replied, "**But I'm only from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe in Israel, and my family is the least important of all the families of that tribe! Why are you talking like this to me?**"

1 Samuel 10:20 NLT - So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel before the LORD, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen by lot.

1 Samuel 10:21 NLT - Then he brought each family of the tribe of Benjamin before the LORD, and the family of the Matrites was chosen. And finally Saul son of Kish was chosen from among them. But when they looked for him, he had disappeared!

1 Samuel 10:22 NLT - So they asked the LORD, "Where is he?" And the LORD replied, "He is hiding among the baggage."

1 Samuel 10:24 NLT - Then Samuel said to all the people, "This is the man the LORD has chosen as your king. No one in all Israel is like him!" And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

But Saul changed and stopped obeying God. He thought he could do things HIS way.

Saul, waiting to fight the Philistines..

1 Samuel 13:8 NLT - Saul waited there seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him earlier, but Samuel still didn't come. Saul realized that his troops were rapidly slipping away.

1 Samuel 13:9 NLT - So he demanded, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings!" And Saul sacrificed the burnt offering himself.

1 Samuel 13:10 NLT - Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and welcome him,

1 Samuel 13:11 NLT - but Samuel said, "What is this you have done?" Saul replied, "I saw my men scattering from me, and you didn't arrive when you said you would, and the Philistines are at Micmash ready for battle.

1 Samuel 13:12 NLT - So I said, 'The Philistines are ready to march against us at Gilgal, and I haven't even asked for the LORD's help!' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering myself before you came."

1 Samuel 13:13 NLT - "How foolish!" Samuel exclaimed. "**You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you.** Had you kept it, the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.

1 Samuel 13:14 NLT - But now your kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, **because you have not kept the LORD's command.**"

Another time - The instructions:

1 Samuel 15:2 NKJV - "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt.

1 Samuel 15:3 NKJV - 'Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.' "

What Saul did (or didn't do):

1 Samuel 15:7 NKJV - And Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is east of Egypt.

1 Samuel 15:8 NKJV - He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

1 Samuel 15:9 NKJV - But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

1 Samuel 15:10 NKJV - Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying,

1 Samuel 15:11 NKJV - "***I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.***" And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the LORD all night.

1 Samuel 15:12 NKJV - So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, "Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, **he set up a monument for himself**; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal."

So Saul became full OF HIMSELF.. And in love with HIMSELF.

1 Samuel 15:13 NKJV - Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the LORD! I have performed the commandment of the LORD."

What???

1 Samuel 15:14 NKJV - But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

1 Samuel 15:15 NKJV - And Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

Classic passive aggressive behavior - blaming others, to get focus off self.

1 Samuel 15:16 NKJV - Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak on."

1 Samuel 15:17 NKJV - So Samuel said, "**When you were little in your own eyes**, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel?"

1 Samuel 15:18 NKJV - "Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.'

1 Samuel 15:19 NKJV - "Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?"

1 Samuel 15:20 NKJV - And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

Still defending himself... not repentant... and still blaming the people.

1 Samuel 15:21 NKJV - "But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."

1 Samuel 15:22 NKJV - So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

1 Samuel 15:23 NKJV - For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."

1 Samuel 15:24 NKJV - Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.

1 Samuel 15:25 NKJV - "Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD."

1 Samuel 15:26 NKJV - But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel."

1 Samuel 15:34 NKJV - Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul.

1 Samuel 15:35 NKJV - And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

1 Samuel 16:14 NLT - Now the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and the LORD sent a tormenting spirit that filled him with depression and fear.

Solomon

2 Samuel 12:24 NLT - Then David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and slept with her. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and David named him Solomon. The LORD loved the child

2 Chronicles 1:7 NLT - That night God appeared to Solomon and said, "What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!"

2 Chronicles 1:8 NLT - Solomon replied to God, "You showed faithful love to David, my father, and now you have made me king in his place.

2 Chronicles 1:9 NLT - O LORD God, please continue to keep your promise to David my father, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth!

2 Chronicles 1:10 NLT - Give me the wisdom and knowledge to lead them properly, for who could possibly govern this great people of yours?"

2 Chronicles 1:11 NLT - God said to Solomon, "Because your greatest desire is to help your people, and you did not ask for wealth, riches, fame, or even the death of your enemies or a long life, but rather you asked for wisdom and knowledge to properly govern my people--

2 Chronicles 1:12 NLT - I will certainly give you the wisdom and knowledge you requested. But I will also give you wealth, riches, and fame such as no other king has had before you or will ever have in the future!"

1 Kings 11:1 NLT - Now King Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides Pharaoh's daughter, he married women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and from among the Hittites.

1 Kings 11:2 NLT - The LORD had clearly instructed the people of Israel, 'You must not marry them, because they will turn your hearts to their gods.' Yet Solomon insisted on loving them anyway.

1 Kings 11:3 NLT - He had 700 wives of royal birth and 300 concubines. And in fact, they did turn his heart away from the LORD.

1 Kings 11:4 NLT - In Solomon's old age, **they turned his heart to worship other gods** instead of being completely faithful to the LORD his God, as his father, David, had been.

1 Kings 11:5 NLT - Solomon worshiped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech, the detestable god of the Ammonites.

1 Kings 11:6 NLT - In this way, **Solomon did what was evil in the LORD's sight**; he refused to follow the LORD completely, as his father, David, had done.

1 Kings 11:7 NLT - On the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, he even built a pagan shrine for Chemosh, the detestable god of Moab, and another for Molech, the detestable god of the Ammonites.

1 Kings 11:8 NLT - Solomon built such shrines for all his foreign wives to use for burning incense and sacrificing to their gods.

1 Kings 11:9 NLT - The LORD was very angry with Solomon, for his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

1 Kings 11:10 NLT - He had warned Solomon specifically about worshiping other gods, but Solomon did not listen to the LORD's command.

1 Kings 11:11 NLT - So now the LORD said to him, "Since you have not kept my covenant and have disobeyed my decrees, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants.

Jeroboam

1 Kings 11:28 NLT - Jeroboam was a very capable young man, and when Solomon saw how industrious he was, he put him in charge of the labor force from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the descendants of Joseph.

1 Kings 11:37 NLT - And I will place you on the throne of Israel, and you will rule over all that your heart desires.

1 Kings 11:38 NLT - If you listen to what I tell you and follow my ways and do whatever I consider to be right, and if you obey my decrees and commands, as my servant David did, then I will always be with you. I will establish an enduring dynasty for you as I did for David, and I will give Israel to you.

1 Kings 11:39 NLT - Because of Solomon's sin I will punish the descendants of David--though not forever."

1 Kings 12:25 NLT - Jeroboam then built up the city of Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and it became his capital. Later he went and built up the town of Peniel.

1 Kings 12:26 NLT - Jeroboam thought to himself, "Unless I am careful, the kingdom will return to the dynasty of David.

1 Kings 12:27 NLT - When these people go to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices at the Temple of the LORD, they will again give their allegiance to King Rehoboam of Judah. They will kill me and make him their king instead."

1 Kings 12:28 NLT - So on the advice of his counselors, the king made two gold calves. He said to the people, "It is too much trouble for you to worship in Jerusalem. Look, Israel, these are the gods who brought you out of Egypt!"

1 Kings 12:29 NLT - He placed these calf idols in Bethel and in Dan--at either end of his kingdom.

1 Kings 12:30 NLT - But this became a great sin, for the people worshiped the idols, traveling as far north as Dan to worship the one there.

1 Kings 12:31 NLT - Jeroboam also erected buildings at the pagan shrines and ordained priests from the common people--those who were not from the priestly tribe of Levi.

1 Kings 12:32 NLT - And Jeroboam instituted a religious festival in Bethel, held on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in imitation of the annual Festival of Shelters in Judah. There at Bethel he himself offered sacrifices to the calves he had made, and he appointed priests for the pagan shrines he had made.

1 Kings 12:33 NLT - So on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, a day that he himself had designated, Jeroboam offered sacrifices on the altar at Bethel. He instituted a religious festival for Israel, and he went up to the altar to burn incense.

1 Kings 13:32 NLT - For the message the LORD told him to proclaim against the altar in Bethel and against the pagan shrines in the towns of Samaria will certainly come true."

1 Kings 13:33 NLT - But even after this, Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways. He continued to choose priests from the common people. He appointed anyone who wanted to become a priest for the pagan shrines.

1 Kings 13:34 NLT - **This became a great sin and resulted in the utter destruction of Jeroboam's dynasty from the face of the earth.**

David

1 Samuel 16:13 NLT - So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

1 Samuel 17:45 NLT - David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven's Armies--the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

1 Samuel 17:46 NLT - Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel!

1 Samuel 17:47 NLT - And everyone assembled here will know **that the LORD rescues his people**, but not with sword and spear. This is the LORD's battle, and he will give you to us!"

David gave credit to God!

1 Samuel 18:10 NLT - The very next day a tormenting spirit from God overwhelmed Saul, and he began to rave in his house like a madman. David was playing the harp, as he did each day. But Saul had a spear in his hand,

1 Samuel 18:11 NLT - and he suddenly hurled it at David, intending to pin him to the wall. But David escaped him twice.

1 Samuel 18:12 NLT - Saul was then afraid of David, for the LORD was with David and had turned away from Saul.

1 Samuel 18:13 NLT - Finally, Saul sent him away and appointed him commander over 1,000 men, and David faithfully led his troops into battle.

1 Samuel 18:14 NLT - David continued to succeed in everything he did, **for the LORD was with him.**

2 Samuel 12:13 NLT - Then David confessed to Nathan, **"I have sinned against the LORD."** Nathan replied, "Yes, but the LORD has forgiven you, and you won't die for this sin.

Acts 13:22 NLT - But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'

Hezekiah

2 Kings 18:1 NLT - Hezekiah son of Ahaz began to rule over Judah in the third year of King Hoshea's reign in Israel.

2 Kings 18:5 NLT - Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before or after his time.

2 Kings 18:7 NLT - So the LORD was with him, and Hezekiah was successful in everything he did. He revolted against the king of Assyria and refused to pay him tribute.

2 Kings 20:2 NLT - When Hezekiah heard this, he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD,

2 Kings 20:3 NLT - "Remember, O LORD, how I have always been faithful to you and have served you single-mindedly, always doing what pleases you." Then he broke down and wept bitterly.

2 Kings 20:4 NLT - But before Isaiah had left the middle courtyard, this message came to him from the LORD:

2 Kings 20:5 NLT - "Go back to Hezekiah, the leader of my people. Tell him, 'This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you, and three days from now you will get out of bed and go to the Temple of the LORD.

2 Kings 20:6 NLT - I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my own honor and for the sake of my servant David.'"

Summary

There are many examples of those who started out right, but got distracted by evil and turned away from God. They should have known better.

We need to strive to be like those - David and Hezekiah - who lived their whole lives dedicated to God. Even though they made mistakes!

Let's remember these examples written in the Old Testament are there for us to learn from. Those men were not very different than we are... so we should learn from their mistakes.

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