

## Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 24, Part 2

### 2 Kings 13-14, Part 2

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So, Amaziah is the king of Judah. He is the son of Joash. Joash was the boy king whose life was spared from his grandmother Athaliah.

And for all the years that his mentor, the high priest, was alive, he did well. But after his mentor died, he didn't do so well. So, here comes Amaziah now, that man's son.

I find this one of the more interesting people in the account. He is mentioned in verse 2 of chapter 14. He was 25 years old when he became king.

He reigned in Jerusalem for 29 years. A bunch of that was in prison, and the rest of it was with his son as co-regent on the throne. His mother's name was Jehoaddin

She was from Jerusalem. Now, this. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not as his father David had done.

Now, I want you to look over the parallel account in Chronicles. Because in some ways, it's a little bit more pointed. Second Chronicles 25 verse 2. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.

How interesting. How does that work? What does that look like?  
Compartmentalization. All right.

Do you know anybody like that? I hope you don't look in the mirror and see them. It's perhaps less common than it used to be. I'm fascinated.

I grew up in a farm community in Ohio. There had been a considerable revival in our little Methodist church in the depths of the Depression in the 30s, and it had made a considerable impact. I have reflected a good deal on my growing up experience.

I worked with a lot of farmers. They were rough guys who didn't go to church particularly and never heard a curse word out of their mouths—men whose word was their bond.

If they said they were going to do something, they did it. Men who were indeed upright, but they didn't love Jesus, and their children today and grandchildren are quite a long way from the Lord. I think 50, 60, and 100 years ago, a lot of churches were full of people like that.

Good people. Upright people. People you could trust, but their hearts were their own.

Now, I think that's very significant when you put it up against... We talked about this a long time ago. You put him up against Asa. We're told that Asa had a perfect heart, although the high places still existed.

Now, as I said to you, I think that's ignorance. I think he didn't read his Bible well enough. So, his behavior left something to be desired, but there was no question about his devotion to the Lord.

Yes. Yes, I believe so. I believe so.

They were not where they worshiped idols because we're told quite explicitly that he destroyed the idol that his grandmother, the Queen Mother had erected, and some others. So, I think that this is simply a case of their worshiping Yahweh at these various shrines, even though Deuteronomy says you're not supposed to do that either. But there it is.

Now, I'm not advocating poor performance and a perfect heart. I'm advocating perfect heart and great performance, but the issue is this is not enough if your heart is divided. So what happens? Amaziah is very successful after the kingdom was firmly in his grasp.

This is verse five. He executed the officials who had murdered his father, the king, but he did not put the children of the assassins to death in accordance with what is written in the law of Moses, where the Lord commanded parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their parents. Each will die for their own sin.

Now, I want to take you back to Exodus chapter 34. And I do this because we've talked about it before, but repetition is the soul of education. I think it's such an important passage of scripture that we've got to get it right.

Exodus 34, the golden calf episode, has occurred. And God has said to Moses, you go ahead, I'll send my angel with you, but I can't go with you. You understand that, given these people, my presence would wipe them out. And Moses has said, then we're not going.

If you don't go with us, better you here in the desert than us there in Canaan without you. Oh, God loved him at that moment. And so, God says, all right, come on up onto the mountain.

I'm looking at Exodus chapter 34. I'm talking about chapter 33, the lead into this. God has said, come on up here on the mountain.

I'm going to renew the covenant from my side—verse four of chapter 34. So, Moses chiseled out two stone tablets, like the first one that he had broken and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning as the Lord commanded him.

And he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord Yahweh. Then he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming Yahweh, Yahweh, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

Now stop there. What a God, what a God. This passage is going to be directly quoted six more times in the Old Testament.

And it's going to be alluded to about a dozen more times. You want to know what Israel believed about Yahweh? Here it is. Okay, so far, so good.

Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished. He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation. Yeah, right.

God says, you don't do what I want you to do. I'm going to get your kids. No. Remember what we just read? What does Deuteronomy say? You shall not kill the children for the sins of their parents.

And you shall not kill the parents for the sins of their children. Oh, thank the Lord for that. What's this passage saying, then? Here's what it's saying.

Oh, oh, wow. God is a forgiving God. He will forgive transgressions and outright rebellion.

He will forgive unintentional sins, such as missing the mark. He will forgive iniquity, the reality of the sin that I've committed that is out there cursing me. He'll forgive me.

Whoo, goody. So, I'll live for the devil for about 60 years, and then I'll repent. Well, good luck with that.

But, yes, God will forgive anybody who genuinely repents. But, you decide to be a drunk, and your kids will pay for it. Not because God gets them, but just because in a world of cause and effect, there are consequences.

So, God says, yes, I'll forgive you if you really repent, I will. But your children will experience the results of your sins. David.

Uh-huh. I think you've heard me say that. Give the man a gold star.

Exactly. He says he keeps this grace for thousands of those who love him and keep his commandments. And Deuteronomy, when it quotes this passage, says thousands.

So, he's going to limit the consequences to three or four generations. But the consequences of obedience and love, who can find the limits of that? I've done a little genealogy, and I've got six generations of believers behind me. And I say, thank you, Jesus.

It may go much farther back than that. Can't prove that. There are a whole bunch of Germans back there who may have been Mennonites who loved the Lord.

But anyway. So, this passage in Kings is helpful in correcting wrong understandings of this passage. No, he's not going to punish them for their sins.

But there are going to be consequences for those sins. Don't presume on God's forgiveness and think that there'll be no consequences. There will be.

Okay, back to Kings. So, God gave Amaziah a great victory. He was the one, and this is verse 7 of chapter 14.

He was the one who defeated 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt capturing Selah in battle calling it Joktheel, the name it has to this day. Whoa! So, Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel with the challenge, come, let's face each other in battle. Once again, what didn't Amaziah do? He didn't ask God.

He just says, wow! I just won a big fight. I believe I'll have another one. How easily we come to trust in our own ability.

I've done it before so I can do it again. I've had reason to talk to you here about it. But when I look at some great Christian leaders who have fallen, I think many times their success and God's unwillingness to cut off that success the minute they fall short can be a terrible, terrible... God's still blessing me so I guess what I've been doing is... Okay.

God's kindness, God's long-suffering can be a terrible trap. We presume on it. And so that's what Amaziah did.

I won one fight. Let's go for it. Let's go for the gold ring.

I love the response of Joe Ash. 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. Yeah, not smart. As I've said to you before, Israel was much stronger, much richer, and therefore had more military hardware.

They had more territory. They had more arable land. And Judah is really dumb to pick a fight with them unless God had directed them.

But I think of Samson. Samson went out as before, not knowing that the Lord was not with him. So here goes Amaziah.

Judah was routed by Israel and every man fled to his home. Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah at Beth Shemesh. Then Jehoash went to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim gate to the corner gate.

The section was about 650 feet long. Took all the gold and silver and all the articles found in the temple of the Lord and in the treasures of the royal palace. He took hostages and returned to Samaria.

Wow. That's called dumb. So, he lived for 15 years.

I've erased it. After Jehoash died, we don't know. Maybe he spent that whole time in prison.

We just don't know. He died, though, as a result of an assassination in Judah. Again, you wonder what the relationship between him and Uzziah was. For all the years, however long it was, probably at least 10 years he was in prison, Uzziah had been running the show.

Now he comes home and he's going to run it? Don't know. But interesting.