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2CHRONICLES 26: 1 All the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the place of his father Amaziah.

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Uzziah, the son of Amaziah, succeeds; and begins his reign piously and prosperously, which continued during the life of Zechariah the prophet, 2Chr 26:1-5. He fights successfully against the Philistines, and takes and dismantles some of their chief cities, 2Chr 26:6; prevails over the Arabians and Meunims, 2Chr 26:7; and brings the Ammonites under tribute, 2Chr 26:8. He fortifies Jerusalem, and builds towers in different parts of the country, and delights in husbandry, 2Chr 26:9, 2Chr 26:10. An account of his military strength, warlike instruments, and machines, 2Chr 26:11-15. He is elated with his prosperity, invades the priest's office, and is smitten with the leprosy, 2Chr 26:16-20. He is obliged to abdicate the regal office, and dwell apart from this people, his son Jotham acting as regent, 2Chr 26:21. His death and burial, 2Chr 26:22, 2Chr 26:23.

Verse 1

The people of Judah took Uzziah - They all agreed to place this son on his father's throne.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 2 He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

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Verse 2

He built Eloth - See the notes on 2Kgs 14:21. This king is called by several different names; see the note on 2Kgs 15:1.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 3 Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jechiliah, of Jerusalem.

2CHRONICLES 26: 4 He did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done.

2CHRONICLES 26: 5 He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the vision of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

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Verse 5

In the days of Zechariah - Who this was we know not, but by the character that is given of him here. He was wise in the visions of God - in giving the true interpretation of Divine prophecies. He was probably the tutor of Uzziah.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 6 He went out and fought against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in the country of Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

2CHRONICLES 26: 7 God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gur Baal, and the Meunim.

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Verse 7

And God helped him - "And the Word of the Lord helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gerar, and the plains of Meun." - Targum. These are supposed to be the Arabs which are called the Meuneons, or Munites, or Meonites.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 8 The Ammonites gave tribute to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entrance of Egypt; for he grew exceeding strong.

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Verse 8

The Ammonites gave gifts - Paid an annual tribute.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them.

2CHRONICLES 26: 10 He built towers in the wilderness, and dug out many cisterns, for he had much livestock; in the lowland also, and in the plain: and he had farmers and vineyard keepers in the mountains and in the fruitful fields; for he loved farming.

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Verse 10

Built towers in the desert - For the defense of his flocks, and his shepherds and husbandmen.

And in Carmel - Calmet remarks that there were two Carmels in Judea: one in the tribe of Judah, where Nabal lived, and the other on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, near to Kishon; and both fertile in vines.

He loved husbandry - This is a perfection in a king: on husbandry every state depends. Let their trade or commerce be what they may, there can be no true national prosperity if agriculture do not prosper; for the king himself is served by the field. When, therefore, the king of a country encourages agriculture, an emulation is excited among his subjects; the science is cultivated; and the earth yields its proper increase; then, should trade and commerce fail, the people cannot be reduced to wretchedness, because there is plenty of bread.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 11 Moreover Uzziah had an army of fighting men, who went out to war by bands, according to the number of their reckoning made by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the officer, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains.

2CHRONICLES 26: 12 The whole number of the heads of fathers' households, even the mighty men of valor, was two thousand and six hundred.

2CHRONICLES 26: 13 Under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, who made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

2CHRONICLES 26: 14 Uzziah prepared for them, even for all the army, shields, and spears, and helmets, and coats of mail, and bows, and stones for slinging.

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Verse 14

Shields, and spears - He prepared a vast number of military weapons, that he might have them in readiness to put into the hands of his subjects on any exigency.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 15 He made in Jerusalem engines, invented by skilful men, to be on the towers and on the battlements, with which to shoot arrows and great stones. His name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, until he was strong.

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Verse 15

Engines - to shoot arrows and great stones - The Targum says, "He made in Jerusalem ingenious instruments, and little hollow towers, to stand upon the towers and upon the bastions, for the shooting of arrows, and projecting of great stones."

This is the very first intimation on record of any warlike engines for the attack or defense of besieged places; and this account is long prior to any thing of the kind among either the Greeks or Romans. Previously to such inventions, the besieged could only be starved out, and hence sieges were very long and tedious. Shalmaneser consumed three years before such an inconsiderable place as Samaria, 2Kgs 17:5, 2Kgs 17:6; Sardanapalus maintained himself in Nineveh for seven years, because the besiegers had no engines proper for the attack and destruction of walls, etc., and it is well known that Troy sustained a siege of ten years, the Greeks not possessing any machine of the kind here referred to. The Jews alone were the inventors of such engines; and the invention took place in the reign of Uzziah, about eight hundred years before the Christian era. It is no wonder that, in consequence of this, his name spread far abroad, and struck terror into his enemies.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 16 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against the LORD his God; for he went into the LORD's temple to burn incense on the altar of incense.

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Verse 16

He transgressed against the Lord - "He sinned against the Word of the Lord his God." - T.

Went into the temple to burn incense - Thus assuming to himself the priest's office. See this whole transaction explained in the notes on 2Kgs 15:5 (note).

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2CHRONICLES 26: 17 Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him eighty priests of the LORD, who were valiant men:

2CHRONICLES 26: 18 and they resisted Uzziah the king, and said to him, "It isn't for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary; for you have trespassed; neither shall it be for your honour from the LORD God."

2CHRONICLES 26: 19 Then Uzziah was angry; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense; and while he was angry with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the LORD's house, beside the altar of incense.

2CHRONICLES 26: 20 Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked on him, and behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out quickly from there; yes, himself hurried also to go out, because the LORD had struck him.

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Verse 20

Because the Lord had smitten him - "Because the Word of the Lord had brought the plague upon him." - T.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 21 Uzziah the king was a leper to the day of his death, and lived in a separate house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the LORD's house: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

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Verse 21

And dwelt in a several house - He was separated, because of the infectious nature of his disorder, from all society, domestic, civil, and religious.

Jotham - was over the king's house - He became regent of the land; his father being no longer able to perform the functions of the regal office.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, wrote.

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Verse 22

The rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet - write - This work, however, is totally lost; for we have not any history of this king in the writings of Isaiah. He is barely mentioned, Isa 1:1; Isa 6:1.

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2CHRONICLES 26: 23 So Uzziah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, "He is a leper." Jotham his son reigned in his place.

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Verse 23

They buried him - in the field of the burial - As he was a leper, he was not permitted to be buried in the common burial-place of the kings; as it was supposed that even a place of sepulture must be defiled by the body of one who had died of this most afflictive and dangerous malady.