

### **“...Yet Not With a Whole Heart...”**

The story of the Judean king Amaziah in 2Chron.25 is ripe with vital spiritual precepts and practical applications (please take time to read it for yourself!). But one of the most telling statements made concerning him is found early on in the account, “*And he did right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a whole heart,*” v.2.

The “*right*” that Amaziah did was, at least in part, that “*he killed his servants who had slain his father the king,*” v.3; and manifested regard for what was “*written in the law in the book of Moses*” by not putting these men’s “*children to death,*” v.4; cf. Deut.24:16. And yet...

The “*not with a whole heart*” part is also demonstrated in this chapter. Though other examples could be cited, the primary evidence seems to be derived from Amaziah’s bringing back and worship of “*the gods of the sons of Seir*” and “*set them up as his gods, bowed down before them, and burned incense to them*” (v.14) after he had defeated them in battle. The prophet sent to Amaziah regarding this failure made a great point in v.15 when he asked, “*Why have you sought the gods of the people who have not delivered their own people from your hand?*” Talk about a “Duh!” moment! But Amaziah, because his heart was not *wholly* committed to Jehovah, responded with contempt and insolence, “*Have we appointed you a royal counselor? Stop!*” and then uttered a not so veiled threat, v.16.

Now, what should we learn even from these few things?

1. Not only does God *desire* our “*whole hearts*” rather than just a piece or part of them, it is ALWAYS in our own best interest to serve Him with *undivided* allegiance, attention, and affection. Jesus made this clear in Mark 12:30, “*And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength*” as well as in Matt.6:24, “*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other.*” God expects, requires, and deserves our **whole hearts!**
2. Reasons/motives matter. Amaziah “*did right in the sight of the Lord,*” but apparently did so when it suited him. He was willing to rightfully punish his father’s murders, and even did so “*as it is written in the law in the book of Moses which the Lord commanded*” (v.4), but then when it suited him, he also violated the first and most fundamental commandment to “*have no gods before Me,*” Ex.20:3. Perhaps many “Christians” today share the divided heart of Amaziah, and are like the Ephesians who did many things right *according to the law* of God, but have nonetheless “*left your first love,*” Rev.2:2-3,4? We should hear and heed David’s wise advice to his son Solomon, “*...know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts...*” 1Chron.28:9. God expects, requires, and deserves our **whole hearts!**
3. Anything less than *whole-hearted* devotion to God inevitably leads to disobedience and destruction. Amaziah started off well in his reign over Judah. But his *half-hearted* (or *less*) dedication to God led to disobedience; and disobedience led to destruction. God’s prophet warned him, “*I know that God has planned to destroy you, because you have done this* (worshipped Edomite idols, PCS), *and have not*

*listened to my counsel* (as one sent by God to speak for Him, PCS),” 2Chron.25:16b. Even the king of Israel, Joash, warned Amaziah of impending doom, but “*Amaziah would not listen*” (vv.17-20) and was defeated and lost not only his kingdom and the city of Jerusalem and its holy relics from the Temple, but eventually his life and his SOUL, vv.21-28. God expects, requires, and deserves our **whole hearts!**

What about you and me? Are our “*whole hearts*” committed to God? Or are we only *half-heartedly* (or less!) devoted to Him? Remember the warning of James 4:5 where it says of God that “*He jealousy desires the spirit which He has made to dwell in us?*” I could be wrong (don’t think so in this case), but I think that means ALL of it! Give God you *whole heart*... ALL of it... every last bit... for eternity depends on it. (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at [vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com](http://vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com); email to [mrpcstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:mrpcstrong@hotmail.com))