

## Preparation

*So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God.*

*II Chronicles 27:6*

The account of Jotham's reign over Judah is relatively brief compared to most accounts of the other kings. Yet our text provides the key comment on the success of his brief sixteen-year reign, in that he prepared his ways before the LORD his God. His success as a builder and fortifier of Judah and as a military leader, described in the previous verses, is attributed here to his awareness of the view of the LORD upon his ways. He had evidently learned this key to successful leadership in his young life of 25 years leading up to his reign.

While there are many "ways" that must be decided and determined by a leader, their influences can vary. As a king, he could have determined to please the people of Judah over which he reigned. However, as seen earlier in this chapter, while Jotham did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, "the people did yet corruptly." So, to his credit, he did not allow the views and choices of the people to influence his ways. If we look back to the previous chapter, it is evident that the long reign of Uzziah his father may have had strong influence both positively and negatively. Uzziah's reign was mostly a good one, evidently till near its end, "when he was strong, [and] his heart was lifted up to his destruction" (II Chronicles 26:16). Jotham would have seen the success of his father's years of doing right in the sight of the LORD, as well as his being smitten with leprosy in his prideful act of attempting to assume the duties assigned only to the priests of the LORD, which initiated the co-regency of Jotham, as Uzziah was cut off from the people according to the Law. In addition, both Uzziah and Jotham benefited from the godly influence of prophets, including Isaiah (Isaiah 1:1).

Thus, Jotham's preparation prominently considered the view of the LORD upon his choices, as learned from these experiences and influences. We would do well to do the same as we prepare our ways, in our individual choices, in roles of leadership, and in our duties to elect and pray for those who would be our leaders.