

## Why Do the Godly Suffer?

"And the Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death." II Kings 15:5

God considered Azariah, king of Judah, a good king – not as good as King David, but not wicked like the kings of Israel. God considered Ahaz, the grandson of Azariah, wicked, for “he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel.”<sup>1</sup> Ahaz prospered as a wicked king for many years.

The Bible does not say that Azariah “became ill” with leprosy; it was not the fickle finger of fate, but the hand of God that gave this good king leprosy. Although he reigned 52 years, we have no idea how many of them he spent as a leper. God “smote the king” for no apparent reason, at least no reason that He wishes to share with His people. His wicked grandson, Ahaz, reigned over Judah for a seemingly sixteen trouble-free years.

Just as there is no necessary relationship between God blessing a person and His approving of that person, so also, there is no necessary relationship between God smiting a person and His disapproving of that person. **When God brings circumstances into your life not to your liking (and you can be confident that He will), do not question His goodness.**