
2CHRONICLES 15: 1 The Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded:

Azariah's prophecy concerning Israel, and his exhortation to Asa, 2Chr 15:1-7. Asa completes the reformation which he had begun, his kingdom is greatly strengthened, and all to people make a solemn covenant with the Lord, 2Chr 15:8-15. His treatment of his mother Maachah, 2Chr 15:16. He brings into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, 2Chr 15:17, 2Chr 15:18. And he has no war till the thirty-fifth year of his reign, 2Chr 15:19.

Verse 1

Azariah the son of Oded - We know nothing of this prophet but what is related of him here.

2CHRONICLES 15: 2 and he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin! the LORD is with you, while you are with him; and if you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.

Verse 2

The Lord is with you, while ye be with him - This is the settled and eternal purpose of God; to them who seek him he will ever be found propitious, and them alone will he abandon who forsake him. In this verse the unconditional perseverance of the saints has no place: a doctrine which was first the ruin of the human race, Ye shall not die; and ever since the fall, has been the plague and disgrace of the Church of Christ. The Targum is curious: "Hearken to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Word of the Lord shall be your helper, while ye walk in his ways. If ye seek doctrine from his presence he will be found of you in times of trouble; but if you cast away his fear, he will abandon you."

2CHRONICLES 15: 3 Now for a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

Verse 3

Now for a long season Israel - "Israel hath followed Jeroboam, and they have not worshipped the true God. They have burnt incense to their golden calves; their priestlings [כומרֵיָא cumeraiya, their black, sooty sacrificers] have burnt perfumes with a strange worship, and have not exercised themselves in the law." - Targum. These priests could not teach, because they had not learnt; and as they had abandoned the law of the Lord, consequently they had no proper matter for instruction.

There is a great diversity of opinions concerning the meaning of this text. Some consider it a prophecy relative to the future state of this people, and the final destruction of the Jews as to their political existence: others consider it as referring to the state of the people under the reigns of Rehoboam and Abijah, which were happily changed under that of Asa; and this appears to me to be the most natural sense of the words.

2CHRONICLES 15: 4 But when in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them.

2CHRONICLES 15: 5 In those times there was no peace to him who went out, nor to him who came in; but great troubles were on all the inhabitants of the lands.

Verse 5

But great vexations - Does not our Lord allude to this and the following verse in Mat 24:6, Mat 24:7, Mat 24:9, Mat 24:13?

2CHRONICLES 15: 6 They were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city; for God troubled them with all adversity.

2CHRONICLES 15: 7 But you be strong, and don't let your hands be slack; for your work shall be rewarded."

2CHRONICLES 15: 8 When Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominations out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from the hill country of Ephraim; and he renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

Verse 8

Renewed the altar - Dedicated it afresh, or perhaps enlarged it, that more sacrifices might be offered on it than ever before; for it cannot be supposed that this altar had no victims offered on it till the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa, who had previously been so zealous in restoring the Divine worship.

2CHRONICLES 15: 9 He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those who lived with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

Verse 9

And the strangers - Many out of the different tribes, particularly out of Simeon, Ephraim, and Manasseh, having reflected that the Divine blessing was promised to the house of David, and finding the government of Jeroboam founded in idolatry, would naturally, through a spirit of piety, leave their own country, and go where they might enjoy the worship of the true God.

2CHRONICLES 15: 10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

Verse 10

The third month - At the feast of pentecost which was held on the third month.

2CHRONICLES 15: 11 They sacrificed to the LORD in that day, of the plunder which they had brought, seven hundred head of cattle and seven thousand sheep.

Verse 11

The spoil which they had brought - The spoil which they had taken from Zerah and his auxiliaries, 2Chr 14:14, 2Chr 14:15.

2CHRONICLES 15: 12 They entered into the covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul;

Verse 12

They entered into a covenant - The covenant consisted of two parts:

1. We will seek the God of our fathers with all our heart, and with all our soul.
 2. Whosoever, great or small, man or woman, will not worship the true God, and serve him alone, shall be put to death. Thus no toleration was given to idolatry, so that it must be rooted out: and that this covenant might be properly binding, they confirmed it with an oath; and God accepted them and their services.
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2CHRONICLES 15: 13 and that whoever would not seek the LORD, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

2CHRONICLES 15: 14 They swore to the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

2CHRONICLES 15: 15 All Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest all around.

2CHRONICLES 15: 16 Also Maacah, the mother of Asa the king, he removed from being queen, because she had made an abominable image for an Asherah; and Asa cut down her image, and made dust of it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.

Verse 16

Concerning Maachah - See the matter fully explained in the note on 1Kgs 15:13 (note).

The Jews imagine that Maachah repented, and her name became changed into Michaiah, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; and that this was done that there might be no mention of her former name, lest it should be a reproach to her: but we have already seen another gloss on this name. See on 2Chr 11:20 (note).

2CHRONICLES 15: 17 But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

Verse 17

The high places were not taken away - He had totally suppressed or destroyed the idolatry; but some of the places, buildings, or altars, he permitted to remain.

2CHRONICLES 15: 18 He brought into God's house the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

Verse 18

The things that his father had dedicated - As it was a custom to dedicate a part of the spoils taken from an enemy to the service and honor of God, it is natural to suppose that Abijah, having so signally overthrown Jeroboam, (2Chr 13:15-19), had dedicated a part of the spoils to the Lord; but they had not been brought into the temple till this time.

Silver, and gold, and vessels - The word כֵּלִים *kelim*, which we translate vessels, signifies instruments, utensils, ornaments, etc.

2CHRONICLES 15: 19 There was no more war to the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

Verse 19

The five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa - Archbishop Usher thinks that this should be counted from the separation of the kingdom, and that this fell on the fifteenth year of Asa's reign. To settle in every respect these chronologies is a most difficult undertaking; and the difficulty does not belong to the sacred books alone, all other chronological tables of all the nations in the world, are in the same predicament. With those of our own history I have often been puzzled, even while I had access to all the archives of the nation. Probably we should read here the five and twentieth year. See the note on 1Kgs 15:16.