
2CHRONICLES 28: 1 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and he didn't do that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father;

Ahaz succeeds his father Jotham, and reigns wickedly for sixteen years, 2Chr 28:1. He restores idolatry in its grossest forms, 2Chr 28:2-4; and is delivered into the hands of the kings of Israel and Syria, 2Chr 28:5. Pekah slays one hundred and twenty thousand Jews in one day, and carries away captive two hundred thousand of the people, whom, at the instance of Oded the prophet, they restore to liberty, and send home, clothed and fed, 2Chr 28:6-15. Ahaz sends to the king of Assyria for help against the Edomites, Philistines, etc., from whom he receives no effectual succor, 2Chr 28:16-21. He sins yet more, spoils and shuts up the temple of God, and propagates idolatry throughout the land, 2Chr 28:22-25. A reference to his acts, his death, and burial, 2Chr 28:26, 2Chr 28:27.

Verse 1

Ahaz was twenty years old - For the difficulties in this chronology, see the notes on 2Kgs 16:2 (note).

2CHRONICLES 28: 2 but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for the Baals.

2CHRONICLES 28: 3 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

Verse 3

Burnt his children in the fire - There is a most remarkable addition here in the Chaldee which I shall give at length: "Ahaz burnt his children in the fire; but the Word of the Lord snatched Hezekiah from among them; for it was manifest before the Lord that the three righteous men, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were to proceed from him; who should deliver up their bodies that they might be cast into a burning fiery furnace, on account of the great and glorious Name, (יהוה) and from which they should escape. First, Abram escaped from the furnace of fire among the Chaldeans, into which he had been cast by Nimrod, because he would not worship their idols. Secondly, Tamar escaped burning in the house of judgment of Judah, who had said, Bring her out, that she may be burnt. Thirdly, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz escaped from the burning, when Ahaz his father cast him into the valley of the son of Hinnom, on the altars of Tophet. Fourthly, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, escaped from the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. Fifthly, Joshua, the son of Josedek the high priest, escaped, when the impious Nebuchadnezzar had cast him into a burning fiery furnace, with Achaab the son of Kolia, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, the false prophet. They were consumed by fire; but Joshua the son of Josedek escaped because of his righteousness."

2CHRONICLES 28: 4 He sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

2CHRONICLES 28: 5 Therefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they struck him, and carried away of his a great multitude of captives, and brought them to Damascus. He was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who struck him with a great slaughter.

Verse 5

Delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria - For the better understanding of these passages, the reader is requested to refer to what has been advanced in the notes on the sixteenth chapter of 2Kgs 16:5, etc.

2CHRONICLES 28: 6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah killed in Judah one hundred twenty thousand in one day, all of them valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers.

Verse 6

A hundred and twenty thousand - It is very probable that there is a mistake in this number. It is hardly possible that a hundred and twenty thousand men could have been slain in one day; yet all the versions and MSS. agree in this number. The whole people seem to have been given up into the hands of their enemies.

2CHRONICLES 28: 7 Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the ruler of the house, and Elkanah who was next to the king.

2CHRONICLES 28: 8 The children of Israel carried away captive of their brothers two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much plunder from them, and brought the plunder to Samaria.

2CHRONICLES 28: 9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded: and he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria, and said to them, "Behold, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, he has delivered them into your hand, and you have slain them in a rage which has reached up to heaven.

Verse 9

But a prophet of the Lord - whose name was Oded - To this beautiful speech nothing can be added by the best comment; it is simple, humane, pious, and overwhelmingly convincing: no wonder it produced the effect mentioned here. That there was much of humanity in the heads of the children of Ephraim who joined with the prophet on this occasion, the fifteenth verse sufficiently proves. They did not barely dismiss these most unfortunate captives, but they took that very spoil which their victorious army had brought away; and they clothed, fed, shod, and anointed, these distressed people, set the feeblest of them upon asses, and escorted them safely to Jericho. We can scarcely find a parallel to this in the universal history of the wars which savage man has carried on against his fellows, from the foundation of the world.

2CHRONICLES 28: 10 Now you purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for male and female slaves for yourselves. Aren't there even with you trespasses of your own against the LORD your God?

2CHRONICLES 28: 11 Now hear me therefore, and send back the captives, that you have taken captive from your brothers; for the fierce wrath of the LORD is on you."

2CHRONICLES 28: 12 Then some of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against those who came from the war,

2CHRONICLES 28: 13 and said to them, "You shall not bring in the captives here: for you purpose that which will bring on us a trespass against the LORD, to add to our sins and to our trespass; for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel."

2CHRONICLES 28: 14 So the armed men left the captives and the plunder before the princes and all the assembly.

2CHRONICLES 28: 15 The men who have been mentioned by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the plunder clothed all who were naked among them, dressed them, gave them sandals, and gave them something to eat and to drink, anointed them, carried all the feeble of them on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brothers. Then they returned to Samaria.

2CHRONICLES 28: 16 At that time king Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria to help him.

Verse 16

The kings of Assyria to help him - Instead of מלכי malchey; Kings; the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldee, one MS., and the parallel place, 2Kgs 16:7, have מלך melek, King, in the singular number. This king was Tiglath-pileser, as we learn from the second book of Kings.

2CHRONICLES 28: 17 For again the Edomites had come and struck Judah, and carried away captives.

2CHRONICLES 28: 18 The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland, and of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth Shemesh, and Aijalon, and Gederoth, and Soco with its towns, and Timnah with its towns, Gimzo also and its towns: and they lived there.

2CHRONICLES 28: 19 For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he had dealt wantonly in Judah, and trespassed severely against the LORD.

2CHRONICLES 28: 20 Tilgath Pilneser king of Assyria came to him, and distressed him, but didn't strengthen him.

2CHRONICLES 28: 21 For Ahaz took away a portion out of the LORD's house, and out of the house of the king and of the princes, and gave it to the king of Assyria: but it didn't help him.

Verse 21

But he helped him not - He did him no ultimate service. See the note on 2Kgs 16:9.

After 2Kgs 16:15, the 23d, 24th, and 25th verses are introduced before the 16th, in the Syriac and Arabic, and the 22d verse is wholly wanting in both, though some of the expressions may be found in the twenty-first verse.

2CHRONICLES 28: 22 In the time of his distress, he trespassed yet more against the LORD, this same king Ahaz.

2CHRONICLES 28: 23 For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which struck him; and he said, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria helped them, so I will sacrifice to them, that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

Verse 23

He sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him - "This passage," says Mr. Hallet, "greatly surprised me; for the sacred historian himself is here represented as saying, The gods of Damascus had smitten Ahaz. But it is impossible to suppose that an inspired author could say this; for the Scripture everywhere represents the heathen idols as nothing and vanity, and as incapable of doing either good or hurt. All difficulty is avoided if we follow the old Hebrew copies, from which the Greek translation was made, *Και ειπεν ο βασιλεις Αχαζ, εκζητησω τους Θεους Δαμασκου τους τυπτοντας με*, And King Ahaz said, I Will Seek to the Gods of Damascus Which Have Smitten Me; and then it follows, both in Hebrew and Greek, He said moreover, Because the gods of the king of Syria help them; therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. Both the Syriac and Arabic give it a similar turn; and say that Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, and said, Ye are my gods and my lords; you will I worship, and to you will I sacrifice."

2CHRONICLES 28: 24 Ahaz gathered together the vessels of God's house, and cut in pieces the vessels of God's house, and shut up the doors of the LORD's house; and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

Verse 24

Shut up the doors - He caused the Divine worship to be totally suspended; and they continued shut till the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, one of whose first acts was to reopen them, and thus to restore the Divine worship, 2Chr 29:3.

2CHRONICLES 28: 25 In every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD, the God of his fathers.

2CHRONICLES 28: 26 Now the rest of his acts, and all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

2CHRONICLES 28: 27 Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem; for they didn't bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

Verse 27

The kings of Israel - It is a common thing for the writer of this book to put Israel for Judah. He still considers them as one people, because proceeding from one stock. The versions and MSS. have the same reading with the Hebrew; the matter is of little importance, and with this interpretation none can mistake.