
2KINGS 15: 1 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.

Azariah begins to reign over Judah, and acts well, but does not remove the high places, 2Kgs 15:1-4. He becomes leprous, and dies, after having reigned fifty-two years; and Jotham, his son, reigns in his stead, 2Kgs 15:5-7. Zachariah reigns over Israel, and acts wickedly; and Shallum conspires against him and slays him, after he had reigned six months, 2Kgs 15:8-12. Shallum reigns one month, and is slain by Menahem, 2Kgs 15:13-15. Menahem's wicked and oppressive reign; he subsidizes the king of Assyria, and dies, after having reigned ten years, 2Kgs 15:16-22. Pekahiah, his son, reigns in his stead; does wickedly; Pekah, one of his captains, conspires against and kills him, after he had reigned two years, 2Kgs 15:23-26. Pekah reigns in his stead, and acts wickedly, 2Kgs 15:27-28. Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, carries into captivity the inhabitants of many cities, 2Kgs 15:29. Hoshea conspires against and slays Pekah, after he had reigned twenty years; and reigns in his stead, 2Kgs 15:30, 2Kgs 15:31. Jotham begins to reign over Judah; he reigns well; dies after a reign of sixteen years, and is succeeded by his son Ahaz, 2Kgs 15:32-38.

Verse 1

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam - Dr. Kennicott complains loudly here, because of "the corruption in the name of this king of Judah, who is expressed by four different names in this chapter: Ozriah, Oziah, Ozrihu, and Ozihu. Our oldest Hebrew MS. relieves us here by reading truly, in 2Kgs 15:1, 2Kgs 15:6, 2Kgs 15:7, עֲזִיָּהּ Uzziyah, where the printed text is differently corrupted. This reading is called true,

1. Because it is supported by the Syriac and Arabic versions in these three verses.
2. Because the printed text itself has it so in 2Kgs 15:32, 2Kgs 15:34 of this very chapter.
3. Because it is so expressed in the parallel place in Chronicles; and,
4. Because it is not Αζαρία, Azariah, but Οζίας, Oziah, (Uzziah), in St. Matthew's genealogy."

There are insuperable difficulties in the chronology of this place. The marginal note says, "This is the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's partnership in the kingdom with his father, who made him consort at his going to the Syrian wars. It is the sixteenth year of Jeroboam's monarchy." Dr. Lightfoot endeavors to reconcile this place with 2Kgs 14:16, 2Kgs 14:17, thus: "At the death of Amaziah, his son and heir Uzziyah was but four years old, for he was about sixteen in Jeroboam's twenty-seventh year; therefore, the throne must have been empty eleven years, and the government administered by protectors while Uzziyah was in his minority." Learned men are not agreed concerning the mode of reconciling these differences; there is probably some mistake in the numbers. I must say to all the contending chronologers: -

Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites.

When such men disagree, I can't decide.

2KINGS 15: 2 Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.

2KINGS 15: 3 He did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done.

Verse 3

He did that which was right - It is said, 2Chr 26:5, that he sought the Lord in the days of Zechariah the prophet, and God made him to prosper; that he fought against the Philistines; broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod; prevailed over the Arabians and Meunims; and that the Ammonites paid him tribute; and his dominion extended abroad, even to the entering in of Egypt; that he built towers in Jerusalem, at the corner gate, valley gate, and turning of the wall; and built towers also in the desert, and digged many wells; that he had a very strong and well-regulated military force, which he provided with a well-stocked arsenal; and constructed many military engines to shoot arrows and project great stones; and that his fame was universally spread abroad.

2KINGS 15: 4 However the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

2KINGS 15: 5 The LORD struck the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death, and lived in a separate house. Jotham the king's son was over the household, judging the people of the land.

Verse 5

The Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper - The reason of this plague is well told in the above quoted chapter, 2Chr 26:16.

That his heart being elated, he went into the temple to burn incense upon the altar, assuming to himself the functions of the high priest; that Azariah the priest, with fourscore others, went in after him, to prevent him; and that while they were remonstrating against his conduct, the Lord struck him with the leprosy, which immediately appeared on his forehead; that they thrust him out as an unclean person; and that he himself hurried to get out, feeling that the Lord had smitten him; that he was obliged to dwell in a house by himself, being leprous, to the day of his death; and that during this time the affairs of the kingdom were administered by his son Jotham. A poet, ridiculing the conduct of those who, without an episcopal ordination, think they have authority from God to dispense all the ordinances of the Church, expresses himself thus: -

But now the warm enthusiast cries,

The office to myself I take;

Offering the Christian sacrifice,

Myself a lawful priest I make:

To me this honor appertains,

No need of man when God ordains. [Some go into the contrary extreme, and in effect say, no need of God when Man ordains.]

Though kings may not so far presume, 'Tis no presumption in a clown,

And, lo, without a call from Rome,
My flail or hammer I lay down;
And if my order's name ye seek,
Come, see a new Melchisedek!
Ye upstart (men-made) priests, your sentence know,
The marks you can no longer hide;
Your daring deeds too plainly show
The loathsome leprosy of pride;
And if ye still your crime deny,
Who lepers live shall lepers die.
Charles Wesley.

This is very severe, but applies to every man who, through pride, presumption, or the desire of gain, enters into the priest's office, though he have the utmost authority that the highest ecclesiastical officer can confer.

2KINGS 15: 6 Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, aren't they written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

2KINGS 15: 7 Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his place.

2KINGS 15: 8 In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months.

2KINGS 15: 9 He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he didn't depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel to sin.

2KINGS 15: 10 Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck him before the people, and killed him, and reigned in his place.

Verse 10

Smote him before the people - In some public assembly: he probably became very unpopular.

2KINGS 15: 11 Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2KINGS 15: 12 This was the LORD's word which he spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your sons to the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." So it came to pass.

Verse 12

This was the word of the Lord - unto Jehu - God had promised to Jehu that his sons should sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation; and so it came to pass, for Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam, and Zachariah, succeeded Jehu, to whom this promise was made. But because he executed the Divine purpose with an uncommanded cruelty, therefore God cut his family short, according to his word by Hosea, I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu; and I will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel, Hos 1:4.

2KINGS 15: 13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned for a month in Samaria.

Verse 13

He reigned a full month - Menahem is supposed to have been one of Zachariah's generals. Hearing of the death of his master, when he was with the troops at Tirzah, he hastened to Samaria, and slew the murderer, and had himself proclaimed in his stead. But, as the people of Tiphshah did not open their gates to him, he took the place by assault; and as the text tells us, practiced the most cruel barbarities, even ripping up the women that were with child!

2KINGS 15: 14 Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and struck Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and killed him, and reigned in his place.

2KINGS 15: 15 Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2KINGS 15: 16 Then Menahem struck Tiphshah, and all who were therein, and its borders, from Tirzah: because they didn't open to him, therefore he struck it; and all the women therein who were with child he ripped up.

2KINGS 15: 17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi began to reign over Israel for ten years in Samaria.

2KINGS 15: 18 He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he didn't depart all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel to sin.

2KINGS 15: 19 There came against the land Pul the king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul one thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

Verse 19

Pul, the king of Assyria - This is the first time we hear of Assyria since the days of Nimrod, its founder, Gen 10:11.

Dean Prideaux supposes that this Pul was father of the famous Sardanapalus, the son himself being called Sardan; to which, as was frequent in those times, the father's name, Pul, was added, making

Sardanpul of which the Greeks and Latins made Sardanapalus; and this Pul is supposed to be the same that reigned in Nineveh when Jonah preached the terrors of the Lord to that city.

That his hand - That is, his power and influence, might be with him: in this sense is the word hand frequently used in Scripture.

2KINGS 15: 20 Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and didn't stay there in the land.

Verse 20

Each man fifty shekels of silver - Upwards of five pounds sterling a man.

2KINGS 15: 21 Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, aren't they written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Verse 21

Are they not written in - the chronicles - There are no chronicles extant, in which there is any thing farther relative to this king.

2KINGS 15: 22 Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his place.

2KINGS 15: 23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria for two years.

2KINGS 15: 24 He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he didn't depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel to sin.

2KINGS 15: 25 Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him, and struck him in Samaria, in the castle of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah; and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his place.

Verse 25

Smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah - Who Argob and Arieah were we know not; some make them men, some make them statues. Pekah had fifty Gileadites in the conspiracy with him.

2KINGS 15: 26 Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2KINGS 15: 27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria for twenty years.

2KINGS 15: 28 He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he didn't depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, with which he made Israel to sin.

2KINGS 15: 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath Pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel Beth Maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried them captive to Assyria.

Verse 29

Came Tiglath-pileser - He is supposed to have been the successor of Sardanapalus: Dean Prideaux makes him the same with Arbaces, called by Aelian Thilgamus, and by Usher Ninus junior; who, together with Belesis, headed the conspiracy against Sardanapalus, and fixed his seat at Nineveh, the ancient residence of the Assyrian kings; as did Belesis, who is called, in Isa 39:1, Baladan, fix his at Babylon.

Took Ijon - These places belonged to Israel; and were taken by Ben-hadad, king of Syria, when he was in league with Asa, king of Judah. See 1Kgs 15:20. They were regained by Jeroboam the second; and now they are taken from Israel once more by Tiglath-pileser. From 1Chr 5:26, we learn that Pul and Tiglath-pileser, kings of Assyria, carried away into captivity the two tribes of Reuben, and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; all that belonged to Israel, on the other side of Jordan. These were never restored to Israel.

2KINGS 15: 30 Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck him, and killed him, and reigned in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

Verse 30

Hoshea the son of Elah - in the twentieth year of Jotham - There are many difficulties in the chronology of this place. To reconcile the whole, Calmet says: "Hoshea conspired against Pekah, the twentieth year of the reign of this prince, which was the eighteenth after the beginning of the reign of Jotham, king of Judah. Two years after this, that is, the fourth year of Ahaz, and the twentieth of Jotham, Hoshea made himself master of a part of the kingdom, according to 2Kgs 15:30. Finally, the twelfth year of Ahaz, Hoshea had peaceable possession of the whole kingdom, according to 2Kgs 17:1."

2KINGS 15: 31 Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

2KINGS 15: 32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.

2KINGS 15: 33 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok.

2KINGS 15: 34 He did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.

2KINGS 15: 35 However the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places. He built the upper gate of the LORD's house.

2KINGS 15: 36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, aren't they written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Verse 36

Now the rest of the acts of Jotham - These acts are distinctly stated in 2Chr 27:1-9. He built the high gate of the house of the Lord, and he built much on the wall of Ophel. He built cities in the mountains of Judah; and in the forests he built castles and towers. He overthrew the Ammonites; and obliged them to give him one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley, for three consecutive years. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years. These are the particulars which we learn from the place in Chronicles quoted above; few of which are mentioned in this place. As to the higher gate of the house of the Lord, commentators are not well agreed: some think it was a gate which he then made, and which did not exist before, and is the same that is called the new gate, Jer 26:10, which is very likely.

2KINGS 15: 37 In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.

Verse 37

In those days the Lord began to send - It was about this time that the Assyrian wars, so ruinous to the Jews, began; but it was in the following reigns that they arrived at their highest pitch of disaster to those unfaithful and unfortunate people. However much we may blame the Jews for their disobedience and obstinacy, yet we cannot help feeling for them under their severe afflictions. Grievously they have sinned, and grievously have they suffered for it. And if they be still objects of God's judgments, there is revelation to believe that they will yet be objects of God's goodness. Many think the signs of the times are favorable to this ingathering; but there is no evidence among the people themselves that the day of their redemption is at hand. They do not humble themselves; they do not seek the Lord.

2KINGS 15: 38 Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his place.
