

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CHRONICLES 15

David, having prepared a place for the ark of God, gathered the Israelites, Levites, and priests, to assist in the bringing of it up thereunto, (^{<1310>}1 Chronicles 15:1,13) and which was done in a very honourable and joyful manner, (^{<1312>}1 Chronicles 15:24-28), though David, for his behaviour, was despised by Michal his wife in her heart, (^{<1313>}1 Chronicles 15:29).

Ver. 1. *And David made him houses in the city of David*, etc.] With the help of the masons and carpenters Hiram sent him, (^{<1340>}1 Chronicles 14:1), the royal palace is meant, with all the apartments in it, which were many and large, as so great a family he had required, and with all the out houses to it necessary for his servants, and their offices:

and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent; (see ^{<1067>}2 Samuel 6:17).

Ver. 2. *Then David said*, etc.] Either within himself, or to his ministers and courtiers about him:

none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites; he saw his former mistake in employing those that were not Levites in bringing up the ark from Kirjathjearim, and bringing it in a cart, and not on the shoulders of the Levites, and so miscarried in his attempt, (^{<1000>}2 Samuel 6:1) and, perhaps, had since more diligently consulted the law of God about this matter:

for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever; as long as the Levitical dispensation lasted, as appears from (^{<1003>}Numbers 1:50 4:15 7:9).

Ver. 3. *And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem*, etc.] The chief and heads of the people:

to bring up the ark of the Lord; from the house of Obededom, where it had been three months, and for the sake of which his house was blessed, and which David heard of; and this encouraged him to take this step to fetch it

from thence: unto his place, which he had prepared for it; (^{<1350>}1 Chronicles 15:1 ^{<1062>}2 Samuel 6:12,17).

Ver. 4-10. *And David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites.*] Whose business it was to bear the ark when there was any occasion for it: and from hence to the end of (^{<1350>}1 Chronicles 15:10) an account is given of the Levites, and their number employed in this affair:

of the sons of Kohath; a son of Levi, that is, of his posterity; for his immediate sons, and so those of the rest after mentioned, had been dead ages ago; the principal of those, at this present time, was Uriel, and his kindred, or those of the same family with him, were one hundred and twenty: of those of Merari, another son of Levi, the chief was Asaiah, with two hundred and twenty of his relations: of those of Gershon, another son of Levi, was Joel, and his brethren were one hundred and thirty: of the posterity of Elizaphan, a grandson of Kohath, (^{<1068>}Exodus 5:18,22), the most noted was Shemaiah, who had two hundred of his family with him: and of those of Hebron, the son of Kohath, (^{<1068>}Exodus 6:18), Eliel was the most famous, and he had eighty of his kindred with him: and of those of Uzziel, another son of Kohath in a different line from Elizaphan, who also was a son of Uzziel, was Amminadab the chief, who had one hundred and twelve of his kindred with him: the number of Levites, in all, gathered together, were eight hundred and sixty two, besides their chiefs.

Ver. 11. *And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests,* etc.] (see ^{<1087>}2 Samuel 8:17 15:27,29 ^{<1004>}1 Kings 4:4)

and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab; the six chiefs before mentioned.

Ver. 12. *And he said unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites,* etc.] Of the families of the Levites, heads of their fathers' houses:

sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren; respectively under each, whose numbers are before given, by washing their bodies and clothes, and abstaining from their wives:

that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it; (^{<1087>}2 Samuel 6:17).

Ver. 13. *For because ye did it not at the first,* etc.] Did not sanctify themselves, as the supplement in our version directs; but rather the sense

is, ye were not there at first, when the ark was brought from Kirjathjearim as far as the house of Obededom, as they should have been; they were not then employed, as was their business, and therefore

the Lord our God made a breach upon us; by smiting Uzzah with death, who was no Levite, and touched the ark, which is called his “error”, and for which God smote him, (^{<1067>}2 Samuel 6:7) on which place Lud. Capellus observes, the word “shal”, we there render “error”, signifies a “disease” in the Arabic language, and might formerly design a sudden one with the Hebrew; as an apoplexy; and so the sense be, that God smote Uzzah with an apoplexy, of which he suddenly died:

for that we sought him not after the due order; but, instead of employing the Levites to carry the ark on their shoulders, it was put upon a cart.

Ver. 14. *So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves*, etc.] As they were ordered, and in the manner they should:

to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel; for though it was chiefly the work of the Levites, yet the priests might do it, and sometimes did, (see ^{<1063>}Joshua 3:13,14 6:6).

Ver. 15. *And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the Lord.*] Not only bare it on their shoulders, but with the staves in it, which rested on their shoulders, (see ^{<1070>}Numbers 7:9 ^{<1254>}Exodus 25:14), the reason of this command, that the ark should be carried on men’s shoulders, and not in any carriage, according to Maimonides ^{f82}, was both for the honour of it, and lest its form and structure should be any ways damaged.

Ver. 16. *And David spake to the chief of the Levites*, etc.] The six before mentioned, (^{<1351>}1 Chronicles 15:11)

to appoint their brethren to be the singers; before the ark, as they brought it up:

with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals; which were used in those times, (see ^{<1065>}2 Samuel 6:5 13:8)

sounding by lifting up the voice with joy; the instrumental music was to be attended with vocal music, and that very sonorous and loud, and

performed with all tokens of inward joy and gladness, as the occasion required.

Ver. 17. *So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel*, etc.] The grandson of Samuel the prophet, (~~1363~~1 Chronicles 6:33)

and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; a famous singer, often mentioned in the Psalms, (~~1369~~1 Chronicles 6:39)

and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; the same with the son of Kishi, (~~1364~~1 Chronicles 6:44), these were the chief of the singers.

Ver. 18. *And with them their brethren of the second degree*, etc.] Who were next unto them, both in office and skill in singing:

the fourteen following, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obededom, and Jeiel, the porters; who, when they were not employed in singing, were doorkeepers of the sanctuary; either they had been porters at the tabernacle in Gibeon, or were so after the ark was placed in the tabernacle David prepared for it.

Ver. 19. *So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan*, etc.] The three principal of them: these were appointed

to sound with cymbals of brass; for as there were three sorts of musical instruments, (~~1356~~1 Chronicles 15:16) these three chief singers had one of those instruments appropriated to them, one of which were the cymbals of brass, to which the apostle alludes, (~~4331~~1 Corinthians 13:1).

Ver. 20. *And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah*, etc.] Who were eight of the second degree; Aziel is the same with Jaaziel, (~~1358~~1 Chronicles 15:18) and Ben is left out, in whose room Azaziah, in the next verse, seems to be put; Ben is thought to be sick or dead before they came to execute their office, and whom the father of Kimchi takes to be the same with him who is expressed in the title of (~~4900~~Psalm 9:1) which title is, “on Muthlabben”, or the death of Ben: these were appointed to sound

with psalteries on Alamothe; psalteries were another kind of instruments of music; and Alamothe was either the beginning of a song, to the tune of which those instruments played, or the tune itself, and the note of it; either

the treble or counter tenor, a shrill sound, like that of organs, which this word sometimes signifies, (see ^{<906>}Psalm 46:1).

Ver. 21. *And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obededom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah,* etc.] These six were appointed to sound:

with harps on the Sheminith to excel; which Sheminith some take to be an harp with eight strings, or the beginning of a song, or a musical tone, the bass; see the title of (^{<906>}Psalm 6:1).

Ver. 22. *And Chenaniah chief of the Levites was for song,* etc.] But the chief for the song were Heman, Asaph, and Ethan; rather

for the burden, as the Targum; for the lifting up and bearing the ark:

he instructed about the song; or about the taking up and bearing the burden, the ark; directing when to take it up, and how far to go with it, and then rest:

because he was skilful; a wise and prudent man in all things, and so proper to direct in this business.

Ver. 23. *And Berechiah, and Elkanah, were doorkeepers for the ark,* etc.]

Either while it was at Kirjathjearim, and at Obededom's house; or rather after it was put in the tabernacle David had prepared for it; though it may be best of all to understand it, that those, as it was carrying, went before it, to keep the people from pressing to it, and gazing on it.

Ver. 24. *And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God,* etc.] With the silver trumpets; one use of which was to blow with when the camps and ark of the Lord moved, (^{<906>}Numbers 10:5,6).

and Obededom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark; they went behind it, as the others before it, for the same purpose, as it was bringing up.

Ver. 25. *So David and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands,* etc.] He and the principal men of the nation, and the officers of the army or militia:

went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obededom with joy; with all demonstrations of it; for which purpose such a band of music was prepared, as before described.

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord,* etc.] Not merely granted them bodily strength to carry it, which did not require a great deal; but helped them to carry it with cheerfulness, and without fear, and so as to commit no error, nor in any respect provoke his displeasure, as when it was brought before from Kirjathjearim:

that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams; by way of thanksgiving, besides what David offered; and this was done by the way, (see ^{<4063>}2 Samuel 6:13).

Ver. 27. *And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen,* etc.] For though a king, he, being among the singers, was clothed as they; for so it follows:

and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song; or of those that bore the burden, the ark, as the Targum:

with the singers; all were clothed in robes of fine linen:

David also had upon him an ephod of linen; which he had besides his linen robe, and was over it; and being a shorter and tighter garment, it bound the other closer to him; though some think this is explanative of the former, and designs the same, and is what others, besides priests, were, on occasion, allowed to wear, (see ^{<4028>}1 Samuel 2:18).

Ver. 28. *Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting,* etc.] (see ^{<4065>}2 Samuel 6:15).

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window,* etc.] Of the palace, to see the procession, (see ^{<4066>}2 Samuel 6:16,21-23) where not only this circumstance is related, and the inward contempt she had David in, because of his behaviour, but also what she said, and what David returned in answer to it.