

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO 2 CHRONICLES 12

Rehoboam and his people forsaking the law of the Lord, Shishak king of Egypt is allowed by God to invade his land, and take his fenced cities, (^{<412>}2 Chronicles 12:1-4), upon which a prophet of the Lord was sent to him and his princes, to show them the reason of it; whereupon they humbled themselves, and the Lord was pleased not to allow the enemy utterly to destroy them, yet to reduce them to servitude, and take away their riches, (^{<413>}2 Chronicles 12:5-12), and the chapter is closed with an account of the reign and death of Rehoboam, (^{<4123>}2 Chronicles 12:13-16).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom,* etc.] Or when the kingdom of Rehoboam was established; the tribes of Judah and Benjamin being firmly attached to him, and great numbers from the other tribes coming over to him, and things going on peaceably and prosperously during the three years that he and his people abode by the pure worship of God:

and had strengthened himself; built fortified cities for the defence of himself and kingdom, (^{<4115>}2 Chronicles 11:5-12), he forsook the law of the Lord; after he had reigned three years, and was become strong, and thought himself safe and secure on the throne, trusting to his strength:

and all Israel with him; the greater part of them following the example of their king; of this defection, and the sins they fell into, (see ^{<1142>}1 Kings 14:22-24).

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass in the fifth year of Rehoboam,* etc.] In the fourth year, the apostasy of him and his people began; and, in the year following, what is next related happened, as a punishment of it:

Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; of whom (see ^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:40 14:25),

because they transgressed against the Lord; transgressed the law of the Lord by falling into idolatry and other abominable evils; the Targum is,

“against the Word of the Lord.”

Ver. 3. *With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen; and the people were without number*, etc.] The foot soldiers; their number, according to Josephus^{f34} was 400,000:

that came with him out of Egypt; the above numerous army came from thence with him, which was famous for horses and chariots of war, (see ²⁴⁴⁷Exodus 14:7,28), what follow seem to have joined him after he came out of Egypt, or whom he subdued in his way; the Lubim or Lybians, inhabitants of Libya, a country near Egypt the same with the Lehabim; of whom (see ⁰¹⁰³Genesis 10:13),

the Sukkiims; who were either the Scenite Arabs, who dwelt in tents, as this word signifies; or the Troglodytes, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, who dwelt in dens and caves, in which sense the word “Succah” is sometimes used, (⁸⁸⁴⁰Job 38:40 ⁹¹⁰⁹Psalm 10:9) and in their country was a town called Suchae, mentioned by Pliny^{f35}; they inhabited near the Red sea; and if Shishak is the same with Sesostris, as is thought, these people were subdued by him, as Herodotus^{f36} and Strabo^{f37} testify:

and the Ethiopians; some think these were the Cushite Arabs, and that Sesostris came into Arabia is testified by the above writers; though rather the proper Ethiopians are meant, since they are joined with the Lubim or Africans; and since, as Herodotus^{f38} says, he ruled over Ethiopia; and Diodorus Siculus^{f39} says he fought with them, and obliged them to pay him tribute.

Ver. 4. *And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah*, etc.] Which Rehoboam had lately built, and placed his sons in them, (⁴¹¹⁵2 Chronicles 11:5-12,23), these he took without any opposition:

and came to Jerusalem; there being no army to oppose him; and so Sesostris took many countries without fighting, and among the rest Phoenicia, as Manetho^{f40} relates, in which Judea may be included.

Ver. 5. *Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam*, etc.] The same as in (⁴¹¹⁵2 Chronicles 11:2), there called the man of God:

and to the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak; through fear of him, and for safety and protection

from him, and to consult what was to be done at this critical juncture, whether to fight him, or make peace with him on the best terms they could:

and said unto them, thus saith the Lord, ye have forsaken me; his law, his word, worship, and ordinances, (^{<4121>}2 Chronicles 12:1),

and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak; suffered him to invade their land, take their fenced cities, and come up to Jerusalem without any opposition, as a punishment of their apostasy; and to explain this providence to them, and call them to repentance, was the prophet sent.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves,* etc.] Both by words acknowledging their sins, and the justice of God, and by deeds, perhaps putting on sackcloth, as was usual on such occasions, and betaking themselves to fasting and prayer:

and they said, the Lord is righteous; in giving them up into the hand of their enemies, seeing they had forsaken him, and sinned against him.

Ver. 7. *And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves,* etc.] Though but externally; the Lord takes notice of external humiliation, as he did of Ahab's, (^{<4122>}1 Kings 21:29),

the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, they have humbled themselves, therefore I will not destroy them; not now, at least not altogether, (^{<4123>}2 Chronicles 12:12),

but I will grant them some deliverance; yet not a complete one, for they were brought into servitude by Shishak, (^{<4124>}2 Chronicles 12:8), or only for a short time:

and my wrath shall not be poured out against Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak; that is, to the uttermost; that was reserved to another time, and to be done by another hand, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, they shall be his servants,* etc.] tributaries to the king of Egypt:

that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries; the difference between them, how easy the one, which they might perform without taxes and tributes, and how hard and heavy the other, through the exactions and exorbitant demands of those to whom they became subjects.

Ver. 9-11. *So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version is,

“departed from Jerusalem,”

as he did, having taken it, and spoiled it of its riches, and settled a yearly tax on the inhabitants of the land; of this, and the two following verses, (See Gill on “^{<1146>}1 Kings 14:26-28”).

Ver. 12. *And when he humbled himself*, etc.] That is, Rehoboam; or broke his heart, as the Targum, was of a contrite spirit seemingly, for it was merely external:

the wrath of the Lord turned from him; which appeared by the departure of Shishak’s army:

that he would not destroy him altogether; or make an utter destruction of him and his people:

and also in Judah things went well; prospered and succeeded after this affair of Shishak was over: or “in Judah there were good things”^{f41}; there were some good men, priests, Levites, and many of the common people, that did good things, kept up and abode by the pure worship and service of God; and which was another reason why the Lord would not destroy them altogether now, (see ^{<1188>}Genesis 18:31,32).

Ver. 13. *So Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem*, etc.] Fortified that yet more for the defence of himself, after Shishak departed:

and reigned; twelve years more, for he reigned in all seventeen, and this was in his fifth year; of what follows in this verse, (See Gill on “^{<1142>}1 Kings 14:21”).

Ver. 14. *And he did evil*, etc.] Committed idolatry, relapsed into that, his humiliation not being hearty and sincere:

because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord; by prayer and supplication, and by an attendance on the service and worship of God; for though he did these things outwardly, yet not sincerely and heartily; he did not engage in them seriously and in good earnest, with affection and fervour.

Ver. 15,16. *Now the acts of Rehoboam*, etc.] Of these two verses, (See Gill on “^{<1149>}1 Kings 14:29-31”).