

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO 2 CHRONICLES 15

Asa returning from the battle, and with the spoil of the enemy, was met by a prophet of the Lord, who encouraged him to go on with the work of reformation, promising the presence and help of God with him, (^{<4450>}2 Chronicles 15:1-7), which inspired him with fresh courage, and he went about the work with great alacrity; and having offered sacrifices, he and his people entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord, to serve him, (^{<4458>}2 Chronicles 15:8-15) upon which he destroyed his mother's idol, brought the dedicated things into the house of God, and the effect of this was peace for a long time, (^{<4456>}2 Chronicles 15:16-19).

Ver. 1. *And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded,* etc.] The same with Iddo, as Hillerus ^{f58} thinks; and some suppose this to be the name of the son as well as the father, but called Azariah, to distinguish him from him, (see ^{<4458>}2 Chronicles 15:8) on whom came, as the Targum, the spirit of prophecy, instructing him what to say to Asa; and the Jews say ^{f59} he is the same with Iddo, and he the same that was sent to Jeroboam, to reprove him for the altar he built.

Ver. 2. *And he went out to meet Asa,* etc.] From Jerusalem, as Asa was coming to it:

and said unto him, hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the principal inhabitants of which tribes had been collected, and went to this war, and were now returning:

the Lord is with you, while ye be with him; it was a clear case he had been with them, in giving them the victory over the Ethiopians; and as long as they continued in the service of God, and abode by his pure worship, they might expect he would yet be with them, otherwise not:

and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; you will see his face, and enjoy his favour, and have his presence, and help from him in every time of need, when they sought him by prayer and supplication, as Asa had, and attended his worship and ordinances:

but if ye forsake him; his laws and his service:

he will forsake you; and leave you to fall into the hands of your enemies.

Ver. 3. *Now for a long season Israel [hath been] without the true God*, etc.] The fear, worship, and service of him being greatly neglected by them for a long time; what period of time is referred to is not expressed, whether past, present, or to come, but left to be supplied; the Targum refers this to the time of the separation of the ten tribes, and the days of Jeroboam, when the calves were worshipped, and not the true God, and the teaching priests of the Lord were cast out, and the law of the Lord, especially with respect to worship, was not regarded, in which it is followed by many interpreters; others think it refers to time to come, and to what would be the case, should they forsake the Lord; and was fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity, (see ^{<3004>}Hosea 3:4) and the Jews ^{f60} say, that

“Oded prophesied that the days should come, when Israel would be “without the true God”, since judgment should not be done in the world: and “without a teaching priest”; since the high priesthood should cease, ((see ^{<3072>}Hebrews 7:12)) “and without the law”; since the sanhedrim should cease;”

but according to our supplement, and which seems most correct, it refers to time past; not to the case of the ten tribes from the times of Jeroboam; nor to the case of Judah from the times of Rehoboam; but to times more remote, even the times of the judges, when they worshipped Baal and Ashtaroth, and not the true God, (^{<0020>}Judges 2:10,11), yet at the same time suggesting, that should the present inhabitants of Judah go into the same practices, their case would be like theirs, described in the following verses:

and without a teaching priest: as they were under the judges, from the times of Phinehas to those of Eli, which was a long space of time:

and without law; every man doing as he pleased, there being no king in Israel, nor any regard paid to the law of God, moral or ceremonial, (^{<0076>}Judges 17:6).

Ver. 4. *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] When being carried captive by neighbouring nations, and oppressed; and they cried unto the Lord, and repented of their sins, and turned from them to him:

and sought him; by prayer and supplication:

he was found of them; and appeared for their help and deliverance, of which there are many instances in the book of Judges.

Ver. 5. *And in those times there was no peace to him that went out nor to him that came in*, etc.] There was no safety in going abroad for travellers from one part to another on account of trade and business, the highways being infested with thieves and robbers:

but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries; of the country villages, which were deserted, because of the plunders and depredations of them, (^(~~ORIG~~)Judges 5:6,7).

Ver. 6. *And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city*, etc.] Or one tribe of another; as the Ephraimites by the Gileadites, and the tribe of Benjamin by the other tribes; and Shechem by Abimelech, (^(~~ORIG~~)Judges 9:45 12:6 20:21,24,44-48),

for God did vex them with all adversity; both with foreign enemies and civil wars; and now it is intimated that this would be their case again, should they not keep close to the Lord their God.

Ver. 7. *Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak*, etc.] Be hearty, earnest, and vigorous, and not languid and remiss in reforming the worship of God, which Asa had begun:

for your work shall be rewarded; with peace and prosperity at home, and success against enemies abroad, of which they had had a recent instance.

Ver. 8. *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet*, etc.] Some think that besides the above words of Azariah the son of Oded, a prophecy of Oded his father was related by him, though not recorded; but rather Oded here is the same with the son of Oded; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read Azariah the son of Oded; and so does the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint version:

he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin; which were abominable to God, and all good men; besides the images and statues he had broken before, he removed other idols that remained, being animated and emboldened by the speech of the prophet:

and out of the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim: the same which his father Abijah had taken from Jeroboam, (^{413B}2 Chronicles 13:19) and which perhaps, upon the approach of the Ethiopians, revolted from Asa, or were restored by them to Jeroboam, and Which Asa retook upon his conquest of them:

and renewed the altar of the Lord before the porch of the Lord; the altar of burnt offering, which had never been repaired since it was made by Solomon; perhaps he anew overlaid it with brass that being worn out, or become very thin in some places.

Ver. 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them,* etc.] The proselytes of the gate:

out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: out of all the places in those tribes that had come off to him, or had been taken by him; for otherwise these belonged to the ten tribes under the government of Jeroboam, and his successors, and the next clause explains it:

for they fell to him out of Israel abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him; as was clear by the victory he gave him over the Ethiopians; after that time many in the above tribes came over to him; the Targum is,

“when they saw the Word of the Lord his God was his help.”

Ver. 10. *So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem,* etc.] By the order of Asa, (^{415B}2 Chronicles 15:9),

in the third month; of the ecclesiastical year, the month Sivan, in which month was the day of Pentecost; and that very probably was the time of their gathering:

in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa; and which seems to be the year in which he fought the Ethiopians.

Ver. 11. *And they offered unto the Lord the same time,* etc.] The Targum adds, on the feast of weeks, or Pentecost: of the spoil which they had brought; from the camp of the Ethiopians, and the cities of the Philistines:

seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep; partly for burnt offerings, and partly for peace offerings, by way of thankfulness to the Lord for the

victory he had given them, and for a feast at the making of the following covenant with him.

Ver. 12. *And they entered into a covenant*, etc.] Asa and all his people; that is, as Piscator remarks, they went between the pieces of the calf cut asunder, for the confirmation of the covenant, (see ^{<2418>}Jeremiah 34:18),

to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul; to serve and worship him most truly, sincerely, and cordially.

Ver. 13. *That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death*, etc.] That obstinately refused to worship him, and served other gods, which by the law was deserving of death, (^{<6712>}Deuteronomy 17:2-6),

whether small or great, whether man or woman; without any regard to rank or dignity, age or sex.

Ver. 14. *And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice*, etc.] As not being ashamed of the oath they took, and that there might be witnesses of it, and that it might be clear they did not equivocate in but expressed themselves in plain words:

and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets; showing that the oath was not extorted from them unwillingly, but that they took it with the utmost cheerfulness, and with all the demonstrations of joy and gladness imaginable.

Ver. 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath*, etc.] The greater part of them; for some there might be who were dissemblers:

for they had sworn with all their heart; in the sincerity and uprightness of their souls:

and sought him with their whole desire; none being more or so desirable as he:

and he was found of them: and favoured them with his presence:

and the Lord gave them rest round about; from all their enemies.

Ver. 16-18. *And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king*, etc.] Or rather his grandmother, (^{<1150>}1 Kings 15:10),

he removed her from being queen; the Septuagint version is, “that she should not minister to Astarte”; which was the goddess of the Zidonians; of this and the two next verses, (See Gill on “^{<1153>}1 Kings 15:13”), (See Gill on “^{<1154>}1 Kings 15:14”), (See Gill on “^{<1155>}1 Kings 15:15”).

Ver. 19. *And there was no more war unto the thirty fifth year of the reign of Asa.*] That is, from the Ethiopian war to that time; after that there was no war with any foreign enemy; there were animosities and discords, bickerings and hostilities of some sort continually between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, as long as he lived, (see ^{<1156>}1 Kings 15:16,32).