

## 2 Chronicles Chapter 28

Verses 1-27: The reign of Ahaz (ca. 735 – 715 B.C.; compare (2 Kings 16:1-20). Isaiah (Isa. 1:1), Hosea (Hosea 1:1), and Micah (Micah 1:1), all continued to minister during his reign. (2 Kings 17:1-9), reports that it was after the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Ahaz, when Hosea was king in Israel, that the Assyrians took Israel into captivity (722 B.C.).

Verses 1-4: The son of Jotham, “Ahaz, became the next and eleventh legitimate king of Judah (2 Kings chapters 16-17). Idolaters considered many places to be holy, including “the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree”.

**2 Chronicles 28:1 "Ahaz [was] twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not [that which was] right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:"**

"Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem": “Sixteen years” (731-715 B.C.). The principle of “dual dating” was followed here. (In 16:1 and 17:1), Ahaz was recognized as king in the year he came to the throne as a co-regent, but the year of his official accession was determined as the year when he began to reign alone. Ahaz shared royal power with Azariah (to 739 B.C.), and Jotham from (744 to 735 B.C.; see note on (17:1). He exercised total authority as co-regent with Jotham from 735-713 B.C. (see note on 16:1). He was sole king from (731 to 729 B.C.), and was co-regent with his son Hezekiah from (729 to 715 B.C.; see note on 18:1).

"But he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father": Ahaz is descended from David, but he does not please God as David did. Ahaz picks up the idolatrous ways of Israel. He even goes further with his idolatry than some of the kings of Israel.

These verses are much the same with (2 Kings 16:2).

The meaning of the name "Ahaz" is possessor, or grasping. Ahaz was also spoken of as Achaz, and Jehoahaz. He was a wicked king.

**2 Chronicles 28:2 "For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim."**

“Baal” (see note on 17:3).

Baal and Astarte were a god and a goddess of sexual immorality. When Ahaz brought in “molten images” for worshiping these heathen gods, he set the people of Judah on the path of destruction.

(See the notes on Judges 2:11-15 and 2 Kings 15:37).

Now we see why he was so wicked. He followed the evil ways of Israel, rather than following the LORD God of Israel. Since Ahab and Jezebel's reign in Israel, the making of molten images

had been prominent in Israel. Many of the kings of Judah destroyed the images, so they had not been as prominent in Judah.

**2 Chronicles 28:3 "Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel."**

See the note on (2 Kings 16:3-4). The heinous Molech sacrifices were carried out in a sacred enclosure (or Tophet), in "the valley of the son of Hinnom". Although the reforms of Josiah would bring an end to these sinister rituals (compare 2 Kings. 23:10), the valley's wicked reputation and its later use as a dump for burning refuse gave rise to the use of its name as the name of the place of final punishment for the unbeliever (i.e., geHinnom, Greek Gehenna; compare Matt. 5:22; 10:28; 13:42, 50; 18:19; 23:15, 33; 25:41; Mark 9:43; Rev. 19:20; 20:14-15).

He followed the same sins that Solomon did.

1 Kings 11:7-8 "Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that [is] before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon." "And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods."

The sacrificing of their children was to the false god, Molech. This was a terrible thing for Ahaz to do.

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

"The high places": Ahaz was the first king in the line of David since Solomon who was said to have personally worshiped at the high places. While all the other kings of Judah had tolerated the high places, Ahaz actively participated in the immoral Canaanite practices that were performed at the "high places" on hilltops under large trees (Hosea 4:13).

Some of the other kings had allowed the worship in high places. The difference here is; false gods were worshipped there during the reign of Ahaz.

This was connected with the evil grove worship.

Verses 5b – 8: Ahaz's gross disobedience earned him God's wrath, by which both Aram, or Syria, and Israel defeated his army, as they had in Jotham's day (compare 2 Kings 15:37). This was likely a continuation of the same campaign against Judah begun earlier.

"Damascus": The capital city of Aram, or Syria, northeast of Judah.

“Pekah”: King of Israel (ca. 752 – 732 B.C.).

**2 Chronicles 28:5 "Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought [them] to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter."**

Whose name was Rezin (2 Kings 16:5), though that is an after expedition to this, which is there related. The Lord is called the God of Ahaz, because he was so of right. He had dominion over him, and ought to have been worshipped by him. And, besides, he was so by virtue of the national covenant between God and the people Ahaz was king of. And moreover, Ahaz professed he was his God, though in a hypocritical manner, and he forsook the true worship of him.

"And they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus": Whereas in a later expedition, related in (2 Kings 16:5), they did not succeed.

"And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel": Whose name was Pekah.

"Who smote him with a great slaughter": As is next related.

The king of Syria in this instance, is Rezin. This is not the whole land of Judah that is captured and taken captive to Syria, but a large number. It appears that Israel and Syria fought Judah at this time and Judah was not helped by their LORD, because of their idolatry. They were unfaithful to their LORD and He allowed great destruction to come upon them. They were not totally destroyed. That would be left for the Babylonians to do. If they had repented and returned to their LORD during this time, He would have spared them.

**2 Chronicles 28:6 "For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, [which were] all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers."**

Who was at this time king of Israel.

"Slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men": A great slaughter to be made at one time. And of valiant men, but not so great as that in (2 Chron. 13:17).

"Because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers": This was not a reason with Pekah for slaying them, he himself being an idolater. But why the Lord suffered them to be slain by him.

Pekah and Rezin are usually spoken of together. These 120,000 fighting men killed, were over a third of their army. Their destruction was a punishment from their LORD for turning away from Him to false gods.

**2 Chronicles 28:7 "And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah [that was] next to the king."**

Who therefore must have escaped being burnt in the valley of Hinnom, or only was caused to pass through the fire there (2 Chron. 28:3).

"And Azrikam the governor of the house": Steward or treasurer in the king's house, in the same office as Shebna was (Isaiah 22:15).

"And Elkanah that was next to the king": Prime minister of state.

**2 Chronicles 28:8 "And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria."**

Which was a very large and unusual number to be carried captive. But having made such a slaughter of the men, and the rest being intimidated thereby, it was the more easily done.

"And took away also much spoil from them": Wealth and riches out of their cities, and even from Jerusalem. For by the preceding verse it seems as if they came there.

"And brought the spoils to Samaria": Or rather "towards Samaria", as some render the word; for they were not as yet come to it, nor did they bring it and their captives there (see 2 Chron. 9:15). "Samaria": The capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel.

It appears that the mighty man of Israel, Zichri, caught the soldiers of Judah in battle with Syria and came and took their wives, sons and daughters captive back to Israel. This 200,000 were not soldiers, they were their families. Maaseiah would have been quite young had he been the son of Ahaz. Perhaps that is why the governor was killed also. He was probably in charge of the son. In fact, Elkanah, who would have been second in command, was caught and killed also. Elkanah was not Ahaz's son. He was like his vice president. He was second in command of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 28:9 "But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name [was] Oded: and he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage [that] reacheth up unto heaven."**

"Oded": An otherwise unknown prophet, with the same name as an earlier Oded (compare 15:1, 8). The prophet said that Israel had won the victory because God was judging Judah. But he protested the viciousness of the killing and the effort to enslave them (verse 10), and warned them of God's wrath for such action (verse 11). Amazingly the apostate and hostile Israelites complied with the prophet's warning (verses 12-15).

The tribe of Ephraim had always been jealous of Judah. They had taken advantage of a bad situation of Judah, and come in and taken what they wanted. This brave prophet Obed, told them that God caused this to happen to Judah in punishment for their sin of unfaithfulness. Israel had done this, not because it was the wishes of the LORD, but because they hated Judah. Their hate for their brothers had now reached to heaven and God would punish Israel also.

**2 Chronicles 28:10 "And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you: [but are there] not with you, even with you, sins against the LORD your God?"**

As seemed by taking and bringing captive such a number of them, contrary to the law (Lev. 25:39).

"But are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?" For which they deserved to be chastised as well as their brethren the men of Judah. And might expect it, and especially if they used them in a barbarous manner, and contrary to the will of God.

We can see their error in the following Scripture.

Leviticus 25:46 "And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit [them for] a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor."

You may read of the punishment for this in (Deut. 28:68). Judah had been one of the twelve tribes of Israel. To take the wives and children of Judah as bond servants, would be a sin against God.

**2 Chronicles 28:11 "Now hear me therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken captive of your brethren: for the fierce wrath of the LORD [is] upon you."**

And not only hear, but be obedient.

"And deliver the captives again, which ye have taken of your brethren": Their women, sons and daughters, even all of them, the whole 200,000.

"For the fierce wrath of God is upon you": Hangs over your heads, and will fall upon you, unless you do this.

This had greatly angered God. His wrath was upon Israel for taking their brethren's families captive. They had better return them immediately, or they would feel the wrath of God themselves. I must say, this took a brave prophet to tell the army of Israel this.

**2 Chronicles 28:12 "Then certain 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 them that came from the war,"**

Which tribe was now greatest and had most authority. Of the principal men of the ten tribes, whose names follow.

"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 them that came from the war": Who

were bringing the captives and spoils to Samaria. But these princes, being influenced by what the prophet said, hindered their proceeding any further.

**2 Chronicles 28:13 "And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD [already], ye intend to add [more] to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and [there is] fierce wrath against Israel."**

That is, into Samaria, near which it seems they now were.

"For whereas we have offended against the Lord already": By exceeding in their cruelty against their brethren of Judah, as well as by worshipping the calves.

"Ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass": By making slaves of those they had taken captives, which was against the express law of God.

"For your trespass is great": Which they had committed already, by their idolatrous practices.

"And there is fierce wrath against Israel": Which they perceived by what the prophet had said.

There was always a remnant, who had not bowed their knee to Baal. In this case, Azariah, Berechiah, Jehizkiah, and Amasa knew that the prophet was telling the truth. They knew that Israel had already greatly sinned with their worship of false gods. They made it clear that this sin would be added to the terrible sins they had already committed. They feared the fierce wrath of God descending upon Israel. This handful of men had not participated in the earlier sins, and certainly wanted no part in this sin. They were saying, listen to the prophet, and send them back home.

**2 Chronicles 28:14 "So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation."**

Which were come out of Samaria to meet them. Such an effect had the words of the prophet, and the princes, upon them. That they not only left the captives with them, but the spoil, to dispose of as they thought fit.

**2 Chronicles 28:15 "And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria."**

Either those before named (2 Chron. 28:12), as Jarchi, and so the Vulgate Latin version. Or such as they pitched upon, nominated, and appointed.

"And took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them": Put clothes on their backs, and shoes on their feet. Who either were taken or carried away before they could put on their garments, or had been stripped of them.

"And gave them to eat, and drink, and anointed them": Not only fed them, being hungry and thirsty, but anointed them for refreshment after travelling. The Targum is, "washed them", from dirt and filth contracted by travelling.

"And carried all the feeble of them on asses": Women and children that were not able to walk afoot so far back again.

"And brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren": A city on the borders both of Judah and Israel, and famous for the number of palm trees near it (see Judges 1:16). In all which these inhabitants of Samaria acted the part of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:33).

"Then they returned to Samaria": The prophet, with the princes, and the army, and the whole congregation.

The warning was accepted and the men, who had not sinned in this manner, took them back to Jericho. It appeared they had actually brought some of these people naked. Now they were clothed and on their way home.

Verses 16-19: The prophet Isaiah preached against making foreign alliances (e.g., Isa. 30:1-3). Making a foreign alliance meant not trusting in the wisdom or strength of God. Asa (chapter 14), and Jehoshaphat (chapter 20), had also sought an alliance with a foreign king.

**2 Chronicles 28:16 "At that time did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him."**

"To Tiglath-pileser, and his son (see 2 Kings 16:7).

"Kings of Assyria": Most likely singular king", as per marginal note, who was Tilgath-pilneser, or Tiglath-pileser (ca. 745 – 727 B.C.).

Ahaz was desperate, and sent to the Assyrians to help him.

Verses 17-19: This judgment of the "Lord" against "Ahaz" is reported only here in the Old Testament. For combined Edomite/Philistine attacks against Judah (see the note on 2 Kings 8:22).

**2 Chronicles 28:17 "For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives."**

As in the days of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:10).

"And smitten Judah, and carried away captives": Taking the advantage of the weak and low condition Ahaz was in, and which was the reason of his sending to the king of Assyria.

The Edomites had been constant enemies of Judah. They too had taken advantage of their weakened condition and attacked them, and took many captives.

**2 Chronicles 28:18 "The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there."**

Which lay nearest to them, as Sharon, Lydda, Joppa, etc. In revenge of what Uzziah had done to them (2 Chron. 26:6). And of the south of Judah; they penetrated as far as that, from the west to the south of the land.

"And had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho, with the villages thereof and Timnah with the villages thereof (of which see Joshua 15:10).

"And Gimzo also, and the villages thereof": Which though nowhere else mentioned in Scripture, yet we frequently read in Jewish writings of Nahum, a man of Ganizu, which perhaps is the same place with this.

"And they dwelt there": Kept them in their hands, and inhabited them.

Even the hated Philistines had come and taken many of the villages of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 28:19 "For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD."**

Because of his impieties and idolatries, which the people by his example went into. He is called king of Israel, because he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and because he ruled over two of the tribes of Israel. And of right was king over all Israel, as David and Solomon his ancestors were. Though the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Syriac versions read, king of Judah. And so the Targum: "for he made Judah naked"; stripped them of their religion, and the worship of God, and so of the divine protection. Whereby they were exposed to their enemies (see Exodus 32:25). The Targum is, "for the house of Judah ceased from the worship of the Lord."

"Transgressed sore against the Lord": By committing gross idolatry the same Targum is, "they dealt falsely with the Word of the Lord."

This is an epitaph that should strike holy fear in anyone who aspires to leadership in God's work.

Ahaz was spoken of as king of Israel, because he had picked up their sinful ways. He was very much like the kings of Israel. His great sins against the LORD had caused this terrible punishment that came on Judah. Many times, a country suffers for the sins of their king or leader.



Verses 20-21: "Tilgath-pilneser" (see note on 2 Chron. 28:16). In spite of temporary relief by the conquest of Damascus and slaughter of Rezin (2 Kings 16:9), little benefit came from this king to Ahaz because he allied with Assyria.

**2 Chronicles 28:20 "And Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not."**

For "Tilgath-pilneser"; Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria (see the note on 2 Kings 15:19-20).

Not to Jerusalem, but to Damascus, where he made a diversion in his favor, and took that city, and where Ahaz met him (2 Kings 16:9).

"And distressed him, but strengthened him not": Exhausted his treasures, and laid a tribute upon him, but did not help him against the Edomites and Philistines. Or recover for him the cities they had taken from him. And, in taking Damascus, he served himself more than Ahaz, and paved the way for seizing upon the ten tribes.

Verses 21-25: For Ahaz's wickedness and pagan innovations (see 2 Kings 16:10-18).

**2 Chronicles 28:21 "For Ahaz took away a portion [out] of the house of the LORD, and [out] of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave [it] unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not."**

The chronicler shows that concern for the temple is pleasing to God. We no longer have a physical temple however, Christians still have churches as assembly places made to worship God. If concern for the temple please God, how much more so concern for those who "are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. 6:16).

Ahaz had robbed the temple of its treasures to buy the help of this evil king of Assyria. He took the bribe but turned on Judah and instead of helping them, he attacked them as well.

Verses 22-27: Ahaz surrendered himself to idolatry with the ignorance of wicked pagan and a ruthless defiance of God that ruined him and his nation. He was justly dishonored in his burial (verse 27).

**2 Chronicles 28:22 "And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this [is that] king Ahaz."**

By increasing his idolatries, as appears by what he did, in imitation of what he saw at Damascus, where he had an interview with the king of Assyria (2 Kings 16:10).

"This is that King Ahaz": That monster of iniquity, than whom there was none worse, nor any so bad, of all the kings of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 28:23 "For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, [therefore] will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel."**

As he foolishly imagined, that they might do him no more hurt. As it is said of the Indians, that they worship the devil, that he may not hurt them. But that a king of Judah should do this is monstrous stupidity. Rather therefore the meaning may be, that he worshipped the gods of those that smote him, those of the men or soldiers of Damascus (see 2 Chron. 28:5). For the Spirit of God would never ascribe the smiting of him to idols, though he himself might.

"And he said, because the gods of the kings of Syria help them": Which looks as if this was before Damascus was taken by the king of Assyria, and when Rezin king of Syria prevailed over Ahaz.

"Therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me": Against the Edomites and Philistines. Wherefore rather to this, his idolatry, respect is had (in 2 Chron. 28:22).

"But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel": The worship of them was the cause of all the calamities that came upon that part of Israel of which he was king.

False gods were the downfall of Israel. In the sense of worshipping the false gods, Judah was no different than Israel. They had all turned from the One True God to the false gods. In this particular instance, Ahaz thought the false gods of Damascus had helped them against him. He did not realize that God had helped them because of the sins of Ahaz.

**2 Chronicles 28:24 "And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem."**

And converted them to his own use, sold them, or melted the gold and silver. Of which they were, and made money of them, his treasures being exhausted.

"And shut up the doors of the house of the Lord": That the people might not come and worship there, but on the high places he made.

"And he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem": That the priests might sacrifice there, and not in the temple.

**2 Chronicles 28:25 "And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers."**

The gods of Damascus, and other idols. This he did to prevent their coming to Jerusalem to worship.

Ahaz did the unthinkable. He destroyed the holy things in the temple and then closed it to worship. He had turned completely away from the LORD God. He set up places of worship in all the towns around, and in all corners of Jerusalem to worship the false gods of Damascus. The anger of God in this would be tremendous. We could safely say that Ahaz was one of the most wicked kings who ruled in Judah.

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

Some others are written in the canonical book of Chronicles (2 Chron. 28:1), and were, it is highly probable, in the annals of the kings of Judah, now lost.

We have mentioned before that this book mentioned in the verse above, could be speaking of a book which recorded the acts of the kings. It is also worth noting that there is a statement made of Ahaz in the book of Kings in the Bible.

**2 Chronicles 28:27 "And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, [even] in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchers of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead."**

But not in the sepulchers of the kings of Israel, as David and Solomon. He being such a wicked prince (2 Chron. 28:27).

"And Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead": Of whom much is said in the following part of this history.

He was such an evil king that he was not buried with honor. He was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the sepulcher with the kings such as David. It is so interesting to me that such an evil king could have a son who was like Hezekiah. We will discover in the next lesson that Hezekiah tries to do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

## **2 Chronicles Chapter 28 Questions**

1. How old was Ahaz, when he began to reign?
2. How many years did he reign?
3. What does "Ahaz" mean?
4. What were some other names he was known by?
5. What kind of a king was he?
6. What were some of the terrible things he did?

7. The sacrificing of children pertained to what false god?
8. How did his sins parallel Solomon's sins?
9. Who delivered Ahaz into the hands of the king of Syria?
10. Who was this king of Syria?
11. Who was the son of Remaliah, who slew in Judah 120,000 in one day?
12. Who was Zichri?
13. What did he do to Judah?
14. How many women and children did he take captive?
15. Who was the prophet that came to them with a message from God?
16. Why had they done this evil thing to Judah?
17. In verse 10, the prophet tells them, it would be a \_\_\_\_\_ to keep the captives of Judah.
18. Why must they release the captives?
19. Who stood up and agreed with the prophet at that time?
20. What did Azariah and the princes do, before they released the people to go home?
21. Where did they take the captives for safety?
22. Who did Ahaz seek help from?
23. Who took many of the villages of Judah?
24. Who was the king of the Assyrians, who distressed Judah?
25. What was the downfall of Israel?
26. In verses 24 and 25, what terrible things did Ahaz do?
27. Where was Ahaz buried?
28. How was his burial different from kings, like David?
29. Who reigned in his stead?