

2 Chronicles 28 - Ahaz's Evil Reign in Judah; The Prospect of Judah's Captivity; Syria & Israel Defeat Judah; Assyria Refuses to Help Judah; Apostasy & Death of Ahaz

IV. Judah's Kings (2 Chr 10:1—36:23)

(2) Reform and apostasy in Judah (2 Chr 12:1—36:14)

(L) Ahaz' idolatry and covenant consequences (28:1-27)

2 Chronicles 28

(L) Ahaz' idolatry and covenant consequences (28:1-27) (Cf. 2 Kings 16:1-4)

With the reign of Ahaz the Chronicler introduced a new interest, namely, the prospect of captivity for Judah, which he again called Israel—the true Israel—twice in this chapter (v19,23). The possibility of Judah's exile appears first in Chronicles in this chapter.

Why did Israel go into captivity? Why did the perfectly obedient Davidic King not appear? Ahaz's behavior helps explain the reason. The writer selected three major events from Ahaz's reign: the king's idolatry (v2-15), his appeal for help to Assyria (v16-21), and his sacrifices to foreign gods (v22-25).

1 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD as his father David *had done*.

1 Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do right in the sight of the LORD as David his father *had done*.

1 Ahaz was 20 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem, but he did not practice what the LORD considered to be right, as his ancestor David had done.

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' Idolatry

2 But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; he also made cast metal images for the Baals.

2 But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; he also made molten images for the Baals.

2 Instead, he lived like the kings of Israel did. He cast metal images of Baal,

2 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.

- Ahaz co-reigned for four years with Jotham, so Ahaz reigned (alone) for 16 years (731-715 BC)

— Unlike David his father (ancestor), Ahaz was evil, walking in the pattern of the kings of the Northern Kingdom, all of whom were wicked (and were on the verge of falling to the Assyrians)

3 Furthermore, he burned incense in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, and burned his sons in fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out from the sons of Israel.

3 Moreover, he burned incense in the valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out before the sons of Israel.

3 burned incense in the Ben-hinnom Valley, and burned his sons as an offering, following the detestable activities of the nations whom the LORD had expelled in front of the people of Israel.

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.

4 He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

4 He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills and under every green tree.

4 He sacrificed and burned incense on high places, on the top of hills, and under every green tree.

4 He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

- He made Baal idols, offered sacrifices in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which included human victims (even his own sons!); and practiced the Canaanite cult on the high places and in the sacred groves (Cf. 28:19,22-25)

The Valley of Hinnom

Human sacrifice was associated with the Ammonite god Molech and was vehemently condemned in the Law (Lev 18:21; 20:2-5; Deut 12:31). It was practiced especially in the Hinnom Valley, just S and W of Jerusalem, a place later known as Gehenna (from ge, "valley," and the proper name Hinnom). Because of the fires which burned there, both in these sacrificial orgies and to consume garbage, Gehenna became a term for hell.

Aram and Israel Defeat Judah (Cf. 2 Kings 16:5-6; Is 7:1)

5 Therefore the LORD his God handed him over to the king of Aram; and they defeated him and carried from him a great number of captives, and brought *them* to Damascus. And he was also handed over to the king of Israel, who struck him with heavy casualties.

5 Wherefore, the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram; and they defeated him and carried away from him a great number of captives and brought *them* to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted him with heavy casualties.

5 As a result, the LORD his God handed Ahaz⁴ over to the king of Aram, who defeated him and took a large number of captives away to Damascus. Ahaz was also delivered over to the control of the King of Israel, who defeated him with many heavy casualties.

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.

- Because of Ahaz's gross sins against God, he fell into the hands of the Arameans (whose king was Rezin, 2 Kings 16:5), who took many Judeans as prisoners to Damascus. This was the third time the Arameans fought Judah (Cf. 22:5; 24:23).

6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah killed 120,000 in Judah in one day, all valiant men, because they had abandoned the LORD God of their fathers.

6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah 120,000 in one day, all valiant men, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

6 Remaliah's son Pekah killed 120,000 soldiers in a single day, all of them elite forces, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their ancestors.

6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.

- Ahaz also suffered defeat by the armies of Israel under King Pekah, who killed 120,000 Judean soldiers in one day

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam the ruler of the house, and Elkanah the second to the king.

7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son and Azrikam the ruler of the house and Elkanah the second to the king.

7 Zichri, a valiant soldier from Ephraim, killed the king's son Maaseiah, Azrikam, the palace manager, and Elkanah, who was second in rank to the king.

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.

8 The sons of Israel led away captive two hundred thousand of their relatives, women, sons, and daughters; and they also took a great deal of spoils from them, and brought the spoils to Samaria.

8 The sons of Israel carried away captive of their brethren 200,000 women, sons and daughters; and they took also a great deal of spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.

8 The Israelis carried away 200,000 women, sons, and daughters from among their own relatives. They also took a great deal of plunder, and brought it all to Samaria.

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.

Oded the Prophet Rebukes Israel

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded; and he went out to meet the army which came to Samaria and said to them, "Behold, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has handed them over to you, and you have killed them in a rage *which* has even reached heaven.

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded; and he went out to meet the army which came to Samaria and said to them, "Behold, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hand, and you have slain them in a rage *which* has even reached heaven.

9 But a prophet of the LORD was there named Oded. He went out to greet the army as it arrived in Samaria. He warned them, "Look! Because the LORD God of your ancestors was angry at Judah, he delivered them into your control, but you have killed them with a vehemence that has reached all the way to heaven!

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.

- Ahaz was not totally overcome but he clearly was in great jeopardy 2 Kings 16:5
— Meanwhile Oded, a prophet in Samaria, persuaded the leaders of "Israel" that God was angry for taking these prisoners of Judah to make them slaves

10 Now you are proposing to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem as male and female slaves for yourselves. *Are you not, however guilty yourselves of offenses against the LORD your God?*

10 Now you are proposing to subjugate for yourselves the people of Judah and Jerusalem for male and female slaves. Surely, *do you not have transgressions of your own against the LORD your God?*

10 Now you're intending to make the men and women of Judah and Jerusalem to be your slaves. Surely you have your own sins against the LORD your God for which you're accountable, don't you?

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?

11 Now then, listen to me and return the captives whom you captured from your brothers, for the burning anger of the LORD is against you."

11 Now therefore, listen to me and return the captives whom you captured from your brothers, for the burning anger of the LORD is against you."

11 So listen to me! Return the captives whom you've captured from your brothers, because the anger of the LORD is burning hot against you!"

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.

12 Then some of the leading men of the sons of Ephraim—Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai—rose up against those who were coming from the battle,

12 Then some of the heads of the sons of Ephraim—Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai—arose against those who were coming from the battle,

12 Some of the leaders of the descendants of Ephraim, including Johanan's son Azariah, Meshillemoth's son Berechiah, Shallum's son Jehizkiah, and Hadlai's son Amasa, stood up to the army as they were coming back from the battle

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,

- The leaders therefore ordered the returning army not to bring the prisoners to Samaria

13 and said to them, "You must not bring the captives in here, for you are proposing to *bring* guilt upon us before the LORD, adding to our sins and our guilt; for our guilt is great, and *His* burning anger is against Israel."

13 and said to them, "You must not bring the captives in here, for you are proposing to *bring* upon us guilt against the LORD adding to our sins and our guilt; for our guilt is great so that *His* burning anger is against Israel."

13 and told them, "Don't bring those captives here! You'll bring even more guilt on us from the LORD, in addition to our own existing sin and guilt! He's already mad enough against Israel because of our guilt!"

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.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoils before the officers and all the assembly.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the officers and all the assembly.

14 So the army abandoned the captives and the war booty in front of the officers and the entire assembled retinue.

14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation.

15 Then the men who were designated by name got up, took the captives, and they clothed all their naked people from the spoils; they gave them clothes and sandals, fed them and gave them drink, anointed them *with oil*, led all their feeble ones on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brothers; then they returned to Samaria.

15 Then the men who were designated by name arose, took the captives, and they clothed all their naked ones from the spoil; and they gave them clothes and sandals, fed them and gave them drink, anointed them *with oil*, led all their feeble ones on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brothers; then they returned to Samaria.

15 After this, some men who were chosen by name took charge of the captives, clothed those who were naked with clothes appropriated from the war booty, gave them clothes and sandals, fed them, gave them something to drink, anointed them with oil, provided those who weren't able to walk with donkeys to ride on, and took them back to their relatives at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

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.

- So the leaders gave the prisoners food and clothing and led the prisoners to Jericho where they could be repatriated to their own country

— Ironically, Israel listened to the Lord whereas Judah did not

Ahaz Appeals to Assyria for Help (Cf. 2 Kings 16:7-9)

16 At that time King Ahaz sent *word* to the kings of Assyria for help.

16 At that time King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria for help.

16 Right about then, King Ahaz sent for help from the kings of Assyria

16 At that time did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

- Not satisfied with Israel's kind overtures, Ahaz entered into negotiations with the king of Assyria, who at that time was Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BC)

— Isaiah had tried to prevent Ahaz from turning to Assyria (Cf. Is 7:4-9)

— Ahaz thought this move was necessary because of intensifying pressure from the Edomites to the east (v17) and the Philistines to the west (v18)

— In addition, of course, was the continuing threat from the Arameans and Israelites (Cf. 28:5-8), a factor mentioned in 2 Kings 16:5-9; Is 7:1-17

17 For the Edomites had come again and attacked Judah, and led away captives.

17 For again the Edomites had come and attacked Judah and carried away captives.

17 because the Edomites had invaded, attacked Judah, and carried off some captives.

17 For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.

- The Edomites even captured some Judahites and took them to Edom

18 The Philistines had also invaded the cities of the lowland and of the Negev of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they had settled there.

18 The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the Negev of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages, and they settled there.

18 The Philistines also invaded some of the cities in the Shephelah⁸ and in the Negev of Judah. They captured Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco, and their surrounding villages, Timnah and its villages, and Gimzo and its villages. Then the Philistines settled there,

18 The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Bethshemesh, 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.

- The Philistines took some of Judah's glory (towns) captive during the Philistine conquest

19 For the LORD had humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the LORD.

19 For the LORD humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the LORD.

19 because the LORD was humiliating Judah because of King Ahaz of Israel, since Ahaz had brought about a lack of restraint within Judah and had remained unfaithful to the LORD.

19 For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD.

20 So Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.

20 So Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him.

20 King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria attacked Ahaz and, instead of helping him, attacked him.

20 And Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not.

21 Although Ahaz took a portion out of the house of the LORD and out of the palace of the king and of the princes, and gave *it* to the king of Assyria, it did not help him.

21 Although Ahaz took a portion out of the house of the LORD and out of the palace of the king and of the princes, and gave *it* to the king of Assyria, it did not help him.

21 Even though Ahaz took some of the assets belonging to the LORD's Temple from the royal palace, and from the palaces belonging to the princes, and gave them to the king of Assyria, none of his gifts did any good.

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.

- Ahaz gave more of this glory away to Tiglath-Pileser III; his personal disregard for Yahweh mirrored his disrespect for the temple

- Tiglath-Pileser proved to be a curse rather than a blessing. Despite receiving a generous bribe from Ahaz from the temple and the palace, the Assyrian king gave no help. The Bible

tells us we are not to put our trust in man.

The Apostasy and Death of Ahaz (Cf. 2 Kings 16:12-20)

22 Now during the time of his distress, this same King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD.

22 Now in the time of his distress this same King Ahaz became yet more unfaithful to the LORD.

22 In the midst of his troubles, King Ahaz became more and more unfaithful to the LORD.

22 And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz.

23 For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus who had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them so that they may help me." But they became the downfall of him and all **Israel**.

23 For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they became the downfall of him and all Israel.

23 He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had defeated him, reasoning, "The gods of the kings of Aram helped them, so I'll sacrifice to them so they will help me!" But those gods brought about his downfall, and the downfall of all of Israel, too.

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.

- "...Israel" - Judah

24 Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the LORD, and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem.

24 Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the LORD and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem.

24 Ahaz also collected the utensils of God's Temple, cut them all into pieces, and closed the doors of the LORD's Temple. Then he made altars to himself on every corner in Jerusalem

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.

- This was the low point of Ahaz' sins: "he closed the doors of the house of the LORD"

25 In every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger.

25 In every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger.

25 and established high places in every city of Judah where incense was burned to other gods, thus provoking the LORD God of his ancestors to anger.

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.

- Ahaz abandoned the Lord and robbed and barred the temple

— In their place he established pagan worship centers throughout Jerusalem and the entire land (Cf. v2-4)

26 Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from the first to the last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

26 Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

26 The rest of his accomplishments, and records of everything he did from first to last are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

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.

27 So Ahaz lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him to the tombs of the kings of Israel; and his son Hezekiah reigned in his place.

27 So Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel; and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

27 So Ahaz died, as had his ancestors, and he was buried in the city of Jerusalem, but they didn't bury him among the tombs of the kings of Israel. Ahaz's son Hezekiah reigned in his place.

27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

- As a final indictment of this evil king, the chronicler remarked that he was buried in Jerusalem, but not in the tombs of the kings (Cf. 21:20; 24:25; 26:23)

— Repeatedly the chronicler noted that Judah's troubles were God's judgment (in anger) on Ahaz's and Judah's sins (28:9,19,25b)

