

1 AND 2 CHRONICLES: GAINING DIRECTION OUT OF THE AIMLESSNESS OF APOSTASY
Part V: Gaining Direction From God's Work In The Rest Of Judah's Davidic Dynasty, 2 Chronicles 13-36
L. Learning To Discern The Signals Of Our Spiritual Blindness
(2 Chronicles 28:1-27)

I. Introduction

- A. Spiritual blindness is a taxing problem: those afflicted by it always fall into trouble, Matthew 15:14.
- B. Studying the spiritual blindness problems of Judah's king Ahaz in 2 Chronicles 28:1-27 is thus helpful as the passage reveals God supplied several gracious signals to Ahaz to reveal he was in spiritual darkness:

II. Learning To Discern The Signals Of Our Spiritual Blindness, 2 Chronicles 28:1-27.

- A. When Ahaz came to Judah's throne, he followed the idolatry of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, 28:1-2.
- B. So, in accord with the Mosaic Covenant of that dispensation of the Law, God let the Aramean king of Damascus defeat Judah and take captives, 2 Chron. 28:5a; Deut. 28:15, 25; Bib. Kno. Com., O. T., p. 641.
- C. God also let Judah's longtime Edomite foes and Philistine foes defeat Judah in battle as judgment for Ahaz's apostate influence, 2 Chronicles 28:17-19a with Ezekiel 35:1-5 and 1 Samuel 31:1-10.
- D. However, Ahaz was so spiritually blind, he concluded that since the gods of the Arameans had enabled them to defeat him, were he to worship their gods, he would succeed, 2 Chronicles 28:22-23b, *Ibid.*
- E. Nevertheless, God graciously gave Ahaz signals to reveal the problems he faced were due to his own sin:
 - 1. God corrected the excessive sin of the nation whose false gods Ahaz had first followed, signaling He was the sovereign Lord over even those from whom Ahaz had initially learned to heed false idols:
 - a. One of the nations God let attack and defeat Judah was the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the idols of which nation Ahaz had followed in starting down his apostate path, 2 Chron. 28:1-2 with 28:5b, 7-8.
 - b. However, since Israel had excessively oppressed Judah in the war, God sent His prophet, Oded to warn Israel to return their many Judean captives in order to avoid great divine judgment, 28:9-11.
 - c. Israel then returned their Judean captives, thus revealing that God was sovereign over the nation from which Ahaz had learned his initial idolatry so that he was to repent of his idolatry, 28:12-15!
 - 2. God let Ahaz's best efforts to end his trials only add to them, revealing he walked in spiritual darkness:
 - a. Thinking that if he appealed to the powerful Assyrians for help against his Aramean, Edomite and Philistine foes, Ahaz sent a delegation to Assyria for help, and with it a costly tribute, 28:16, 21a.
 - b. Yet, regardless of this effort, Assyria deceived Ahaz and distressed him, 2 Chronicles 28:20, 21b.
 - c. When this his best effort hurt him, it was a signal for Ahaz to repent and heed Deut. 28:15, 30-31!
 - 3. Also, the longtime Edomite and Philistine foes God let defeat Ahaz had been defeated by other good Judean kings, 2 Chron. 28:17-18 versus 2 Chron. 25:11 and 2 Chron. 26:6-7. This revealed a spiritual problem afflicted Ahaz unlike these other good kings, meaning Ahaz was to return to the right standing before God in order to subdue such foes, cf. Deuteronomy 28:1, 7 versus Deuteronomy 28:15, 25!
 - 4. Ahaz's idolatry had led his subjects to an unrestrained bent for idolatry, sign of a problem with him:
 - a. The Hebrew word *hiphria'* used of Judah in 2 Chronicles 28:19b ("naked" KJV, "act sinfully" ESV or "promoted wickedness" NIV) actually means "shew a lack of restraint" in Judah's bent toward evil, cf. Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1418; B. D. B., Hebrew and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 828-829.
 - b. Thus, a revealing sign something was amiss with Ahaz was the unrestrained idolatry of his subjects!
- F. However, Ahaz relentlessly stayed on his evil path, and ended his life in defeat, 2 Chronicles 28:23c-27:
 - 1. Ahaz added to his many false gods the idols of the Arameans who had defeated him (2 Chronicles 28:22-23b; *Ibid.*), he even hindered the true worship of God by cutting up the temple vessels and locking the temple doors and he also promoted much more idolatry in Judah, 2 Chronicles 28:24-25.
 - 2. So, at death, God let Ahaz be buried in Jerusalem, but not among the kings, 2 Chron. 28:23c, 26-27.

Lesson: *Ahaz missed God's blessing for failing to heed His signals that he walked in spiritual darkness, and those signals were: (1) God's correcting those from whom Ahaz had first learned to head into sin; (2) God's letting Ahaz's costly effort to gain Assyria's help only worsen his welfare; (3) God's letting ancient foes that past good kings had conquered defeat Ahaz and (4) the unbridled sin of his subjects.*

Application: *Though experience can deceive us, IF we face ANY of the above TRIALS in life, may we CHECK SCRIPTURE to see IF we err, and repent IF the Bible shows we are in spiritual DARKNESS!*