

# “2 Chronicles 15:3–4”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Our congregation just completed our observance of the Feast of Tabernacles (which included an eighth day). I gave two similar sermons at both our convention sites in Big Sandy and Destin, Fla.

The titles of the sermons were 2 Chronicles 15:3 and 2 Chronicles 15:4. I combined the information given in those sermons into this article.

## **2 Chronicles 15:2-7**

Azariah passed along a message from God to Asa, and to all of Judah and Benjamin.

In the two sermons at the Feast, I consecutively focused on verses 3 and 4. This article combines those two verses.

## **2 Chronicles 15:3**

This verse mentioned three behaviors that were lacking among the tribes of Israel called Judah and Benjamin.

- Without the true God
- Without a teaching priest
- Without law

## **Without the true God**

- Exodus 12:12—When the Lord spoke to Moses during the events involving the Passover, He said: “I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt.”
- Exodus 20:3—The first commandment is: “You shall have no other gods before Me.”
- Isaiah 40:12-14—The Lord asked questions that pointed to His sovereignty.
- Isaiah 40:21-22—The Lord reminded the readers that He sits above the earth and the inhabitants are like grasshoppers.
- Isaiah 45:5-7—The Lord reminded the readers that there is no God beside Him.
- Isaiah 45:18-20—The Lord again reminded the readers about His sovereignty.
- Acts 17:27—Paul reminded the people that God was not far from them.

## Without a teaching priest

It is valuable if disciples understand the various functions of a priest. This presentation focused upon the fact that the priests were to be teachers.

- Hebrews 5:12-14—It is important that disciples learn to be teachers.

Two important traits about being a teacher are: (1) knowing the material and (2) knowing how to reach people.

In the sermon, I described four individual groups listed in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22—challenging audience members to consider if they were learning to effectively reach the four groups.

- “To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews.”
- “To those who are under the law as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law.
- “To those who are without law as without law, that I might win those who are without law.”
- “To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak.”

Paul continued the thought by saying: “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

## Without law

Notice a contrasting approach to the law.

- Galatians 2:4—False brethren came among the Church of God to lead people into the bondage of the law.
- Jude 4—Ungodly men turned grace into lawlessness.

## 2 Chronicles 15:4

What does it mean when the Bible says that the Lord “forsakes” people?

2 Chronicles 15:2—“The Lord is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.”

2 Chronicles 15:4—“When in their trouble, they turned to the Lord God for Israel and sought Him—He was found by them.”

Hebrews 13:5—The Lord said: “I will never leave you nor forsake you”—quoting from Deuteronomy 31:6-8 and Joshua 1:5.

It is my belief that 2 Chronicles 15:2 reveals that the Lord might temporarily withdraw from a person, but that 2 Chronicles 15:4 shows that He is always close—to create reconciliation.

## Correction by a loving Father

Hebrews 12:5-8—God is like a Father who loves His children because He loves them.

Hebrews 12:9-11—People accept it when their physical fathers correct them, so why can't disciples accept it when our Heavenly Father corrects us?

## The Lord sometimes says "no"

■ Deuteronomy 3:23-27—Moses asked to go to see the Promised Land and the Lord said "no"—because of Moses' behavior (whether you either want to call it sin or simply a mistake).

■ 2 Samuel 12:15-23—David asked for his child to be healed, and the Lord said "no"—because of David's sins.

■ 2 Corinthians 12:7-10—Paul asked three times for a "thorn in the flesh" to be removed, and the Lord said "no"—to demonstrate the Lord's power and sovereignty.

## Our obedience blesses us

Some people often say things like: "The God of the Old Testament is tough, but the God of the New Testament is kind and loving."

That is not my view of the Lord. Notice the kind and loving approach of the Lord in the following Old Testament scriptures.

■ Ezekiel 18:20—"Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin."

■ Ezekiel 18:21-22—"Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies. Therefore turn and live!"

## God's promise

■ Philippians 1:6—"Being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."