2 Kings - Commentaries by Henry Allan Ironside

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, March 9

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“Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king’s household” —2 Kings 7:9.

THE four lepers who had found abundance in the deserted camp of the Syrians were conscience-stricken as they realized that, while they were feasting, others were dying of starvation. Acting on their best impulses then, they hurried back to tell the royal household that all might share in the bounteous provision God had made for them. The lesson is an important one for those of us who are now enjoying the riches of divine grace. Millions are still without the knowledge of Christ. How great is our guilt if we allow them to die in their sins, without doing all we can to acquaint them with the gospel of God, which alone can save all who put their trust in Christ. Let us go and tell. It is our bounden duty and we will be held responsible if we fail to respond.

—Grace E. Troy.

Daily Sacrifice, February 23

“And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha”—2 Kings 6:17.

UNBELIEF ever fills the heart with fear, far it magnifies the difficulties and loses sight of the power of God, but no matter what the circumstances which may confront the believer it still remains blessedly true that, “Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.” The angels of the Lord were encamping roundabout the city wherein Elisha and his servant dwelt, even before the servant’s eyes were open to behold them; sight but confirmed that which was true already. So may we have opened eyes to recognize the marvelous way in which the angel of the Lord encampeth roundabout them that fear Him and delivereth them,

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, March 8

“Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable... he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had brought away captive a little maid; and she waited on Naaman’s wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy” —2 Kings 5:1-3.

THE blight of sin is set forth in a striking way in the disease of leprosy. In the case of Naaman we have human nature at its best in many respects. He was evidently a kindly, gracious man, though proud and sensitive, as his attitude toward the prophet’s message indicates. A soldier of renown, he was honored by his sovereign and looked up to by the nation to which he belonged. He was blessed with an affectionate, solicitous wife, who sought his well-being, “But he was a leper.” And this dreadful fact blighted everything else. So one may be admirable in many things and his circumstances generally be pleasing and satisfactory, but if he be a sinner, unsaved and uncleansed, all else counts as nought.

The little captive maid who waited upon Naaman’s wife is a precious example of faithfulness under adverse circumstances. Torn away from her home and loved ones, instead of giving herself over to grief and despair, she maintains a bright testimony to the power of Israel’s God and becomes the honored instrument of bringing her afflicted master into touch with the prophet of Jehovah, through whom he finds, not only healing for the body, but the knowledge of the one living and true God whom he will worship henceforth (vs. 17).

Daily Sacrifice, February 22

“And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil”—2 Kings 4:2.

THE poor widow who came to Elisha for help little realized that she possessed already all that was necessary to meet every need under the good hand of God. That pot of oil represented the grace of God as ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit. As long as there were empty vessels to receive it, the oil was not stayed. And so it is today. God has given to everyone of us the riches of His grace which we may use as the need arises, and the supply will never fail until it can be truly said that “There is not a vessel more.” It is but an Old Testament way of saying, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus,”

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, March 7

“And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven” —2 Kings 2:11.

IT was a glorious consummation to a noble life. Surely Elijah must have rejoiced in the hour of his ascension that his petulant prayer when he was under the juniper tree was not answered. He prayed to die, but God had something far better for him. He was the only man since Enoch who was carried up to heaven without passing through death. And so God is often better than our faith and deals with us according to the lovingkindness of His great heart rather than according to our poor thoughts and our ill deserts. He would have us learn to trust Him to do the best for us and to know that if He does not grant our exact requests it is because He has something better in store for us.

—Anne Shipton.

Daily Sacrifice, February 24

“He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left”—2 Kings 22:2.

IN the godly king Josiah we have a fine example of that purpose of heart which should ever characterize those who know the Lord. It was said of him that he “turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.” On the one hand, false religion beckoned to him and sought to enslave him, but he refused to be deceived; on the other side, the pleasures of the world sought to turn him aside from the path of sobriety and devotion to the Lord, but resolutely he turned from every temptation presented, because he had set his heart upon doing the will of God. It is no wonder that his reign was a record of blessing and revival. He was used of God in a mighty way because of his single eye and his undeviating devotion to the path of obedience. In this we may well imitate him.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, March 11

“At that time Berodachhaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah skewed them not” —2 Kings 20:12, 13.

YESTERDAY we saw Hezekiah spreading out the letter of blasphemy before the Lord. Today we see how sadly he failed and how differently he acted when there came a letter and a present from the idolatrous king of Babylon. Hezekiah was flattered by this attention and did not feel the need of taking it to God as he did in the other case. And so he erred grievously and Israel was destined to suffer terribly for the king’s blunder. We need to be as much before God when the world patronizes us as when it openly disapproves. It is never safe to forget to pray.

—Anon.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, March 10

“And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord” —2 Kings 19:14.

IT was a “letter of blasphemy” sent from the God-defying Syrian leaders, in order to terrify good King Hezekiah and impress him with the hopelessness of attempting to defend Jerusalem against the vast armies of the cruel enemy. But Hezekiah found his resource in prayer. He laid the letter before the Lord and counted on Him to act for His own glory, and in a most wonderful way God intervened. Hezekiah knew to whom to turn in the hour of stress. God has said, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me” (Psa. 50:15). The promise was most blessedly fulfilled, as in every case where faith lays hold of the Lord and counts on Him to act for His own glory.

—Grace Troy.

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