# Isaiah - Commentaries by Henry Allan Ironside

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, April 21

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“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel” — Isaiah 7:14.

THE virgin birth of Jesus is a revealed truth, the importance of which no one can properly appraise. Upon this fact hangs the whole plan of redemption. It tells us that God entered into human conditions, became Man without ceasing to be God, took our flesh and blood apart from sin, in order that He might by Himself effect purgation of sins by dying upon the cross. With the denial of the virgin birth goes the denial of the true vicarious atonement of Christ.

Had He been a member of Adam’s fallen race He would have needed a Saviour for Himself. As the virgin-born Son of the Father He came into the world as “that Holy One” uncontaminated by sin in the flesh, though in its likeness, and so was able to qualify as our Kinsman-Redeemer.

—Stennett.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, April 20

“Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged”—Isa. 6:5-7.

IT is always of interest when one is privileged to get a personal and intimate account of the revelation of God to a human soul. In this chapter Isaiah sets us into the secret of his wonderful power and equipment for service, He takes us into the sanctuary, shows us how the Lord was revealed to him, and lets us know the circumstances of his call to the prophetic office. This was the real starting-point of his effective ministry. We know from chapter 1:1, that he began to witness for God in the days of King Uzziah. As the events recorded in chapter 6 took place in the year that ruler died, we conclude that these experiences were subsequent to his earlier prophetic testimony. Many another servant of God has preached to others before learning to know the Lord himself in a definite way and before being brought into the full consciousness of cleansing and enduement for service. Yet we need not think of this as Isaiah’s “second blessing.” It was rather a part of God’s dealing with him in order that he might be better prepared to give out the Word to others because of knowing the reality of having to do with God himself.

—Robert R. Pentecost.

Daily Sacrifice, April 19

“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts”— Isaiah 6:5.

A sudden realization of the holiness of God brought with it a sense of Isaiah’s own unfitness for the divine presence. He felt in his inmost being that he was defiled and unclean, even as, long years after, Peter the fisherman felt, when consciously in the presence of the Creator Incarnate (Luke 5:8), and as Job felt long before when a sense of the majesty of Jehovah burst upon his soul (Job 42:5, 6). It is always thus when one comes to such a recognition of the holiness, power, and majesty of God. Unclean lips come from an unclean heart, and this is part of our inheritance from Adam. Isaiah confessed his own sinfulness and that of all the people among whom he moved; “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

—Charles Wesley.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, April 24

“If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it”— Isaiah 58:13, 14.

IT is of all importance to realize that men are more to God than forms and ceremonies, even of His own devising. “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27). He who is “Lord ... of the sabbath” is pleased when we use His holy day to bless and help those in trouble, and to relieve the afflicted, so far as we are able to do so. Truly to keep the first day of the week holy to the Lord is to use it

for rest, worship, and ministry to others. To think only of relaxation, and to spend this day in pleasure-seeking, is to misuse it and to fail to enter into the purpose God has had in mind in preserving its privileges for us. “I get so weary with all the burdens of business throughout the week,” said a Christian tradesman to me once, “that I must have rest and exercise on Sunday. So I use the Lord’s Day afternoons visiting in the hospital and seeking to comfort and help the friendless.” He returned to work on Monday refreshed and ready for another six days of toil.

Let us cherish our privileges and neither despise them, on the one hand, nor hedge them about with legal enactments, on the other, for which there is no Biblical authorization.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, April 23

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness” —Isaiah 55:1, 2.

IF it were not for the truth set forth in chapters 53 of Isaiah, there would be no possibility of the gracious invitation of chapters 55. Throughout this entire section of Isaiah (chapters 49 to 57) God is presenting His chosen Servant, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of Israel and of the world, whose rejection at His first coming was foreknown and plainly predicted, but who by His propitiatory work was to open up the way for guilty sinners to find peace with God and pardon for all their transgressions. Because of His work God can send forth the gracious invitation for all men everywhere to partake of His salvation. Isaiah has been called “the evangelical prophet” and he well deserves to be so designated. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is the Person and work of our Lord set forth so clearly and fully as in this wonderful book. Man is shown to be utterly bankrupt spiritually, destitute of righteousness, and with no claim upon God whatever. Yet Christ, Jehovah’s sinless Servant, is presented as the great sin offering through whose infinite sacrifice all who come to Him in faith will be justified in His sight. His salvation is based upon righteousness. In the cross the sin question has been settled in a righteous way, and so God can now save all who come to Him in faith.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, April 22

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hast laid on Him the iniquity of us all” —Isaiah 53:6.

HERE we have the entire story of the Bible epitomized: man’s ruin both by nature and practice; and God’s marvelous and all-sufficient remedy. The verse begins with all and ends with all. An anxious soul was directed to this passage and found peace. Afterward he said, “I bent low down and went in at the first all. I stood up straight and came out at the last.” The first is the acknowledgment of our deep need. The second shows how fully that need has been met in the cross of Christ. Happy to be numbered among those who have put in their claim and found salvation through the atoning work which there took place!

Daily Sacrifice, April 27

“Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin” —Isa. 53:10

THE four accounts of the crucifixion taken together give us the full meaning of the work of the cross. Jesus is presented as enduring the shame and physical anguish inflicted upon Him by man for three awful hours. In that period He gave no evidence of perturbation of spirit. He was in perfect communion with the Father, and manifested a tender concern for others, but there was no word of self-pity or commiseration for His own sufferings. But in the last three hours He was enduring the terrible ordeal of bearing the judgment our sins deserved. His cry of loneliness is the key to the deeper suffering of those hours of darkness when God, the righteous Judge, had to abandon Him to the inward spiritual suffering as the Surety for sinners. It was then His soul—not merely His body—was made an offering for sin,

—H. K. Burlingham.

Daily Sacrifice, April 26

“I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth” —Isa. 49:6.

IN Isaiah 49 we have a remarkable prophecy of Christ’s rejection by Israel and the calling of the Gentiles. In verse 4, Messiah says, “I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nought.” That is, as far as Israel is concerned, but He leaves all with Jehovah, and declares, “Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord.” For He has said unto Him, “It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth.” It was to this scripture that Paul directed the attention of the envious Jews at Antioch, who were so angry when they saw the way the Greeks thronged to hear the gospel.

Daily Sacrifice, April 25

“When thon passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee”—Isaiah 43:2.

HE who led Israel in safety through the Red Sea and the Jordan, and who walked with the three devoted Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace, is still the unfailing recourse of His troubled people in every hour of trial, no matter how severe the test. Faith can count on His sustaining grace and blessed companionship in each perplexity or apparent defeat or grave danger. Millions have tested and proven the faithfulness of His promise.

Daily Sacrifice, April 24

“I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them”— Isaiah 42:16.

IF God explained all His ways with us beforehand we would no longer walk by faith, but by sight. He leads us along strange paths, and through new and peculiar experiences that we may learn how marvelously His grace can sustain, and how blessedly His wisdom can plan. It is not necessary that we should see the road ahead. It is only necessary that we trust our Guide. He knows the end from the beginning, and He never deviates from His purpose of blessing. When, at last, we have reached the city of God and look back over the way we have come, we shall praise Him for all His dealings with us, and we shall understand the reason for every trial.

—M. E. Rae.

Daily Sacrifice, April 23

“And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering”— Isaiah 40:16.

SIN is so terrible an affront to a holy God that no sacrifice, however great, which man could offer would ever avail to put it away.

Although the mountains of Lebanon became as a great altar, and all the cedars thereon were hewn down and piled up for one enormous fire, on which were sacrificed the vast herds and flocks that grazed upon the pastures of these wooded hills, yet all together they would not be sufficient to atone for one sin. Only the precious blood of Christ avails to make propitiation for our guilt and to justify us before God.

—William Wileman

Daily Sacrifice, April 22

“The lame take the prey”— Isaiah 33:23.

GOD finds delight in working through those who confess their weakness and inability. In the day of His power He will take up poor lame Israel and lead them on to glorious victories over their former oppressors. So now He makes the base things and the things that are despised to triumph over the great and mighty of this world. He works with broken vessels. It is when the earthen pitcher is shattered that the light shines out. A crippled Jacob becomes Israel, a prince with God. In our weakness His strength is made perfect.

—Mary N. Garrard.

Daily Sacrifice, April 21

“The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever” —Isa. 32:17.

ASSURANCE forever! Is it not a wonderfully-pleasing expression? Assurance not for a few days, or weeks, or months—nor yet for a few years, or even a lifetime—but forever! It is this blessed assurance that God delights to impart to all who come to Him as needy sinners seeking the way of life.

Two words are employed in this verse that are intimately related—peace and assurance. Yet how many deeply-religious people there are in the world who scarcely know the meaning of either term. When I know that my sins have been dealt with in such a way that God’s righteousness remains untarnished, even as He folds me to His bosom, a justified believer, I have perfect peace. I know Him now as “a just God and a Saviour” (Isa. 45:21). He says, “I will bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry” (Isa. 46:13). What cheering words are these! He has provided a righteousness, His very own, for men who have none of their own! Gladly, therefore, do I spurn all attempts at self-righteousness, to be found in Him perfect and complete, clothed with His righteousness.

—M. Gibson.

Daily Sacrifice, April 20

“Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice”— Isaiah 32:1.

FOR many centuries men have looked with longing for the golden age of righteousness when Christ’s kingdom will be established over all the earth and all mankind will own His benevolent yet righteous sway. There are differ-ems of opinion as to just when and how this will be brought about, but all Christians join in praying, “Thy kingdom come,” and all look forward to the triumph of truth over error, and of good over evil. When that day comes, those who have been faithful to Christ in the time of His rejection will reign with Him in the hour of His manifested glory and power. We can well afford to suffer with and for Him now in view of that which is to be our blessed portion then.

When we see Him enthroned we will never look back with regret that we have endured too much for His name’s sake during our pilgrim pathway, but will rather wish we had been more faithful and devoted, for we shall realize then the true blessedness of a life yielded wholly to the Lord Jesus Christ

—Pratt’s Col.

Daily Sacrifice, April 18

“He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more”— Isaiah 2:4.

A comparison of Micah 4:1-5 and this duplicate passage in Isaiah 2:2-4 with many other passages in the prophetic Scriptures will make it plain that the blessed and idealistic conditions therein depicted will never be attained so long as Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is rejected. “The last days” refer, not to the climax of the Christian dispensation, but to the closing period of God’s dealings with Israel and the nations after the rapture of the Church. Following the time of trouble predicted in both Testaments (Jer. 30:6,7; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21,22), which comes after, not before, the rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13-17), the Lord Jesus will appear in glory as the Son of Man from heaven (Matt. 24:29,30); and after the judgment of the living nations (Matt. 25:31-46) He will take over the government of the world, and the kingdoms of this world will “become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15).

—Isaac Watts.

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