Joshua - Commentaries by Henry Allan Ironside

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, February 3

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“Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God”— Joshua 14:8.

THE greatness of the character of Caleb is expressed in his name. He was not of double heart. Mixed motives had no place in his life. He had settled it years before that he was to be entirely the Lord’s, and ever after he lived up to his name as the “whole-hearted.” Undoubtedly, the cause of much of our failure today is that we are so lacking in this spirit of disinterested devotion to the will of God. Of old, the disciples were exhorted that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord (Acts 11:23). Jesus declared, “If... thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light” (Matt. 6:22). When we sanctify the Lord God in our hearts and give Him the place of supreme authority, all controversy is at an end, and the life is entirely under His control. This is the path of victory and blessing. No one can be successful in his Christian life who is endeavoring to have God and the world share his heart (1 John 2:15).

—Mary D James.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, January 31

“Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses” —Joshua 1:2, 3.

THE book of Joshua is, in the Old Testament, what the Epistle to the Ephesians is in the New. It sets before us the inheritance of the people of God. Of old they were blessed with all temporal blessings in earthly places in the land of promise through Joshua. Today we are blessed “with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Joshua and Jesus are really the same names. Both mean “Jehovah, the Saviour.” Joshua is from the Hebrew, Jesus from the Greek. This explains the seemingly strange statements in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8. The “Jesus” of those verses is, of course, really the Hebrew general, Joshua, who succeeded Moses as leader of Israel. He was distinguished for his faithfulness to God and to Moses, whose assistant he was (Num. 14:6; 26:65). He and Caleb were the two spies who encouraged the people to go up and take possession of the land when the ten brought back their evil report. By divine command Joshua was selected by Moses to be his successor (Deut. 34:9), and was filled with the spirit of wisdom so as to enable him to lead the people into their inheritance. He was a valiant man of unimpeachable integrity, whose life and character challenged all to devotion to God and obedience to His Word.

—W. H. Bathurst.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, February 4

“There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass”— Joshua 21:45.

WHAT a testimony to the faithfulness of God! He fulfilled His word to the letter, whether in grace or in government, as He brought His people through the wilderness and into the promised inheritance. As they looked back they could say, All that God promised He has accomplished.” So shall it be with those who now know Him as revealed in Christ Jesus. When we have ended our pilgrimage and from the vantage-point of our eternal home in the Father’s house we survey the way we have come, we shall praise and adore Him who saved us and guided us to an assured habitation, whose Word has been our confidence through all the journey.

—F. Buckley.

Daily Sacrifice, February 8

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”— Josh. 24:15

“ME and my house.” These words bring before us a principle that runs all through Scripture. God delights to bless the households of His people and He looks for household piety. This comes out in many definite instances, as in the case of Noah (Gen. 7:1), Abraham (Gen. 18:19), Lydia, and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:15, 31-34). We see the sad effects of failure on this line in the instances of Eli (1 Sam. 3:13) and of David himself (2 Sam. 23:5), who failed grievously in not bringing his sons into subjection, although God overruled in wondrous grace.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Daily Sacrifice, February 5

“Give me a true token”— Joshua 2:12.

RAHAB wanted definite assurance of security in view of the hour of judgment coming upon Jericho. Hence her insistent demand, “Give me a true token.” That token was for her the scarlet line which she was commanded to hang in the window. Such a scarlet line is the precious truth of redemption by the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. When in doubt as to her safety Rahab could look upon that scarlet line and be at peace. Even so, today, the troubled soul has but to rest in faith upon the testimony of the Word of God as to the abiding value of the blood of Christ to be free from every doubt and fear.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, February 1

“There shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure; come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore” — Joshua 3:4.

THE ark going down into the Jordan pictured our blessed Saviour going into the dark waters of judgment for us. He had to go on alone, none could share with Him in the work of making expiation of iniquity. Just as the people of Israel waited until there was a space of two thousand cubits between them and the ark, and did not enter the river-bed till the floods were rolled back, so we, who had no part in the atonement, now obtain the benefit of that death which Jesus endured alone in order that we might be saved. We could only look on in awe-struck silence as He took our place and bore our penalty.

—Swain.

Daily Sacrifice, February 6

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day”— Joshua 5:9.

IN the early days of Joshua, after each new victory, the armies of Israel returned to Gilgal, there to renew their consecration and to give thanks for divine help in time of conflict. The name “Gilgal” means “rolling,” and was given because it was there that the reproach of Egypt was rolled away. There those who were born in the wilderness were separated to God by the covenant sign of circumcision, which had been neglected during the years of their wanderings. Gilgal, therefore, speaks of self-judgment—the recognition of the unprofitableness of the flesh,

—William Blane.

Continual Burnt Offering: Daily Meditations, February 2

“The manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land”— Joshua 5:12.

MANNA was food for the wilderness. It represented Christ come down from heaven to sustain the souls of His people as they pass through this scene of desolation. He took the lowly place with them and as they feed on Him they are enabled to make progress on the pilgrim road, But the old corn of the land speaks of the risen Christ. The corn of wheat fell into the ground in death. In resurrection He becomes the food of His people as they enter by faith into their heavenly inheritance. He sits now exalted on the Father’s right hand, where faith beholds Him as the mighty Victor. Occupied with Him, His saints become like Him, and become strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

—J. Denham Smith.

Daily Sacrifice, February 7

“There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel”— Joshua 7:13.

THIS was the secret of the defeat at Ai. Sin in the camp made Israel powerless to stand before their enemies. The effort of Achan to conceal the accursed thing did not prevent the Lord from dealing with Israel because of it. Only after it was brought out into the light and judged in the presence of God was victory assured to the host of the Lord. Who can tell the extent to which hidden sin has weakened the Church of God today in its conflict with the powers of evil! Only by confession and unsparing self-judgment will weakness be overcome and victory assured.

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