

OLD TESTAMENT
READINGS &
DEVOTIONALS

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VOLUME 1

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C.M.H. Koenig Books

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1

Reading: Genesis 1

“God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.” Genesis 1:4

Light might well be good since it sprang from that fiat of goodness, “Let there be light.” We who enjoy it should be more grateful for it than we are and see more of God in it and by it. Light physical is said by Solomon to be sweet¹, but gospel light is infinitely more precious, for it reveals eternal things, and ministers to our immortal natures. When the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual light and opens our eyes to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we behold sin in its true colors, and ourselves in our real position; we see the Most Holy God as he reveals himself, the plan of mercy as he propounds it, and the world to come as the Word describes it. Spiritual light has many beams and prismatic colors, but whether they be knowledge, joy, holiness, or life, all are divinely good. If the light received be thus good, what must the essential light be, and how glorious must be the place where he reveals himself. O Lord, since light is so good, give us more of it, and more of thyself, the true light.

No sooner is there a good thing in the world, than a division is necessary. Light and darkness have no communion; God has divided them, let us not confound them. Sons of light must not have fellowship with deeds, doctrines, or deceits of darkness.² The children of the day must be sober, honest, and bold in their Lord's work, leaving the works of darkness to those who shall dwell in it for ever.³ Our Churches should by discipline divide the light from the darkness, and we should by our distinct separation from the world do the same. In judgment, in action, in hearing, in teaching, in association, we must discern between the precious and the vile, and maintain the great distinction which the Lord made upon the world's first day. O Lord Jesus, be thou our light throughout the whole of this day, for thy light is the light of men.⁴ (Spurgeon, Morning, Jan 5)

Footnotes:

1. Ecclesiastes 11:7.
2. Philippians 2:14-16; Ephesians 5:8.
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6.
4. John 1:4.

2

Reading: Genesis 2

“Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils ...” Genesis 2:7

Many are the sweet reflections which are suggested to the Reader’s mind, from the perusal of this Chapter. Here is the first institution of the holy sabbath. And here we meet also with the first institution of the holy estate of marriage. Both of divine authority. Both sanctioned by God himself; and therefore, both worthy to be observed with suitable reverence. Concerning the *former*, I would say to the pious Reader, may it be your mercy, and mine, to honor the Lord’s Day, on account of the many precious purposes, for which the Lord himself honored it: and *to cease from our own works, as God did from His.*¹ And concerning the *latter*, I would add a prayer, that a due sense of the Divine appointment, in the institution of holy wedlock, may make everyone engaged in it, remember what the Apostle says: *Marriage is honorable unto all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*² But doth not the idea of union in the marriage-state, in this life, awaken a spir-

itual improvement, and call up to the recollection of the true believer in Jesus, the sweet thought of our spiritual union with Him, who hath betrothed his people to himself, forever? Oh! what a precious scripture is that; *Thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name.*³ Dearest Jesus, be Thou my Husband, Shepherd, Friend!

May the recollection, which the 7th verse of this chapter awakens, of the dust of which our nature was formed, remind you and me of our earthly extraction; so that we can truly say to *corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.*⁴ But at the same time, may the pleasing thought, that the LORD God hath breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, make us never forget our heavenly relationship. And oh! that God the Holy Spirit would breathe upon the dry bones,⁵ both of him that writes and him that reads, and bid us live.

Reader! do not overlook the very gracious doctrine of the 20th verse. *There was not found an help meet for Adam.* No! There is not, there cannot be, in any, or in all the creatures of God's providence, a helpmeet. And though the LORD God brought the woman to our first father, as a suitable help meet for the *body*; yet it is the *Seed of the Woman*,⁶ alone, which can become a Helpmeet for the *soul*. Dearest Jesus! be thou my Help, my Hope, and my Portion forever. (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: Genesis-Numbers, 13-14)

Footnotes:

1. Hebrews 4:9-11; Mark 2:26-28.
2. Hebrews 13:4.
3. Isaiah 54:5.
4. Job 17:14.
5. Ezekiel 37:1-14.
6. Genesis 3:15.

3

Reading: Genesis 3

“... the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...” Genesis 3:8 (AKJV)

My soul, now that the cool of the day has come, retire awhile and hearken to the voice of thy God. He is always ready to speak with thee when thou art prepared to hear. If there be any slowness to commune it is not on his part, but altogether on thine own, for he stands at the door and knocks, and if his people will but open, he rejoices to enter.¹ But in what state is my heart, which is my Lord's garden? May I venture to hope that it is well trimmed and watered, and is bringing forth fruit fit for him? If not, he will have much to reprove, but still I pray him to come unto me, for nothing can so certainly bring my heart into a right condition as the presence of the Sun of Righteousness, who brings healing in his wings.² Come, therefore, O Lord, my God, my soul invites thee earnestly, and waits for thee eagerly. Come to me, O Jesus, my well-beloved, and plant fresh flowers in my garden, such as I see blooming in such perfection in thy matchless character! Come, O my Father, who art the Husbandman, and deal with me in thy tenderness and prudence!

Come, O Holy Spirit, and bedew my whole nature, as the herbs are now moistened with the evening dews. O that God would speak to me. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth! O that he would walk with me; I am ready to give up my whole heart and mind to him, and every other thought is hushed. I am only asking what he delights to give. I am sure that he will condescend to have fellowship with me, for he has given me his Holy Spirit to abide with me forever. Sweet is the cool twilight, when every star seems like the eye of heaven, and the cool wind is as the breath of celestial love. My Father, my elder Brother, my sweet Comforter, speak now in lovingkindness, for thou hast opened mine ear and I am not rebellious. (Spurgeon, Eve, Jul 1)

Footnotes:

1. Revelation 3:20.
2. Malachi 4:2.

4

Reading: Genesis 4

“... Abel became a shepherd of flocks ...” Genesis 4:2

As a shepherd Abel *sanctified his work to the glory of God, and offered a sacrifice of blood upon his altar, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering.*¹ This early type of our Lord is exceedingly clear and distinct. Like the first streak of light which tinges the east at sunrise, it does not reveal everything, but it clearly manifests the great fact that the sun is coming. As we see Abel, a shepherd and yet a priest, offering a sacrifice of sweet smell unto God, we discern our Lord, who brings before his Father a sacrifice to which Jehovah ever hath respect. Abel was hated by his brother—hated without a cause; and even so was the Savior: the natural and carnal man hated the accepted man in whom the Spirit of grace was found, and rested not until his blood had been shed. Abel fell, and sprinkled his altar and sacrifice with his own blood, and therein sets forth the Lord Jesus slain by the enmity of man while serving as a priest before the Lord. “The good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.”² Let us weep over him as we view him slain by the hatred of mankind, staining the horns of his altar with his own blood. *Abel’s*

blood speaketh. “The Lord said unto Cain, ‘The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.’”³ The blood of Jesus hath a mighty tongue, and the import of its prevailing cry is not vengeance but mercy. It is precious beyond all preciousness to stand at the altar of our good Shepherd!⁴ to see him bleeding there as the slaughtered priest, and then to hear his blood speaking peace to all his flock, peace in our conscience, peace between Jew and Gentile, peace between man and his offended Maker, peace all down the ages of eternity for blood-washed men. Abel is the first shepherd in order of time, but our hearts shall ever place Jesus first in order of excellence. Thou great Keeper of the sheep, we the people of thy pasture bless thee with our whole hearts when we see thee slain for us. (Spurgeon, Morning, Jan 20)

Footnotes:

1. Genesis 4:4; Hebrews 11:4.
2. John 10:11.
3. Genesis 4:10.
4. John 10:11.

5

Reading: Genesis 5

“... Enoch walked with God...” Genesis 5:22

I have often considered, and as often found pleasure, in the consideration of the very honorable testimony which the Holy Spirit hath given to the faith of the patriarchs, both in the Old and New Testaments. What wonders were wrought by faith! “They walked with God! They endured (saith the sacred writer) as seeing him who is invisible.”¹ They communed with God, and were as conscious of his spiritual presence, and spiritual society, as we are of sensible objects. Hence, by these acts of frequent communion, the souls found a growing likeness. The more they loved God, the more their minds were led by grace into an increasing conformity to what they loved. This assimilation is a natural consequence, even among natural things. He that walketh with wise men will be wise. We naturally imbibe the manners, the sentiments, yea, the very habits, of those with whom we like to associate. How much more must a frequent intercourse and communion with the Lord, and under his spiritual teaching, induce a conformity to the most fair, most lovely, and most beloved object of the soul! “Beholding, (saith the Apostle.)

as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”² Are these things so? Then it is explained to thee, my soul, wherefore it is that thou goest so lean, and art yet so poor in the divine life. Thou dost not, as Enoch did, keep up a continual communion with Jesus. Pause, this evening, over the subject, and see if this be not the case. All the days of thine unregeneracy, before thou wert first brought acquainted with God in Christ, were spent in a total ignorance of God. There was then no communion with him; yea, not even the desire of communion. But when God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into thine heart, then was first given to thee the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.³ Recollect, then, what were thy feelings when the day-spring from on high first visited thee. Didst thou not flee to Jesus, as the man-slayer hastening for his life to the city of refuge? Oh! how feelingly wert thou made to value the very name of a Savior! How earnestly didst thou seek him above thy necessary food! And if thou hast since intermitted those visits to Jesus, and lost a sense of thy daily want of him, can it be a subject of wonder that this leanness of soul is induced in thee? Will not a distance from, and a shyness of, Jesus, produce a poverty in spiritual things, as much as the want of food to the body will bring on a leanness and a decline in bodily things? Learn, then, this evening, an unanswerable reply to all thy complaints, and the complaints of the Church at large. Wherefore is it that believers live so much below their privileges, but because they live so much below the enjoyment of sweet communion with Jesus? If worldly concerns swallow up our time, as the earth did Korah and his company; if we are satisfied with a mere form of prayer in our morning and evening retirement, and in our family worship before God, while destitute of the power of godliness; if we are still but little acquainted with the Lord, and seldom go to court to behold the king in his beauty, and to be favored with his smiles; it is

no longer a matter of surprise, that, from keeping so poor a house, we are so poor in enjoyment. Oh! for grace to walk with God, as Enoch walked! Make me, thou dear Lord, jealous above all things of my own heart. Let every morning, with the first dawn of day, call me up to holy communion with thee. And let every night toll the bell of reflection, to examine what visits I have had *from* thee, and what visits I have made *to* thee; and let nothing satisfy my soul but the continual walk of faith with thee; that from an increasing knowledge *of* thee, increasing communion *with* thee, and increasing confidence *in* thee, my soul may be growing up into such lively actings of grace upon thy person, blood, and righteousness, that a daily walk of communion with my Lord may be gradually preparing my soul for the everlasting enjoyment of him; and when death comes, though it make a change of place, yet will it make no change of company; but “awaking up after thy likeness, I shall be fully satisfied with it.” (Hawker, The Poor Man's Evening Portion, Jan 13)

Footnotes:

1. Hebrews 11:27.
2. 2 Corinthians 3:18.
3. 2 Corinthians 4:6.