

OLD TESTAMENT  
READINGS &  
DEVOTIONALS



# Old Testament Readings & Devotionals

---

---

VOLUME 11

---

---

C.M.H. Koenig

*Robert Hawker*

*Charles H. Spurgeon*

*Octavius Winslow*

C.M.H. Koenig Books

C.M.H. Koenig Books

Copyright © 2021 by Heather L. Rautio

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

ISBN 978-1-956475-21-0 (Paperback)

ISBN 978-1-956475-22-7 (eBook)

ISBN 978-1-956475-23-4 (Hardcover)

Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the Christian Standard Bible. Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible®, and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers, all rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked AKJV are from the Authorized (King James) Version. Rights in the Authorized Version in the United Kingdom are vested in the Crown. Reproduced by permission of the Crown's patentee, Cambridge University Press.

Cover design by H. L. Rautio.

Cover photograph by E. T. Rautio.

First Printing, 2021

Visit [www.cmhkoenigbooks.net](http://www.cmhkoenigbooks.net)

# 1

## Reading: Ezra 1

*“King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the LORD’s house that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and had placed in the house of his gods.” Ezra 1:7*

Was not Cyrus a type, in this instance, of the gentile church, concerning whom it was said that *they should bring of their abundance to beautify the place of God’s sanctuary.*<sup>1</sup> And it is remarkable, as if the Lord meant from the earliest days of the church to point out his holy will and pleasure, in making the Jew and Gentile church at length one in Jesus, that in the first wilderness church after the people departed out of Egypt, the church was supplied from the spoils of the Egyptians.<sup>2</sup> But I wish the Reader to make another observation which those verses suggest, namely, amidst all the impiety and profaneness of the kings of Babylon, in desecrating the holy vessels of the temple, how did the Lord watch over both the people and the temple treasures. Yes! the Lord’s eye was upon them, and according to his own precious word, their memorial was always before him: *In my wrath I smote thee, saith the Lord; but in my favor have I had mercy*

*upon thee.*<sup>3</sup> How sweet a lesson this to the long and painful exercises of his afflicted ones now. He knows all they feel; hears every groan; and is speaking to them in the same gracious words; *I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*<sup>4</sup> (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 583–584)

Footnotes:

1. Isaiah 60:3–14.
2. Exodus 12:35-36.
3. Isaiah 60:10.
4. Isaiah 27:2-3.

## 2

# Reading: Ezra 2

*“These now are the people of the province who came from those captive exiles King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had deported to Babylon ...”* Ezra 2:1

We are not to suppose that these were individually the very same persons which were carried away and all lived to return. Seventy years must have produced both deaths and births in the several tribes. But I rather conceive, by this register, is meant the exact number of those in each tribe that survived to return.

...No doubt during the captivity a faithful register was kept of the several families, and therefore their number was the more clearly ascertained. Chiefly with an eye to the promised Messiah, each father of the tribe carefully preserved his record. One feature in this record of the families of Israel I cannot help remarking. I mean the smallness of the children of Bethlehem compared to some; —*only 123*. This was what the prophet *Micah* had before noticed. *And thou Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler*

*in Israel; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.*<sup>1</sup> What a sweet thought this suggests, not to despise the day of small things! (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 585, 587)

Footnote:

1. Micah 5:2.

# 3

---

## Reading: Ezra 3

*“When the seventh month arrived ... the people gathered as one in Jerusalem.”* Ezra 3:1

This seventh month was probably at the time of gathering in their summer fruits. What the country had produced of them is not said. But it was a fit season for assembling upon the great purpose they had in view. I would not have the Reader, methinks, overlook the unanimity which subsisted among them; for we are told they gathered themselves together as one man. Reader! it is this sweet feature of Jesus’s gospel which makes both him and his blessed cause so dear. Oneness with him will be sure to make the same with his members. If I love him, I must love my brother that is part of him.<sup>1</sup>

*“... began to build the altar of Israel’s God in order to offer burnt offerings on it ...”* Ezra 3:2

I must beg the Reader very particularly to mark this verse. Here we find that before they began, or even had power to begin, the foundation for the temple, the altar was set up. Was not this typical of Jesus? Is he not, and was he not ever, the Altar, the Sacrifice, and Priest? What a precious allusion then was this to him, in whom

all sacrifices had their substance, and to whom they all referred. (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 592)

Footnote:

1. John 13:35.

# 4

## Reading: Ezra 4

*“Then ceased the work of the house of God.”* Ezra 4:24 (AKJV)

Ah! how distressed was Zion, when this decree took place. And yet the history of the church plainly proves that the hand of the Lord was in it! My soul, are thine exercises sometimes similar? Doth it seem to thee as if the work of God in thee was at a stand? nay, as if it was totally over? Pause! recollect there is a set time to favor Zion. Thy Jesus is of one mind, and who can turn him? He is everlastingly pursuing the designs of his love. And as Zion was graven upon the palms of his hands, and her walls were continually before him, when she appeared in her most desolate circumstances; so the work of his grace, in the heart of his people, doth not remit, though, to thy view, all thy promising beginnings seem to be blighted, and as it seems in thy apprehension, thou findest growing imperfection. And is not Jesus, by this very means, emptying thee of self, and all the pride of self-attainments? Is he not preparing thee for his own glory, by removing in thee the rubbish of all creature-confidences? Remember what is said; When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. Mark here, that it is the Lord that is to build

Zion: and it is the Lord's glory, and not thine, that is to result from it. The work of the house of God in thee would indeed cease, if the work was thine, or thou hadst any hand in the performance of it! But the same almighty hand which laid the foundation of this house, those hands shall also finish it.<sup>1</sup> And by this process, the glorious Builder is teaching thee to cease from thine own works, as Jesus when redemption-work was finished, did from his.<sup>2</sup> Precious Lord! is this the cause, and are these the lessons, thou art teaching me, in the deadness, emptiness, and the numberless complaints under which I daily groan? Oh! then, for grace to cease from self, to cease from all fancied attainments, and to have my whole heart and soul centered in thee, in whom alone is all righteousness, grace, work, and fulness. Yes, Lord! the work is thine, the salvation is thine, the glory is thine, all is thine and all that remains for me, is to be forever giving thee the just praise that is due to thy most holy name, content to be nothing, yea, less than nothing, that the power of Jesus may rest upon me; for when most weak in myself, then am I most strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. (Hawker, The Poor Man's Morning Portion, May 24)

Footnotes:

1. Philippians 1:6.
2. Mark 16:19; Hebrews 12:2.

# 5

---

## Reading: Ezra 5

The Lord had certainly softened the minds of those men, that though they sent an accusation against the people to the king, yet the Lord overruled the indicting of it. When *a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*<sup>1</sup> But I beg the Reader to observe further what confidence the people had taken from the consciousness that the eye of the Lord their God was upon them. No doubt the Lord blessed the words of his servants the prophets unto them. I cannot sufficiently praise the firmness and zeal of the people in stating their just pretensions to prosecute the work; not only because Cyrus the king had tolerated, but from an infinitely higher cause, that the king of kings, even the God of heaven and earth, they were servants to. And they had suffered his displeasure in the captivity they were lately brought out of, for neglecting what they now were determined to engage in. Oh! how precious it is to find souls faithful to God and Christ, and determined to persevere in his service, be the consequence what it may. Reader! make your just observations upon the same characters, as they appeared in the foregoing chapter and in this. *There* through

fear of man, which bringeth a snare, they ceased from the work. *Here*, through fear and love of God, which giveth confidence, they set up their banners. But Reader! do not fail at the same time to put down this different conduct to the right cause. Left to themselves in the former instance, we see what human strength is. Aided and encouraged by the Lord's prophets, and more especially the Lord's grace, in this latter instance, we see what man can do, the Lord helping. Precious Jesus! I can do nothing by myself except to sin and forget thee. But I can do all things when thou art by and guidest me on, and enablest me. (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 603)

Footnote:

1. Proverbs 16:7.