

OLD TESTAMENT  
READINGS &  
DEVOTIONALS



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C.M.H. Koenig Books

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# 1

## Reading: 2 Kings 21, 2 Chronicles 33

I bring the whole of a life so flagitious as that of Manasseh within one point of view, both for the sake of shortness, and for gathering all the instruction it affords before the Reader at once. But as the Holy Spirit hath been graciously pleased to give the church further particulars concerning Manasseh than what is here said of him in the 2nd book of the Chronicles, chapter 33. I very earnestly beg the Reader to read the whole of what is there said of Manasseh at the time he peruseth this chapter. And the more so, indeed, because here we only learn his worthlessness. There we discover the penitence he manifested in affliction. And by comparing both parts of his history together, we learn, under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, as illustrious an example of the triumphs of grace in his recovery, as we behold the most woeful instance of the fall of man in his vileness. So that blended in one and the same point of view, we behold the truth of what the apostle was commissioned to tell the church, that *where sin abounded grace doth much more abound: that*

*as sin reigneth unto death so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*<sup>1</sup> I cannot refrain stopping the Reader in the perusal of this passage to remark the graciousness of God in his determined punishment of Jerusalem. The Lord saith that *he will wipe it as a man wipeth a dish, turning it upside down.*<sup>2</sup> Do, Reader, observe those expressions. Jerusalem shall be wiped, not broken, not cast away, not destroyed; but wiped. It shall be much tossed about, indeed, from the highest to the lowest, fairly upside down; but nevertheless, all this is with a view to cleansing. It is all in mercy, all in love, all in tenderness. The Lord saith in the after age; *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies.*<sup>3</sup> And he hath opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a fountain for sin and for uncleanness.<sup>4</sup> And where is this but in thy blood, precious Jesus! thou art the Lamb of God that takest away sin. And thou art the mercy promised.<sup>5</sup> (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 276–277)

Footnotes:

1. Romans 5:20-21.
2. 2 Kings 21:13.
3. Zechariah 1:16.
4. Zechariah 13:1.
5. Luke 1:72.

## 2

# Reading: Nahum 1

*“The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power.”* Nahum 1:3 (AKJV)

Jehovah *“is slow to anger.”* When mercy cometh into the world she driveth winged steeds; the axles of her chariot-wheels are red hot with speed; but when wrath goeth forth, it toileth on with tardy footsteps, for God taketh no pleasure in the sinner’s death.<sup>1</sup> God’s rod of mercy is ever in his hands outstretched; his sword of justice is in its scabbard, held down by that pierced hand of love which bled for the sins of men. *“The Lord is slow to anger,”* because he is GREAT IN POWER. He is truly great in power who hath power over himself. When God’s power doth restrain himself, then it is power indeed: the power that binds omnipotence is omnipotence surpassed. A man who has a strong mind can bear to be insulted long, and only resents the wrong when a sense of right demands his action. The weak mind is irritated at a little: the strong mind bears it like a rock which moveth not, though a thousand breakers dash upon it, and cast their pitiful malice in spray upon its summit. God marketh his enemies, and yet he bestirs not himself, but holdeth in his anger. If he were less divine than he is, he would long ere this

have sent forth the whole of his thunders, and emptied the magazines of heaven; he would long ere this have blasted the earth with the wondrous fires of its lower regions, and man would have been utterly destroyed; but the greatness of his power brings us mercy. Dear reader, what is your state this evening? Can you by humble faith look to Jesus, and say, “My substitute, thou art my rock, my trust”?<sup>2</sup> Then, beloved, be not afraid of God’s power; for by faith you have fled to Christ for refuge, the power of God need no more terrify you, than the shield and sword of the warrior need terrify those whom he loves. Rather rejoice that he who is “great in power” is your Father and Friend. (Spurgeon, Eve, Feb 22)

Footnotes:

1. Ezekiel 33:11.
2. Romans 3:21-26.



# 3

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## Reading: Nahum 2

I have often thought that if the ungodly and carnal world could but consider, that all the opposition which they are making against the Church is overruled to the Lord's glory and his people's furtherance; they would, even from motives of ill will, desist sometimes from the exercise of their unprovoked malice. And I have as often thought, if the people of God could but keep in view that the malice of their opposers is not only permitted, but even appointed of the Lord; and like the clouds, pregnant with refreshing showers, must at length break over their head in blessing; how would they bless God for raising up to them enemies, to thwart and call forth their graces into exercise. In the history of *Egypt*, the Lord himself so explains the persecutions *Israel* sustained. *He turned their heart (it is said) to hate his people.*<sup>1</sup> So that though *Pharaoh* stormed, and the *Egyptians* oppressed them, yet they were but the instruments, the hand was the Lord's. Reader! whatever tends to lead the heart to the Lord, must be *of* the Lord. And whether *Egypt*, *Assyria*, *Babylon*, or *Nineveh*; whether corruption within, or persecution without;

whether our own deceitful hearts, or the world, or the powers of darkness, assault and harass, and afflict the people of God; wait but the issue, and listen to the voice of the Lord. To every adversary of his Church, the Lord speaks in those decisive words, *behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord!* Blessed Lord Jesus, I would say for myself and Reader, *if thou be for us*, what need we care *who* or what *is against us*?<sup>2</sup> (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: Ezekiel-Malachi, 449)

Footnotes:

1. Psalm 105:25.
2. Romans 8:31.

# 4

## Reading: Nahum 3

...The whole of *Nahum's* prophecy, if taken *literally*, and with an eye to the history of *Nineveh*, and the Church, is interesting. But if read *spiritually*, as typifying in *Nineveh* the enemies of the Church, and the Lord's deliverance of his people, and the final destruction of their foes, in the redemption by Christ, riseth to a degree of sublimity, beautiful, interesting, and glorious. Reader! may the Lord give to us both the sweet and powerful proofs of his divine teaching, that we may *know the things which are freely given to us of God!* (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: Ezekiel-Malachi, 451)

## Reading: 2 Kings 22

*“I have found the book of the law in the LORD’s temple,” and he gave the book to Shaphan, who read it.” 2 Kings 22:8*

This is a most interesting verse. It should seem very plain that during the long period that idolatry had prevailed in the land, not only the temple had been suffered to fall into ruins; but the very word of God had been so disregarded, that not a copy of it was among the people. It was God’s command by Moses, that every king should himself write out a copy of it.<sup>1</sup> And there was a further command, beside that which concerned the person of the king in studying the law of God himself; it was to be publicly read every seventh year.<sup>2</sup> Reader! to what deplorable state was the children of Israel reduced at this time, when so far from reading in the word of God, the very sacred book itself they had lost. Oh! ye that disregard your bibles, that pass by the reverence ye owe to the holy word of God. Behold here the dreadful effects of it. My soul! doth God’s sacred word contain the words of eternal life, even Jesus and his great salvation? And is this precious treasure disregarded, slighted, overlooked by me? Do I suffer that holy word which is able to make

me wise unto salvation; do I suffer it from sabbath to sabbath to lie by on the shelf, until my sentence of everlasting condemnation might be written upon the dust of it which lies upon the cover! Reader! I pray God that this may never be your case nor mine. But what a mercy was it in God, to cause this copy which Hilkiyah found to be secured during the whole reign of idolatry. Whose blessed hand was it that was thus commissioned of the Lord to put it in so secure a place in the temple? Let his memory be ever blessed. Some have thought that it was Moses, because we read that he commanded Joshua after he had finally read to the people the book of the law, to put it in the side of the ark as a witness for after ages.<sup>3</sup> But Reader! let it have been whom it may, have you thought of the mercy you and I have derived from it? Certain it is, that had this copy not been found, the hand that now writes, and the eye that reads those observations upon it, would never have known the one nor the other. Oh! blessed God! how evident from hence, even if there were no other testimonies, how evident from hence is it, that thou hast given us those scriptures of truth, from thy graciously watching over it! Oh! Lord, how gracious art thou, that so long a period of idolatry did not wear out thy long-suffering and patience! Oh! Lord, grant that I may esteem thy precious word more than my necessary food, and that it may be my study all the day. And let mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I may be occupied in thy word. I cannot help detaining the Reader with one observation more on this interesting verse, just to remark the distinguishing mercy of the Lord towards Hilkiyah, that he should be the highly favored one to discover this hidden treasure. Reader! is not that minister of Jesus peculiarly blessed, whom the Lord honors with his secrets, and whom our Jesus commissions to bring out of his treasury things new and old for his household's use? Think, Reader! what joy the discovery of this blessed book must have given to Hilkiyah, when he cried out in holy transport, 'I have found the book of the law in the

house of the Lord.' And let that soul describe his joy, for no language of another can express it, when from the word of God he can say, I have found Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth!<sup>4</sup> Reader! where was this book found? Was it not in the temple? Where shall you and I find Jesus, but in his ordinances, his word, his house of prayer! (Hawker, Poor Man's Old Testament Commentary: 1 Kings-Esther, 279–280)

Footnotes:

1. Deuteronomy 17:18.
2. Deuteronomy 31:10–13.
3. Deuteronomy 31:24–27.
4. John 1:45.