

Devotional from Pastor Ho
December 24, 2020

2 Chronicles 25:9, *“And Amaziah said to the man of God, ‘But what shall we do about the hundred talents that I have given to the army of Israel?’ The man of God answered, ‘The LORD is able to give you much more than this.’”*

King Amaziah of Judah was putting together an army for a war. Those who were twenty-years old and older, choice men who were fit for war numbered 300,000. He probably deemed this number insufficient, so he hired another 100,000 mighty men from Israel for 100 talents (7500 lbs. or 3400 kg) of silver. Then a man of God told him not to involve the Israelites, because God was not with them, while God had the power to make him win or lose the battle. In other words, he should rely on God alone.

It turns out that Amaziah had paid for these mercenaries and couldn't get a refund if he sent them back. Naturally, he felt he had wasted their services, but the man of God said something remarkable, “The Lord is able to give you much more than this.” It is as if the Lord was giving Amaziah a blank check, “If you will obey me on this matter, I will grant you the desire of your heart.” For Amaziah, the “much more” refers not only to the 100 talents of silver, but also a guaranteed victory over the Edomites, which the hired mercenaries couldn't guarantee. The only drawback in this incident is that the angry mercenaries, who were sent back to Israel, turned around and raided the cities of Judah, killing 3000 people and took much spoil. Is this the Lord's oversight, allowing these villains to find a loophole? Otherwise, what spiritual insight could we gain from this incident?

The Chronicler reports the incident matter-of-factly, without giving any explanation for the dark spot on an otherwise rosy picture. But we who celebrate Christmas understands that obedience has a cost, which is sometimes costly. Obedience doesn't necessarily guarantee smooth-sailing. Obedience must even be accompanied by perseverance in order to be rewarded with the promised “much more.” For the Son of God, obedience means coming to the world by taking the form of a servant (Phil 2:7) and by learning to obey through suffering (Heb 5:8).

Prayer: Wonderful Savior, thank you for exemplifying for us what obedience means. Help us to obey and persevere in it. Amen.

何牧師的靈修

2020年12月24日

歷代誌下 25 章 9 節：“亞瑪謝問神人說：我給了以色列軍的那一百他連得銀子怎麼樣呢？神人回答說：耶和華能把更多的賜給你。”

猶大的國王亞瑪謝招聚軍隊準備進行戰爭。那些二十歲以上的成人，適合出去打仗的精兵共有三十萬。他可能認為這個數字不足，因此他又用銀子一百他連得（7500 磅或 3400 公斤），從以色列招募了十萬大能的勇士。然後有個神人告訴他不要讓以色列人參與，因為神沒有與他們同在，而神卻有能力助人得勝，也能使人在戰爭中失敗。換句話說，他應該只依靠神。

事實證明亞瑪謝已經把錢交給這些勇士了，如果他叫他們回去，他將無法得到退款。自然地，他覺得自己浪費了他們的服務，但是神人說了精彩超卓的話：耶和華能把更多的賜給你。好像主在給亞瑪謝一張空白支票，“如果你在這件事上願意服從我，我會給你達成你內心的期望。”對於亞瑪謝來說，“更多”不僅是一百他連得銀子，更是指保證對以東人的勝利，是那被招募的勇士無法保證的。這次事件的唯一弊端是，這些被打發回去以色列的憤怒勇士，回頭攻打猶大各城，殺了三千人，搶了許多財物。這是主的疏忽，讓這些惡棍找到漏洞嗎？要不然，我們可以從這次事件中獲得什麼屬靈上的亮光教導呢？

歷代誌的作者僅照實報導這事件，沒有對原本應是璀璨的圖片上的污點作任何解釋。但我們這些慶祝聖誕的人明白順服是有代價的，有時候代價還真昂貴。順服不一定保證一切將一帆風順。順服甚至還要有堅持陪伴著才能得到所應許的“更多”。對神的兒子來說，順服意味著來到世界上取奴僕的形象（腓利比書 2:7）也藉著苦難學習順服（希伯來書 5:8）。

禱告：奇妙的救主，謝謝你給我們順服的模範。求你幫助我們順服以及持之以恆。阿門。

何牧师的灵修

2020年12月24日

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