

The Evening and the Morning were the First Day. Gen. 1:5

How different is God's method from man's! The creature works from day to night, his best is first; but darkness overshadows his fairest hopes and best-concerted schemes. The Creator's days begin with the preceding eve. He reckons the evenings and night into the days, because out of them the day is born; they usher in the light, and recreate body and brain for the busy hours that follow.

ART THOU DISAPPOINTED IN CHRISTIAN WORK? Remember that God wrought on through long dark ages, ere his schemes were evolved in order and beauty. Human schemes begin with blare of trumpet and roll of drum, but are soon plunged in darkness. The heavenly seed is sown in autumn shadows; the foundation-stone of redemption was laid amid the gloom of Calvary; the work that lasts generally begins amid disappointment, difficulty, and heart-break, but inevitably passes into the day.

ART THOU PASSING THROUGH THE BITTERNESS OF SOUL-TROUBLE? For weeks there has been no ray of comfort, no sign of deliverance. Yet every dark hour is hastening towards the dawn. Thou shalt see thy Beloved walking towards thee in the morning light.

ART THOU IN DESPAIR FOR THE WORLD? The times are dark, and threaten to get darker. But if the first creation began in the dark, can it be wondered at that the second must begin there too? But as the one emerged in daylight, so shall the other. The morning cometh; see the star of day standing sentry! Time is bearing us to a day that shall never go down to night, but shall mount ever toward its meridian.

有晚上，有早晨，這是頭一日。 創一5

神的方法何等不同於人的方法！人做工是從白天到晚上，他的上好是在開頭的時候；但是黑暗使他最美的希望和最協調的計畫蒙上陰影。造物主的日子從之前的夜晚開始。祂把傍晚和黑夜計算到一天裡面，因為白天是從夜晚出生的；夜晚引進光明，並為接下來的繁忙時間修養身體和大腦。

你對基督教的事工感到失望嗎？你要牢記，在神的計畫演變成美麗有序之前，祂已在漫長黑暗年代裡做工許久了。人的計畫從吹號擊鼓開始，但很快就落入黑暗。天國的種子在秋天的陰影中撒下；救贖的基石奠定在各各他的幽暗中；恒久的工作通常開始於沮喪、困難和心碎之間，但是必然漸漸變成白晝。

你正經歷心靈煩惱的痛苦嗎？數週以來沒有一線安慰光芒，沒有解救的跡象。然而每個黑暗的鐘點正朝向黎明急速前進。你必看見你的良人在晨光中向你迎面而來。

你對這世界絕望嗎？時代是黑暗的，而且有更黑暗的趨勢。但是如果第一次的創造是在黑暗中開始，難道第二次創造也必須從那裡開始，這還算希奇嗎？但是如果先前的是在白晝裡顯現，以後的也當如此。早晨臨近；請看晨星站崗了！時間正帶我們進入一個白晝，永遠不再落入黑夜(啟廿一25)，且要一直上升直到日午。

The Lord God put him into the Garden. Gen. 2:15

Thus God started man in an ideal home. Memories of Eden, exquisite as dreams, weave the background of human life. Fellowship with the Creator, who walked its glades; its river, trees, and fruits; its blessed companionship; its light and ennobling toils—how fair the picture!

THE GARDEN OF EDEN. That was God's ideal. When men point thee to the scars on the world's face, left by the trail of the Arab slaver, the march of the army, the decaying glory of human civilization, and ask how such things are consistent with God's love, point to that garden and say, "That is what the love of God meant for man; Satan and sin have wrought this."

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. When man forfeited Paradise, the Saviour was revealed to regain it. He trod the winepress alone in the shadowed garden of the olive trees, that through its glades He might pass to his cross, and so make the wastes of sin bloom again as Eden. Is it wonderful that another Paradise is possible, when He sowed its seeds and watered the soil with his blood?

TURNING WASTES INTO GARDENS. In Eden man wrought as God's fellow-worker; and we are called each day to do something towards reconstructing the Lost Paradise. Find thy part in delving, sowing, watering, or tending the tender shoots! Seek that thine heart should be an Eden, kept sacred for thy King, and endeavour thy best to plant gardens where hitherto sand-wastes and thorn-thickets have prevailed. Then, "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

耶和華神將那人安置在伊甸園。 創二15

神使人從理想的家園開始。伊甸園的記憶，如夢境般優美，編成人類生活的背景。與造物主相交，漫步在園子的林間；園子的河流、樹木、果子；在伊甸園中蒙福的同伴；園子的光明和高貴的辛勞 — 多麼美麗的畫面！

伊甸園。這是神的理想。當人們向你指出這世界表面的傷痕，就是阿拉伯奴隸販子的足跡、軍隊的行進、人類文明的榮耀逐漸衰敗所留下的疤痕，並質問這樣的事情如何與神的愛相符，請你指著那園子說，「那園子就是代表神給人的愛，而撒但和罪已經做出這樣的破壞。」

客西馬尼園。當人失去了伊甸園，救主就被揭示要來恢復它。祂在陰暗的橄欖園中獨自踩踏這壓酒池[譯註：客西馬尼的字義就是醉酒、醃油]，使祂可以經過客西馬尼的林間，邁向祂的十字架，從而使罪的荒地再次開花如伊甸園。當祂撒下樂園的種子，並用祂的鮮血澆灌土地，使另一個樂園成為可能，這算希奇嗎？

把荒地變為園子。在伊甸園，人曾以神的同工的身分做工；現今我們每天被呼召去做些重建失去之樂園的工作。你務要在耕耘、播種、灌溉、或照顧嫩枝的工作中尋找你的角色！你要追求使你的心成為伊甸園，使它聖別專為你的王，並竭盡全力種植園子，雖然到如今仍然沙土遍地、荊棘茂盛。然後，「松樹長出代替荊棘。番石榴長出代替蒺藜。這要為耶和華留名，作為永遠的證據，不能剪除。(賽五十五13)」

Where art thou? Gen. 3:9

The cool of the day, when the breeze steals over the fevered landscape, is an appropriate time for man to hold fellowship with God. We need to have his hand laid on our throbbing temples, stilling, tranquillizing, shedding his serenity throughout our being. What the breath of evening is in summer, fellowship with God will be for thee, my soul; see that thou art not so absorbed with thy sins, thy love, or thy business, as to miss the tryst, when the sun is westering.

God misses his child. That hour of fellowship was much to Adam, and it was more to God. Love, God's love, craves for fellowship. As the musician for his lute, as the hart for the brook, as the mother for the twining arms and babbling talk of her child—so does God long for the free outpourings of his child's heart in prayer; misses them when withheld; is jealous when they are fitful and intermittent.

God seeks his child. He did not wait till Adam found his way back to his side. But He hastened in search of him. So through the glades He comes to seek thee, O truant one! Where art thou, that for these many days thou hast withheld thyself from the hour of prayer? Wilt thou not say with the psalmist, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek."?

God mourns over his child. These words, in one version, are rendered, Alas, for thee: as though the heart of God were wrung with sorrow for our loss, as well as his. But he does not content Himself with regret. By the pang of travail, by the prick of thorns, by the necessity of labour, by sacrifice and gifts of covering for our nakedness, He brings us back to Himself.

你在哪裡？ 創三9

當涼風悄悄吹過炎熱的大地，天轉涼時，正是與神相交的美好時刻。我們需要有祂的手放在我們跳動的太陽穴上，安靜鎮定下來，使祂的寧靜流遍我們全人。我的心啊，你需要與神交通，正如在夏天需要傍晚的微風；你要留意不讓你沉迷於你的罪、你的喜好、你的工作，以至於夕陽西下時錯過與神的約會。

神思念祂的孩子。彼此交通的時刻對亞當很重要，對神更加珍貴。愛，神的愛，渴望交通。如音樂家喜愛他的琵琶，如鹿渴慕溪水，如母親歡喜她的孩子揮動的小手和牙牙學語的聲音——神也如此渴望祂的孩子在禱告中自由地傾吐心意；在交通受到攔阻時祂會想念，當交通斷斷續續時祂會嫉妒。

神尋找祂的孩子。祂不是等亞當自己找路回到祂身邊，而是祂趕緊尋找他。祂穿過樹林來尋找你！逃避的人啊，你在哪裡？這些天來，你一直抑制自己不去禱告？你不要隨著詩人說「你說，你們當尋求我的面。那時我心向你說，耶和華啊，你的面我正要尋求。（詩廿七8）」嗎？

神為祂的孩子憂傷。這句話，有一個版本這樣描述，你這可憐的人啊！神的心為了我們的失喪而悲傷絞痛，好像祂也失喪一樣。但是祂並不以懊悔為滿足。藉著生產的劇痛，藉著荊棘的刺傷，藉著必要的勞苦，藉著為要掩蓋我們的赤身而犧牲並施恩，祂把我們帶回到祂面前。

Where is Abel thy Brother? Gen. 4:9

The first question God puts to the soul is, "Adam, where art thou?" The next, "Where is Abel thy brother?" We are our brothers'keepers. Each within our reach, all who need our help, all related to us by the ties of the family, have a claim on us. We must not take an advantage over them; their weakness and need are strong claims on our resources of every kind; we are bound to keep them so far as we can; we may at any moment be called to give an account of their whereabouts. To dispute this is to betray the spirit of Cain, who was a murderer.

GOD KEEPS AN INVENTORY OF HIS SAINTS. In his book their names are written. Their names, abode, and circumstances; their fathers, mothers, and brothers; their occupation, whether they keep the sheep or till the land: all are known to Him, because fixed by his providence. Whatever touches them is, therefore, instantly known to Him. It is as though they were part of his very being, and a stab of pain to them thrills his heart.

GOD CALLS US TO HELP HIM IN KEEPING ONE ANOTHER. We are to watch for each other's souls; to consider one another to provoke to good works; to bear one another's burdens; to exhort each other, to convert the wanderer from the path of the destroyer, and to wash stains from his feet. The cure of souls is the work of all the saints. But this is only possible to those who have been baptized into the Spirit of Christ. Remember that you have just as much love towards God, as you are willing to show towards the brother whom you have seen. "This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

你兄弟亞伯在哪裡？ 創四9

神向人提出的第一個問題是，「亞當，你在哪裡？」下一個問題是，「你兄弟亞伯在哪裡？」我們是兄弟的守護人。我們能力所及範圍內的每個人，所有需要我們幫助的人，所有和我們有關係的親屬，都有權利要求我們。我們一定不要佔他們的便宜；他們的軟弱和需要，對我們的每一項資源，發出強烈的要求；我們有義務要盡所能照顧他們；我們可能隨時會被要求說明他們的下落。抗拒這個責任就顯出該隱的靈，該隱是一個殺人的兇手。

神持有祂聖徒的清單。他們的名字記錄在祂的冊子裡。他們的名字、住處和境況；他們的父親、母親和弟兄；他們的職業，不管是他們牧羊或種地：一切祂都知道，因為是按祂旨意所定的。因此，不論什麼碰到他們，祂立刻知道。彷彿他們就是祂身體的一部分，刺傷他們就震動祂的心。

神呼召我們互相看顧。我們要互相看守彼此的靈魂；彼此相顧，勉勵行善(來十24)；互相擔當別人的重擔(加六2)；彼此相勸(來三13)；使流浪者轉離毀滅的道路，並洗聖徒的腳(約十三14)。靈魂的醫治是所有聖徒的工作。但只有那已經受洗進入基督的人才可能做到。謹記你對神的愛有多少，你才甘心對那看得見的弟兄有多少愛。「愛神的，也當愛弟兄，這是我們從神所受的命令。(約壹四21)」

Enoch walked with God. Gen. 5:24

What an epitaph on this ancient saint! It is as clear-cut to-day as when first recorded here. We know nothing of Enoch but this brief record; but it tells us everything. It was not an act or a number of acts, but a high tone of life constantly maintained. Better to walk with God every day in calm, unbroken fellowship, than to have occasional rapturous experiences, succeeded by long relapses and backslidings. The Hebrew word might be rendered, "Enoch walked and continued to walk."

BE SURE TO GO GOD'S WAY. He will not walk with thee in thy way, but thou mayest walk with Him in his. To this He calls thee. Each moment, and especially when two or three roads diverge, look up to Him, and say, "Which way art Thou taking, that I may accompany Thee?" It will not be so hard to forsake inviting paths and engaging companions, if only the eye is kept fixed on his face, and the track of his footsteps determines thy road beyond hesitation or dispute.

BE SURE TO KEEP GOD'S PACE. Do not run impetuously before Him; learn to wait his time: the minute-hand as well as the hour-hand must point the exact moment for action. Do not loiter behind in indolence or sloth. Be loyal and true to his ideals, and quick to obey his least commands.

BE SURE TO WEAR GOD'S LIVERY. He is in the light; the light is his chosen symbol; it ill becomes thee to wear the unfruitful works of darkness. Put them off, and put on the armour of light. Walk with Him daily in stainless robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb. Then thy fellowship shall be with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and with all holy souls everywhere.

以諾與神同行。 創五24

對這位古代的聖徒，這是多麼好的墓誌銘！到今日它還是清晰正如當初銘刻一樣。我們對以諾的認識只有這個簡短的記錄；但它向我們顯示了一切。這不是一次的行為或多次的行為，而是持續維持一種高的生命狀態。每天在平靜不間斷的交通中與神同行，勝過偶爾欣喜若狂的經歷接著就是長期故態復萌和墮落。這句希伯來話可以譯作：「以諾與神同行，並且繼續同行。」

務要確定走神的路。祂必不會和你一起走你的路，但你可以和祂一起走祂的路。祂就是為這目的而呼召你。每時每刻，尤其是在兩三個岔路出現時，你要仰望祂，說：「你選哪條路，我可以陪伴你？」只要你的眼睛注視祂的臉面，你就不會很難放棄誘人的道路和迷人的同伴，而且祂的足跡決定你的道路，這是毫無猶豫也無可爭辯的。

務要確實維持祂的步調。不要性急趕在祂前面；學習等候祂的時間：不但是時針，連分針也一定要指到準確的行動時間。不要在懶惰中間蕩而落後。要忠於祂的理想，並快速遵行祂最小的命令。

務要確定穿戴神的制服。祂在光中，光是祂揀選的標誌；穿戴黑暗不結果子的行為對你是不合宜的。要脫去暗昧的行為，穿上光明的盔甲。穿上純潔的衣袍，就是在羔羊的血中洗淨的(啟七14)，每日與祂同行。那麼你將和聖父、聖子並聖靈相交，也與各處的聖徒相交(約壹一3)。

Noah was just . . . perfect, . . . walked with God. Gen. 6:9

The eyes of God went to and fro over the ancient world, where sin reigned unchecked, to discover one grateful spectacle. But they were doomed to disappointment, till they lighted on Noah. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord, because him only had God seen to be righteous in all his generation. Like Antipas, he dwelt where Satan's seat was, held fast the divine name, and was God's faithful witness. Be thou loyal to God, my soul, though thou stand alone. There are three characteristics in the man who finds grace in the eyes of the Lord.

IN HIMSELF HE IS JUST. Not faultless, as judged by the white light of eternity; but blameless, so far as his own consciousness is concerned. He wears ever the white flower of a blameless life. His strength is as the strength of ten, because his heart is pure. He exercises himself to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and man. This condition is only possible to faith, that opens the door of the heart to receive the life of God. Wouldst thou be just, welcome that Just One. Let Him live within thee.

TOWARDS MAN HE IS UPRIGHT. He does not keep his eyes bowing down to the ground in shame, or furtively looking around to gain a secret advantage; he looks the whole world in the face. His eyes reflect the integrity and purity of his soul; they beam with sincerity, unselfishness, and love.

WITH RESPECT TO GOD, HE ABIDES IN PERPETUAL FELLOWSHIP. This were worth our getting, though we parted with all our jewels to win it. To be tuned into one deep accord with the divine nature; to answer to Him with one full, responsive chord; to be always found where God is, and never where He is not—that were life indeed.

挪亞是個義人，... 完全人，... 與神同行。 創六9

在這古代的世界，罪盛行毫無攔阻，神的眼睛來回察看，為要發現一個愉快的景象。但是神註定要失望，直到祂的目光落在挪亞身上。挪亞在耶和華眼前蒙恩，因為在神眼裡只有他在當時的世代是個義人。就像安提帕，他住在撒但座位之處，還堅守神的名，他是神忠心的見證人(啟二13)。我的心啊，你要對神忠誠，雖然你孤單站立。在主的眼前蒙恩的人有三個特徵。

他裡面是義的。並非像被永恆的明光所審判那樣完美無缺；而是就他自己的感覺而言，沒有責備。他永遠戴著那無可指摘之生命的白花。他的力量如同十個人的力量，因為他的心純淨。他操練自己對神對人常存無虧的良心(徒廿四16)。只有藉著信心才可能達到這種情形，信心打開人的心門接受神的生命。如果你要公義，就要歡迎那義者(約壹二1)。讓祂住在你裡面。

他對人是正直的。他不讓他的眼睛因為羞恥而朝地面看，或者偷偷地四處查看以獲得隱祕的利益；他正面看整個世界。他的眼睛反映出他心裡的正直和純潔；發出誠摯、無私、和愛的光芒。

他對神有長久不間斷的交通。這值得我們追求，儘管我們要捨棄我們所有的財寶去獲得它。調整我們自己與神的性情有深度的契合；用完全、敏感的心弦來回應祂；一直停在神所在的地方，絕不在神不在的地方 — 那就是生命。

As God has commanded. Gen. 7:9

This is the secret of a Holy and Blessed Life. Most of our sorrows and disappointments have come on us because we have chosen our own path, and done according to our own will.

In obeying, we must sometimes walk in the dark. When Noah began to walk with God, he knew not that it would lead him into collision with his generation, with the suggestions of common sense and experience, and with much that he held dear as life. But walking on each day, he grew strong to trust in the bare word of his Almighty Guide, and grasped it as men in the catacombs will keep their hand on a tiny string or cord, until the first streak of daylight appear. Obey absolutely the voice that speaks in thy heart; the way is dark, but it is the way.

In obeying, we must learn to wait. For one hundred and twenty years the long-suffering of God waited, and during that weary period this true heart failed not. Then for seven days the patriarch waited within the closed doors. It is not easy to bear the long strain of endurance. To rush into the battle, to do something desperate, to strike for liberty—this is the choice of the flesh; but to live in hourly fear, to toil on without result, to see the years stealing away the bank or shoal on which our heart had erected its structures of hope—this is hardest of all, unless our hope is anchored beyond life's ebb and swell.

In obeying God others obey us. How came it that these creeping things and flying fowls, these living creatures, clean and unclean, entered the Ark so tamely and submissively? Surely a divine constraint was upon them. When we are under authority, we can say "Go," "Come," "Do this." All things serve the man who serves the divine Master, Christ.

正如神所吩咐...的。 創七9

這是一個聖潔蒙福生命的祕訣。大多數的悲傷和失望臨到我們身上，是因為我們選擇自己的道路，按照我們自己的意思行事。

我們順從，有時就必須在黑暗中行走。當挪亞開始與神同行時，他不知道這會導致與同時代的人衝突，與常識和經驗的建議衝突，並與許多他看為像生命一樣寶貴的事物衝突。但是他每一天行走，堅定地僅僅信靠全能神話語的引導，並抓住它，如同在地下墓穴裡的人，牢牢地抓住細小的繩索，直到第一線晨光出現。絕對順從你心中說話的聲音；雖然道路是暗的，但它是唯一的路。

我們順從，就必須學習等待。一百二十年來神長久忍耐等待，而且在令人厭倦的時期，這個真心的人也不曾衰退。接下來的七天裡(10節)，這位先祖(挪亞)在緊閉的門內等待。承受這漫長忍耐的緊張並不容易。倉促衝入戰場，不顧一切做事，為自由而奮鬥——這是肉體的選擇；但是生活在時刻恐懼之中，看不見結果仍繼續辛苦工作，眼見歲月悄悄奪去堤岸淺灘，就是我們的心建立希望的地方——這是難中最艱難的，除非我們的盼望在生命的興衰之外下錨。

我們順從神，其他的就順從我們。這些爬物和飛鳥，潔淨的和不潔淨的活物，怎麼就如此馴良順服地進入方舟？必定是一個神聖的約束在牠們身上。當我們服在權柄之下，我們就可以吩咐「去！」「來！」「你作這事！」(太八9)。人服事神聖的主基督，一切的事物就都為這人效力。

God remembered Noah. Gen. 8:1

He cannot forget thee, though all hearts that loved thee are cold in death, and though floods of trouble surge and break around. He comes nearest when there is none else to intercept his love. The floods but bear us nearer to his heart, above the tops of the highest hills.

HE COULD NOT FORGET BECAUSE HIS HONOUR WAS PLEDGED. There was a tacit understanding between Noah and himself, that if his servant obeyed his mandate He would be responsible for the consequences that obedience might involve. There is no need to make bargains with God, as Jacob did. It is far better simply to obey, sure that whatever the highest honour may demand, God will be equal to it. He will have prepared more than we expected.

HE COULD NOT FORGET, BECAUSE HE RODE THE WATERS WITH HIS CHILD. He said, "Come thou into the Ark," evidently He was inside and when it is said that God shut him in, it was from inside that the door was locked. Whatever happened to Noah was an experience for his Almighty Friend. They had walked together on the earth; they now shared together the seclusion of the Ark. God is identified in the experiences of his saints. Their pangs, and tears, and waiting hours are his. He can no more forget, than a mother her sucking child.

HE COULD NOT FORGET, BECAUSE NOAH WAS A TYPE OF HIS BELOVED SON. Across the dark sea of death, the cross of Jesus has brought him and his own: so that we now belong, not to the old world which is under the curse, but to the world of Resurrection-Life. The dark woes of Calvary were imaged there: how could God forget? Reckon on God's faithfulness: He will not leave thy soul in Hades.

神記念挪亞。 創八1

祂不會忘記你，儘管所有愛你的人，他們已在死中冰涼，甚至苦難如洪水洶湧澎湃圍繞著你。當沒有什麼能攔截祂的愛時，祂來到最近處。洪水只使我們更靠近祂的心，高過最高山嶺的頂點。

祂不會忘記，因為有祂的尊榮作保證。祂和挪亞之間有個默契，如果神的僕人順從祂的命令，祂就要為這順從所帶來的後果負責。不需要和神討價還價，像雅各所做的。更好是簡單地順從，不管最高的尊榮會有任何要求，確信神頂得過它。祂必預備超過我們所期望的。

祂不會忘記，因為祂和祂的孩子一起漂浮在洪水之上。祂說，「你... 進到方舟來。(七1另譯)」很顯然祂在裡面，而且這是說到神把他關在裡面時(七16)，門是從裡面鎖起來的。不管什麼事發生在挪亞身上，那也是他這位全能朋友的經歷。他們在地上同行(六9)；如今又一同隱居在方舟裡。神確實和祂的聖徒一同經歷。他們的痛苦、淚水、和等待的時間，同樣也是祂的。祂不會忘記，遠勝過一個母親不忘記她吃奶的嬰孩(賽四十九15)。

祂不會忘記，因為挪亞是祂愛子的一個預表。耶穌的十字架使祂和屬祂的人，越過了黑暗的死亡之海；因此我們現在不再屬於那受咒詛的舊世界，而是屬於復活生命的世界。各各他黑暗的痛苦活畫在那裡；神怎會忘記？務要倚靠神的信實：祂絕不會把你的靈魂撇在陰間(徒二27)。

My Bow in the Cloud. Gen. 9:13

A covenant is a promise or undertaking, resting on certain conditions, with a sign or token attached to it. The rainbow on the raincloud, the Lord's Supper, the wedding-ring are signs and seals of the respective covenants to which they belong. Whenever we see them we should bethink ourselves of the covenant. Whenever you see a rainbow, recall the covenant into which God has entered with thee; for as He has sworn that the water of Noah should no more go over the earth, so his kindness shall not depart from thee, nor the covenant of his peace be removed. Three things are needed to make a rainbow.

A CLOUD. When man's sin overshadowed Paradise, the bow of promise shone; and when the thunderclouds gathered about the Saviour's path, the divine voice assured Him as He had glorified the divine name by his life, He should glorify it much more by his death. When the black clouds of conviction, bereavement, soul anguish beset thee, look out for the bow; it is always there, though sufferers do not always perceive it.

RAIN. There are no rainbows unless there be falling drops to catch and unravel the sunbeams. It may be that all evil is worse in its anticipation than in its endurance ; but this is certain, that the big drops of sorrow have to patter on our soul before we can realize all that God is prepared to be to us.

SUNSHINE. It is only when God comes into our grief that we can see the treasures of Love and Grace which are stored for us in Him. We never know how great a blessing sorrow may be till we carry it into the light of king's face. It is the dark canvas on which the artist produces his most marvellous effects.

我把虹放在雲彩中。 創九13

一個約是一個應許，一個承諾，根據確定的條件，有一個記號信物附在其上。在雨雲上面的彩虹、主的晚餐、結婚戒子都是屬於各自契約的記號和印記。任何時候我們看到這記號，我們應當想起我們所立的約。無論什麼時候當你看到彩虹，務要想起神和你所立的約；因為祂已經發誓，挪亞的洪水不會再次淹沒大地，所以祂的恩慈不會離開你，祂平安的約也不會廢除。形成一道彩虹，需要有三件東西。

一片雲彩。當人的罪使樂園蒙上陰影時，應許的彩虹就發光照耀；當雷雲聚在救主的路上時，天上發出聲音向救主保證，因救主已藉著祂的生，榮耀神的名，更要因祂的死，榮耀神的名（約十二27-33）。當定罪、喪亡、靈魂痛苦的烏雲圍繞你時，你要尋找那彩虹；它始終在那裡，雖然受苦的人並不常常看見它。

雨水。除非有落下的雨滴捉住並解開陽光，否則就不會有彩虹。對於一切的災禍，預期可能比忍受更糟糕；但是有一點是確定的，悲痛的大雨滴都必須滴滴答答落在我們心上，然後我們才意識到神向我們所預備的一切。

陽光。只有當神進入我們的憂傷時，我們才能看到在神裡面為我們儲存的愛和恩典的寶藏。我們絕不知道痛苦可能是多麼大的祝福，直到我們把痛苦帶到神的面光中。是那深色的畫布，藝術家在上創造出最令人驚奇的效果。

The Isles of the Gentiles. Gen. 10:5

Few realize the treasures that lie in this heap of names. This chapter is the key to ancient histories and contains many of the names that lie on our modern maps. What teeming myriads are here! We learn three things.

THE ONENESS OF THE HUMAN RACE. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth." The slave that crouches in the African wood, the meanest outcast that creeps along in the dark, the veriest ruffian red-handed in crime—are bone of our bone, no less than the kings and saints, the prophets and martyrs.

THE WEALTH OF OUR SAVIOUR'S NATURE. He loved all; He gave Himself for all; He became the Propitiation for the sins of all; through Him all will rise; and He is able to satisfy all from His royal heart. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." There is not one child of man who may not find his consummation and bliss in Jesus, the One Man. All men are but broken lights of Him; and of all men that have ever lived He is the one flawless, sinless, perfect Man, the apex of the pyramid of humanity, the Head and Prince.

THE WARRANT FOR FOREIGN MISSION. If the races of mankind have sprung from a common stock, the experience of one is the key to all. Each may learn from his own heart to estimate the hopes and fears, the yearnings and temptations, the weariness and sin-consciousness of the rest. The Gospel which has brought the blessing will do as much for each of those who bear, however obliterated, the print-mark of our race. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

各國的 ... 海島。 創十5

很少人了解這堆名字裡所藏的珍寶。本章是開啟古代歷史的鑰匙，也包含許多在我們現代地圖上的名字。這裡充滿了無數的芸芸眾生！我們學到了三件事。

人類的單一性。「神從一本造出萬族的人，住在全地上。(徒十七26)」蹲伏在非洲森林中的奴隸，在黑暗中匍匐極卑微的流浪者，在犯罪時當場被捕可惡至極的惡棍 — 都是我們的骨中之骨(創二23)，並不亞於國王和聖人、先知和殉道者。

我們救主本性的豐富。祂愛所有的人；祂為世人獻上自己；為了世人的罪，祂成為挽回祭；所有的人必藉著祂復活；祂能使所有的人從祂高貴的心得到滿足。「我的神必照祂榮耀的豐富，在基督耶穌裡，使你們一切所需用的都充足。(腓四19)」沒有一個人不能在這位成為人的耶穌裡面找到完滿和福樂。所有的人不過是祂殘破的燈；祂是所有存活的人中唯一無暇的、無罪的、完美的人；祂是人性金字塔的最高點，祂是首領和君王。

向國外宣道的根據。如果人類是從一個共同的祖先生出來，一個人的經歷對於所有的人都是關鍵。每個人可以從他自己的心，學習衡量其他人的希望和恐懼、渴望和誘惑、厭倦和罪惡感。帶著祝福的福音，必定有益於每一個帶著我們族類印記的人[神的形像和樣式]，無論那個印記如何遭抹滅。「你們往普天下去，傳福音給萬民聽。(可十六15)」

Let us go Down. Gen. 11:7

God comes down into human life. Though the world is corrupt and full of violence; though his arch-enemy has taught man to dread and hate Him; though attempts are on foot to resist Him in open rebellion, by making a unity apart from Him, and in exclusion of his corner-stone, yet He comes down.

HE COMES DOWN TO SEE. He will not pronounce judgment till He has satisfied Himself by personal inspection how things stand. He comes down to our bedrooms, and overhears the words we speak, the deeds we do there; to our home-life, and is a silent listener and observer of all its incidents; to our shops, warehouses, and bank-parlours, auditing our accounts, casting up the columns, examining our samples, our weights and measures, our advertisements and circulars. From Him no secrets are hid.

HE COMES DOWN TO PUNISH. "Let me alone, that I may destroy." Never forget the punitive side of God's character. How easily He asserts his power! He can disorganize the memory, breathe on the brain, touch one small nerve or muscle, and the best-concerted schemes fail. Why shouldst thou fear every day the fury of the oppressor, when God is at thy side!

HE COMES DOWN TO SAVE. If there be one Lot, He will bring him forth. What was the Incarnation, the descent to Calvary and the grave, but the coming down of the "us" of the blessed Trinity. He that ascended is the same that also first descended. He has come that He may heal our wounds, take us in His arms, and bear us with Him far beyond all principality and power. He is the way, by which we may pass from the confusion of Babel to the love of Pentecost, and the one speech of heaven.

我們下去。 創十一7

神下到人的生命當中。儘管世界敗壞並充滿暴力；儘管神的大敵已教導人懼怕厭惡神；儘管許多抵擋神的企圖在公開的背叛中進行，藉著團結一致遠離神，並排斥祂的房角石(弗二20)，然而祂下來了。

祂下來察看。祂不會宣布判決，直到祂親身檢查，弄清楚事情的真相。祂下到我們的臥室，聽見我們說的話、觀看我們的行為；祂來到我們的家庭生活，默默傾聽、觀察所有的事件；祂來到我們的商店、貨棧、和銀行會客廳，稽查我們的帳目、計算每一欄的數目、檢查我們的樣品、砝碼和量器、廣告和傳單。沒有祕密瞞得過祂。

祂下來懲罰。「你且由著我，我要滅絕他們。(申九14)」永遠不要忘記神性格裡懲罰的一面。神展現祂的能力是多麼容易！祂可以擾亂記憶，在頭腦上吹氣，輕輕摸一條小神經或肌肉，最協調的方案就失敗了。當神在你旁邊，你為何每天害怕壓迫者的怒氣！

祂下來拯救。如果那裡有一個羅得，祂必帶他出來。什麼是道成肉身，下到各各他和墳墓，無非是可頌三一神的「我們」下來(7節)。那升上的就是先降下的(弗四9)。祂已經來了，祂就可以醫治我們的創傷，把我們抱入祂的懷中，使我們與祂一起遠超過一切執政的、掌權的(弗一21)。祂是道路(約十四6)，藉祂我們可以越過巴別塔的變亂，到達五旬節的愛，和天上的同一語言。

Get thee out. Gen. 12:1

Never did a corn of wheat more utterly fall into the ground to die. It seemed as though he were urgently needed in his country and among his kindred; but man's thoughts and ways are not God's. The blessing of Abraham's life could only come in the land of promise, and after he had died to the whole life of nature. To every one who is to be richly blessed and made a blessing there is the inevitable command, "Get thee out. Be willing to die."

GET THEE OUT OF THE LAND OF IDOLS. Beyond the flood of the Euphrates, Terah and the rest served other gods. Had Abram remained there, he might have touched the unclean thing; hence God's desire to get him beyond the reach of infection, that he and his race might remain monotheistic. Hast thou had communion with darkness, with Belial, with idols? Get thee out and be separate; touch not the unclean thing. Be clean, thou who art to bear the vessels of the Lord. Reckon thyself to have died.

GET THEE OUT IN LONELINESS. "I called him alone, and increased him." If thou art unwilling to abide alone, thou must fall alone into the ground and die. God must reduce us to a minimum before He can work through us to the maximum. But there is also no loneliness to the soul who is one with God. Alone against the world, it is still in a majority.

GET THEE OUT IN FAITH. "He went out, not knowing whither." It was what man calls a venture; but as he stepped out on what seemed a void, he found it rock beneath his feet. Day by day a track appeared across the desert, and all his needs were met till he reached the place of blessing. Death was the gate of life. Having died to Haran, he began to bring forth much fruit in every soil of the world.

你要離開。 創十二1

從來沒有一粒麥子更完全落在地裡死了。看起來好像在他的故鄉和親族之中，人迫切需要他；但人的思想和方法不是神的思想和方法。亞伯拉罕生命的祝福，僅僅在應許之地才能臨到，並在他整個天然的生命全然死去之後。對於每個要豐富地蒙福並成為祝福的人，有個不可避免的命令，「你要離開，甘願死去。」

你要離開偶像之地。在幼發拉底河大水的那一邊，他拉和其餘的人事奉別的神。假使亞伯蘭留在那裡，他可能會接觸到不潔淨的東西；因此神要求他遠離傳染的範圍，使他和他的種族可以保持信奉獨一的真神。你是否曾與黑暗、彼列、偶像來往？要離開並分別，不要接觸不潔淨之物(林後六14-16)。要潔淨，你是要攜帶主器皿的人。要算你自己已經死了。

你要在孤獨中離開。「因為亞伯拉罕獨自一人的時候，我選召他，賜福與他，使他人數增多。(賽五十一2)」如果你不願意停留在孤單中，你必單獨落入地裡死去。在神可以藉著我們作工到最大限度之前，祂必須先把我們降低到最小限度。然而對於那與神合一的人，也並沒有孤獨。單獨面對世界的，仍舊屬於大多數。

你要懷著信心離開。「出去的時候，還不知往哪裡去。(來十一8)」這就是人所說的冒險；但當他邁出腳步似乎踩空時，他發現岩石就在他腳下。日復一日，一條穿過曠野的道路顯出來了，他所有的需要都得到滿足，直到他到達了蒙福之地。死亡是生命的門。他向著哈蘭死去，就在這世界各處的土地上，開始結出許多果子。

The Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him. Gen. 13:14

Abram's life was one of an ever-perfecting separation. But out of these experiences sprang his rarest joys. The separate and obedient soul may reckon on:

FRESH REVELATION. Whenever Abram dared to step out in obedience, the Lord spake freshly to him. But in Egypt we find no trace of the divine voice. If God spake there, it would be in warning and rebuke. Has the voice of God long been silent to thee - no fresh command, no deeper insight into truth? See to it that thou art not in Egypt. Separate thyself, not only from Haran, but from Lot; not only from what is clearly wrong, but from all that is questionable; and the Lord will speak to thee things it is not possible for men to utter.

FURTHER VISION. Lot lifted up his eyes to espy what would make for his advantage and well-being, and beheld only the plain of Sodom, which indeed was well-watered, but the seat of exceeding sin. But when Abram lifted up his eyes, not to search out aught for himself, but to see what God had prepared, he looked northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward-words which remind us of the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of Christ. The single eye is full of light; the far climber gets the widest horizon; if thou wilt do His will, thou shalt know.

HUNDREDFOLD COMPENSATION. Whatever Abram renounced, when he left his home, or gave Lot the right to choose, he received back in the usual measure of God, with an overflowing overplus. God gave him the entire land, including Lot's portion. We can never give up for God, without receiving in this life more than we gave.

羅得離別亞伯蘭以後，耶和華對亞伯蘭說 ... 創十三14

亞伯蘭的生命一直在「分別」上漸趨完美。從這些經歷中湧出他最珍貴的喜樂。「分別」和「順從」的人可預期會有：

新鮮的啟示。每當亞伯蘭順從，勇敢地走出去，耶和華就重新對他說話。但在埃及，我們找不到神說話的痕跡。如果神在埃及說話，那將會是警告和譴責。神是否已經長時間對你沉默 — 沒有新的吩咐，對真理沒有更深入的領悟了？要留意確定你不是在埃及。要分別你自己，不僅離開哈蘭，也要離開羅得；不僅要離開那明顯錯誤的事，也要離開一切有疑問的事；而且神要對你說的事，是人不可能說的。

更遠大的異象。羅得舉目看見那些對他有益和使他幸福的事，而且只看到了所多瑪平原，那裡的確是滋潤的(10節)，但卻是罪惡極重之地。然而當亞伯蘭舉目，一點也不為自己尋找，而是看見神所預備的，他向東、西、南、北觀看(14節) — 這些話提醒我們基督之愛的長、闊、高、深(弗三18)。單純的眼睛充滿了光明；爬最高的人，視野最寬廣；你若立志遵著祂的旨意行，就必曉得(約七17)。

百倍的補償。當亞伯蘭離開他的家，當他給羅得選擇的權利時，無論他放棄什麼，他所得神通常的回報，就是滿溢且綽綽有餘。神賜他全地，包括羅得的那分。我們絕不會為神捨棄而不在今生得到回報，且超過所付出的。

God Most High, Maker of Heaven and Earth. Gen. 14:19

It was to Melchizedek, the lonely king-priest living outside the busy rush of the world, that this new name of God was given. There are some to whom God gives these direct revelations of Himself, that they may communicate them to others. These are our seers. This title for God, which Abram immediately appropriated, was the source:

OF HUMILITY. To think of God as the Maker and Possessor of heaven and earth induces the profoundest humility of heaven. "They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou didst create all things." How great God is! His greatness is unsearchable. Earth and heaven are His handiwork. Take time to think of this, but never forget that He is Love; then, with the familiarity of the child, thou wilt combine the lowly reverence of the creature.

OF STEADFASTNESS IN THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION. When the king of Sodom desired Abram to share in the spoils of the kings, setting before him a most subtle temptation, and one which might have dragged him from the life and walk of faith, Abram fell back on the revelation of God just vouchsafed to him, and said in effect: "What need is there that I should do this thing, or receive of thy gold? All God is mine; in God all things are mine also. What I need He will assuredly give. What He withholds I will receive from no other source." There is no need for us to get wealth wrongly; God can supply all we need.

OF SECURITY. God owns all; all the earth is his empire; wherever we travel we are within his dominion, breathe his air, are ministered to by his angels. We have a right to the best in all good things, since they are our Father's, and we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ.

天地的主，至高的神。 創十四19

神的這個新名是啟示給麥基洗德的，他是置身於忙碌世界之外，孤獨的君王祭司。有些人，神會直接向他們啟示祂自己，好使他們將這些啟示傳遞給別人。這些人就是我們的先見(撒九9)。亞伯蘭立即使用這個神的名稱，作為以下這些事的源頭：

謙卑的源頭。思想神是天地的創造者和擁有者，引出屬天最深的謙卑。「他們把冠冕放在寶座前，說，你創造了萬物。(啟四10-11)」神是多麼偉大！祂的偉大不可探究。天和地是祂手的工作。你要花時間去思想這事，但絕不要忘記祂是愛；然後你必將孩童般的親熱，與受造物謙卑的尊敬結合在一起。

試探時堅定不移的源頭。當所多瑪王要求亞伯蘭分享眾王的掠物時，在他面前設置一個最狡猾的試探，這試探可能拖他離開信心的生涯，亞伯蘭依賴神剛剛賜予他的啟示，他實際上是說：「我何必這樣做，收下你的金子？神完全屬我，在神裡面的一切也屬我。我所需的祂必確實地賜下。祂所保留的，我也不必從其他地方獲得。」我們沒有必要不正當地獲取財富，神能供給我們一切的需要。

安全感的源頭。神擁有一切；全地都是祂的領土。我們無論走到哪裡，都歸祂管轄，呼吸祂的空氣，受祂的天使服事。我們有權享受一切最好的，因為這些都是我們天父的，並且我們是神的後嗣，與基督同作後嗣(羅八17)。

Behold, a Smoking Furnace and a Flaming Torch. Gen. 15:17

Fire is the chosen emblem of God; and as these fire-emblems passed slowly between the divided carcasses it was as though God accommodated Himself to the methods of human oath-taking, and solemnly bound Himself. But in all his dealings with us He is prepared to be both a furnace and a torch.

GOD AS A FURNACE. Take up a piece of iron ore, and see how the metal is scattered amid commoner substances. How can it be disintegrated? The chisel cannot do it, but fire will. Plunge it now into the fire; let it fall in the heart of the glowing furnace, and presently the stream of liquid metal will issue forth, pure and beautiful. It is thus that God deals with human hearts; the blood makes propitiation, but the fire cleanses. The love of God, the purity of God, the spirituality of God brought home to us by the Holy Ghost, search and try us to the innermost fibre of our being, and burn out of us the evils which had long held empire.

*Refining Fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.*

GOD AS A FLAMING TORCH. The torch guides the footsteps through the dark; and God's Spirit waits to shed light on many dark and hidden things, and to guide us into all the truth. It is one thing to comprehend by the intellect; it is altogether another to apprehend by the heart. There is no such teacher as God; and the mistake of our modern religious life is to receive so much from man, instead of waiting in rapt silence until God Himself communicates His truth to us. The conditions are purity of desire, cleanness of heart, and willingness to obey.

不料有冒煙的爐，並燒著的火把。 創十五17

火被選為神的象徵；當這些象徵的火從劈開的死畜之間緩慢經過時，好像神使自己適應人類起誓的方法，鄭重約束祂自己。但在祂與我們來往的一切事上，祂已準備好作火爐和火把。

神作火爐。請你拿起一塊鐵的礦石，看看金屬是怎樣分散在普通物質之中。怎樣能使鐵分離出來？鑿子做不到，但火可以。只要把它投入火中；把它投入灼熱的火爐中心，不久液態的金屬就流出來，純淨美麗。神也是這樣對待人的內心；血贖罪，而火則煉淨。藉著聖靈使我們明白神的愛、神的純淨、神的靈性，鑒察並試煉我們直到我們本性的最深處，燒掉長期轄制我們的罪惡。

鍛煉的火啊，求你穿透我心，
照亮我靈魂；
散布你的生命，遍及我全人各部分，
使我全然成聖！

神作燒著的火把。火把引導我們的腳步穿過黑暗；神的靈等待著要照耀許多黑暗和隱藏的事，並引導我們進入一切的真理(約十六13)。用理智明白是一回事；用心領會完全是另外一回事。沒有像神這樣的教師；我們現代敬虔生活的錯誤在於從人領受太多，取代專心一意在安靜中等候，直到神自己將祂的真理傳達給我們。其條件是單純的願望、潔淨的心、並甘心順從。

Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. Gen. 16:9

Poor Hagar! No wonder that she fled. Her proud Arab independence and the sense of coming motherhood made her rebel against Sarah's hard dealings. We have often meditated flight, if we have not actually fled from intolerable conditions. Of course, when God opens the door out of a dungeon we need not hesitate, as Peter did, to rise and follow. But this is very different to flight from the post of duty.

OUR CROSS. For Hagar, Sarah; for Hannah, Penninah; for David, Joab; for Jesus, Judas; for Paul, Alexander the coppersmith. Life assumes hard and forbidding aspects. Sometimes the cross is not a person, but a trial-the pressure of a slow and lingering disease; the demand for grinding and persistent toil; the weight of over mastering anxiety for those dearer than life, who have no knowledge of God.

OUR Demeanour. Return and submit. We are apt to suppose that we shall get rest and peace elsewhere. It is not so, however. Nowhere else shall we find the path less rugged, or the pillow less hard. To evade the yoke will not give us heartsease. The Master's advice is that we shall take his yoke, and bear it as He did; remain where God has put us, till He shows us another place; and bear what He ordains and permits, even though it comes through the means of others.

OUR FAITH. We cannot patiently submit to our lot unless we believe that what God permits is as much his will as what He appoints. Behind Sarah's hard dealings we must behold his permissive providence. Through all the discipline of life we must believe that God has a purpose of unfailing love and wisdom. Then our submission is not stoicism, but loving acquiescence in our Father's will.

你回到你主母那裡，服在她手下。 創十六9

可憐的夏甲！難怪她逃跑。她那阿拉伯人驕傲的獨立性 [12節之「野驢」的特性]，以及要成為母親的意念，使她反抗撒拉的苦待。如果我們沒有真的從難以忍受的情況下逃走，我們也經常考慮逃走。當然，當神打開地牢的門，我們就得起來跟從，不需要猶豫，正如彼得所做的（徒十二3-5）。但這與從責任的崗位上逃脫是截然不同的。

我們的十架。對於夏甲，十架是撒拉；對於哈拿，是昆尼拿（撒上一6）；對於大衛，是約押（撒下十八9-15）；對於耶穌，是猶大（太廿六14-16）；對於保羅，是銅匠亞歷山大（提後四14-15）。人生本來就有艱難、嚴峻的情況。有時十架不是一個人，而是一個試煉——可能是慢性疾病纏綿的壓力；可能是長期苦工的折磨；也可能是那些你愛他們勝過愛你自己，卻還不認識神的人，他們使你承受著無法抗拒之憂愁的重壓。

我們的態度。回來並順服。我們總是傾向於認為可以在別的地方找到休息和平安。然而，事實並非如此。我們不會在別處找到較平坦的道路，較軟的枕頭。逃避重轡並不能使我們心安。主勸勉我們背負祂的轡，像祂所背負的；留在神安置我們的地方，直到祂指示我們去別處；並承擔祂所命定以及祂所允許的，儘管這是藉著別人的手臨到的。

我們的信心。除非我們相信：神所允許的就是神的旨意，正如祂所命定的就是祂的旨意；否則我們就不能耐心順服我們的處境。在撒拉苦待的背後，我們應當看到神所許可的旨意。藉著所有人生的訓練，我們應當相信神有一個目的，是出於可靠的愛和智慧。那麼我們的順服就不是苦修，而是在愛裡默然順服我們天父的旨意。

Walk before Me and be thou Perfect. Gen. 17:1

God precedes his commands with such revelations of Himself, that obedience is rendered easily possible. Before calling Abram to perfection, He described Himself as El Shaddai, the Almighty. What may we not do if we learn to avail ourselves of the all-might of God? Oh to know the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe! Our lack is that we do not know our God, and therefore fail to perform exploits. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me." Lie on thy face, and let God talk with thee, and tell thee the conditions on which He will make thee exceeding fruitful. First--Walk before Me: Second--Be thou wholehearted.

THERE MUST BE WHOLENESS IN OUR SURRENDER. No part of our nature barred or curtailed off from God. Every chamber must be freely placed at his disposal; every relationship placed under his direction; every power devoted to his service. All we have and are must be entirely his.

THERE MUST BE WHOLENESS IN OUR INTENTION. The one aim of our Lord was to bring glory to his Father; and we should never be satisfied till we are so absolutely eager for the glory of Christ that we would seek it though at the cost of infamy to ourselves; and be as glad for another to bring it to Him, as we should be in bringing it ourselves.

THERE MUST BE WHOLENESS IN OUR OBEDIENCE. It was clearly so with Abram. As soon as God left talking with his servant, he took Ishmael and performed the rite which had just been enjoined.

你當在我面前作完全人。 創十七1

神在命令之前，總先啟示祂自己，使人容易順從。神呼召亞伯蘭作完全人之前，祂先描述自己是「伊勒·沙代」，就是全能的神。如果我們學會利用神的全能，還有甚麼是做不到的呢？但願我們能認識神的能力向著信的人是多麼浩大(弗一19)！我們的缺乏是由於不認識神，因此就不能行大事。「耶和華如此說：智慧人不要因他的智慧誇口，勇士不要因他的勇力誇口，財主不要因他的財富誇口。誇口的是因認識我而誇口。(耶九23-24)」你要俯伏下來，讓神與你說話，告訴你祂使你多結果子的條件。第一：行在神面前；第二：全心全意。

在奉獻上要完全。我們的本性沒有任何部分向神是隱藏的。全人的每一個房間都應該毫無攔阻地交給神支配，每個人際關係都放在祂的指導之下，每一份力量都獻上事奉祂。我們所有的和所是的，必須完全屬於祂。

在意圖上要完全。我們的主惟一的目標就是要榮耀父；我們絕不會滿足，直到我們絕對渴望為著基督的榮耀，即使尋求神的榮耀要付出遭致惡名的代價。別人榮耀主，我們也該歡喜，正如我們自己榮耀主一樣。

在順服上要完全。亞伯蘭是這樣清楚完全順服。當神向祂的僕人說完了話離開之後，亞伯蘭就照神所吩咐的，給以實瑪利行割禮(23節)。

And Abraham drew near. Gen. 18:23

The patriarch's attitudes are well worthy of note: he sat (Genesis 18:1), bowed (Genesis 18:2), ran (Genesis 18:7), stood by (Genesis 18:8), went with them (Genesis 18:16), stood before the Lord (Genesis 18:22); here, he drew near.

HE DREW NEAR WITH AWFUL REVERENCE. "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." The place whereon he stood was holy ground; and if he trod or crossed it, in the intensity of his desire, he never forgot that the most intimate fellowship of man with God must be mingled with the reverence of godly fear, which remembers that He is a consuming fire.

HE DREW NEAR IN FAITH. He had enjoyed a blessed prevision of the day of Christ. There had been revealed to him that one perfect and sufficient Sacrifice, in virtue of which sinners are welcome to draw near to God. They have boldness to enter the holiest, and draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, who know the new and living way which Jesus has opened for us.

HE DREW NEAR AS INTERCESSOR. We never get so near God as when we plead for others. At such times we enter the holiest and innermost chamber, and talk to Him with an urgency which we dare not use for ourselves. Whilst the Syrophenician pleaded for her daughter, she came to the very feet of Jesus. Wouldst thou know the inner chamber? Go thither on errands for others.

HE DREW NEAR IN INTENSITY. When Haman pleaded for his life, he fell on the Queen's couch in the anguish of his soul. Sometimes God appears to hesitate; it is only to draw us on, ever further and deeper, till we awake to find ourselves alone in his presence.

亞伯拉罕近前來。 創十八23

這位先祖的姿勢很值得注意：他坐(1節)、俯伏(2節)、跑(7節)、站在旁邊(8節)、與他們同行(16節)、站在耶和華面前(22節)；23節這裡說，他近前來。

他帶著十分的敬畏近前來。「我雖然是灰塵，還敢對主說話。(27節)」他所站之地是聖地；如果他是因心裡熱切而闖越過來，他也並沒有忘記，人與神最親密的交通必須調和著虔誠的敬畏(2節)，記得祂乃是烈火(申四24)！

他在信心裡近前來。此時，他已經享受預先看見基督日子的有福經歷。有一個完全且充足的祭物已經向他啟示出來(來十5-7)，藉此祭物，罪人可以自由靠近神。他們坦然無懼進入至聖所，在信心完全的把握裡，存著真誠的心近前來，因為知道耶穌已經為我們開了一條又新又活的路(來十19-20)。

他作為代禱者近前來(23-32節)。我們從未與神如此靠近，像我們為他人代求時。此時我們進入最裡面的至聖所，帶著迫切向祂懇求；我們為自己祈求時，並不敢如此迫切。當敘利非尼基族的婦人為她女兒代求時，她來俯伏在耶穌腳前(可七25)。你願意體會什麼是內室嗎？那麼就為別人代求吧。

迫切地近前來(23, 25節)。當哈曼為自己的性命祈求時，他心裡愁苦，伏在王后的靠榻上(斯七7-8)。有時神好像在猶疑沒有反應，那只是為著要引我們繼續向前、進深，直到我們覺醒，發現自己是單獨在祂面前。

Abraham got up early to the place where he stood before the Lord, and looked. Gen. 19:27

There was not much sleep that night for this loyal heart! With the spring of day he was where, probably, Lot, years before, had looked on the face of the country, and beheld it as a garden of the Lord. But how great the contrast! The smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace!

HAVE A PLACE WHERE YOU STAND BEFORE GOD. It may not always be to speak to Him, but to be spoken to, to be judged, to have the motives and intentions of the heart winnowed and sifted. Well is it to stand each day before the judgment-seat of Christ, and to receive his verdict on our innermost life. Oh that the grass of that trysting-place may be well worn through our frequent intercourse with our beloved Lord!

FOLLOW UP YOUR PRAYERS. Abraham was not content with shooting arrows into the air; he followed them to see how they sped, and where they fell. We do not need to reiterate our petitions with unbelieving monotony, as though they were not safe in God's keeping; but we should remind Him by our upward look that our expectation is from Him.

VIEW THE FATE OF THE UNGODLY FROM GOD'S STANDPOINT. We are apt to consider it from that of our own pity, or commiseration, or tolerance of shortcoming. We judge lightly, because we dread too searching a judgment on ourselves. But we need sometimes to see sin as God sees it. Stand on Calvary and learn what sin is, and how much it has cost the Saviour. There, too, you will learn that God goes further than his servants' prayers. Though He may not be able to discover the ten, yet He will deliver the one righteous man. "His countenance doth behold the upright."

亞伯拉罕清早起來，到了他從前站在耶和華面前的地方...觀看。 創十九27

那天晚上，這個忠心的人沒有睡多少！天一亮亞伯拉罕就站在那裡；可能若干年前羅得也站在此處，觀看那片土地，看它如同耶和華的園子(十三10)。然而，現在是何等大的對比啊！地面上的煙氣上騰，如同燒窯一般(28節)。

你要有一個地方，是你可以站在神面前的。在那裡可能不是你一直向神說話，而是你聆聽祂的言語，接受審判，使你心裡的動機和意圖，被簸揚並篩淨。每一天站在基督的審判台前，接受神對我們內在生命的判斷，真是好！哦！但願我們與親愛的主交流頻繁，使那約會地點的草皮被踩平！

你要追蹤你的禱告。亞伯拉罕不以向空中射箭為滿足，他追蹤他的禱告，要看那些箭如何加速，看它們落在什麼地方。我們不需要帶著不信的心單調地重申我們的祈求，好像神的保守還不够安全。反而我們應該舉目仰望提醒祂，我們的盼望乃是從祂而來。

你要從神的觀點，看不敬虔者的結局。我們容易根據自己的同情、憐憫、或容忍過錯去考量。我們對罪審判寬鬆，因為我們害怕自己受到太嚴厲的審判。但我們有時需要以神的觀點來看待罪。你要站在各各他(太廿七33)，認識什麼是罪，以及救主為罪所付的代價是何等大。這樣，你就必明白神所做的，遠超過祂僕人的禱告。儘管祂不能找到十個義人，祂仍然拯救一個義人，「正直人必得見祂的面。(詩十一7)」

I also withheld thee from sinning against Me. Gen. 20:6

As we review our lives, we can see many occasions on which our feet had well-nigh gone--our steps were on the very brink of the precipice. Another inch, and we should have brought shame on Christ and lasting remorse to ourselves. To what can we attribute our escape but to the grace of God, which withheld us, even though we failed to recognize it?

HE DOES NOT WITHHOLD US FROM TEMPTATION. He could not do so without serious and permanent loss. The waves of ink will surge up against the white marble palace of the soul. To us, as to our Lord, fresh from under the opened heavens, the tempter will come. What the fire is in fixing the colour on the porcelain vase, that temptation is in rendering permanent the lessons and impressions made by God's providence and grace.

HE DOES NOT WITHHOLD US FROM OCCASIONS IN WHICH IT WOULD BE EASY TO TRANSGRESS. Abimelech was not hindered from taking Sarah into his palace. The door of occasion and opportunity stood open before him; but he was withheld from the fatal act. We must never infer that occasion confers licence. The fact of an opportunity being present does not warrant indulgence in wrong-doing.

IF GOD WITHHELD ABIMELECH, WHO DID NOT SEEK HIS SPECIAL HELP, HOW MUCH MORE THOSE THAT SEEK HIM! You are not insensible of the perils of your life; but wait earnestly and persistently on God. Are you more eager to be kept than He to keep? Did He not implant that desire? Will He not do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think? Is not the good Shepherd strong enough to keep one poor trembling sheep? Begone, unbelief! My God whom I serve is able to deliver, and He will! (Dan 3:17).

我也攔阻了你，免得你得罪我。 創二十6

當我們回顧我們的人生，我們可以看到許多時候我們的腳幾乎失閃——我們的腳步就在懸崖的邊緣。再過一寸，我們就會讓基督蒙羞而悔恨終身。我們竟然可以逃避，即使我們沒看出來，除了神的恩典攔阻我們之外，還能歸功於什麼呢？

神不阻止我們受試探。祂不可能這樣做而沒有嚴重和永久的損失。兇惡的狂潮對著人心的白色殿宇侵襲過來。我們與我們的主一樣要面對試探，當祂剛看見天開了之後，那試探人的就進前來。火使陶器的顏色固定，同樣，試探使神的看顧和恩典留下恒久的教訓和印記。

神不阻止我們遭遇容易導致犯罪的機會。神沒有阻止亞比米勒帶撒拉入宮。機會的門在他面前敞開，但是神阻止了他採取致命的行動。我們絕不要推斷「機會」就是「神許可」。犯罪的機會出現，並不證明放縱犯罪是正當的。

如果未曾尋求神幫助的亞比米勒，神都阻止他犯罪，那尋求祂的人，必更加得神幫助！雖然你不是對你人生中危險的事麻木不仁，你還是要非常認真且持續不斷地等候神。你渴望蒙保守會多過神渴望保守你嗎？豈不是祂將這個渴望灌輸到你裡頭的嗎？祂要作的不是大大超出我們所求所想的嗎？好牧人豈不是足夠強壯保護一隻可憐發抖的羊嗎？不信的心啊，走開吧！我所事奉的神能拯救，祂也必拯救！（但三17）。

And God opened her eyes, and she saw. Gen. 21:19

Poor Hagar! There was no help for it; and she, who a little before had thought she was giving Abraham his heir, found herself and her boy homeless wayfarers on the desert sands. Their one need was water; they little deemed it was so near. No need to create a new fountain, but to open their eyes. We need the opened eye to see:

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST. The work of propitiation for sin is complete. We are not required to add to it one tear, or prayer, or vow. "It is finished." To go to heaven to bring Christ down, or to the deep to bring Him up, is alike superfluous. All we need is the opened eye to see what Jesus has done, and recognize that it is all that was demanded to meet the claims of God's holy law.

THE THINGS FREELY GIVEN TO US OF GOD. God hath given us in Jesus all things that pertain to life and godliness. There is no possible gift or grace, in which we are deficient, that is not stored in Him, in whom the fullness of God abides. But we are blind; the eyes of our heart have not been opened to see the hope of our calling, the riches of our inheritance, the greatness of God's power. Did we know these things, surely not a moment would elapse without our availing ourselves of God's rich provision.

THE ALLEVIATIONS WHICH GOD PROVIDES AGAINST EXCESSIVE SORROW. Hagar's anguish, as Mary's at the sepulchre in after years, blinded her to available comfort. So grief puts a bandage over our eyes. Life is sad, and lonely, and dark, but God is near; and if you ask, He will show springs of consolation, of which you may drink. There is no desert without its springs; no dying child without the angel of the Lord.

神使夏甲的眼睛明亮，她就看見。 創二十一19

可憐的夏甲！沒有幫助；她不久之前還以為她給亞伯拉罕生了繼承人，現在卻發現自己和兒子成了沙漠中的徒步旅行者，無家可歸。他們需要水，但他們沒有想到水就在附近，不需要去挖掘新的水泉，只要打開他們的眼睛。我們也需要眼睛被打開看見：

基督已完成的工作。贖罪工作已經完成。我們不需要加上一滴眼淚、或一個禱告、或一個許願。「成了」(約十九30)。所以想要到天上領基督下來，或者到深淵領祂上來一樣是多餘的(羅十6-7)。我們所需要的就是眼睛被打開，看見耶穌所作成的，承認耶穌所作成的工，滿足了神聖潔律法的要求。

神白白賜給我們的事。神在耶穌裡已將所有關乎生命和敬虔的事賜給我們(彼後一3)。我們所缺少的恩賜或恩典，不可能沒有儲存在祂裡面，因為神的豐富都居住在祂裡面(西一19, 二9)。但是我們是瞎眼的，我們心中的眼睛還沒有被打開看見：我們所得呼召的指望，我們所得基業的豐富，以及神能力的浩大(弗一18-19)。我們若知道這些事，必定時刻支取神給我們豐富的供應。

在極度悲傷中從神而來的安慰。夏甲的愁苦，就像很多年之後馬利亞在耶穌的墳墓前，看不見眼前的安慰(約廿1-2, 11)。因此悲傷像繃帶矇住了我們的眼睛。人生雖愁苦、孤寂、幽暗，但神就在身邊。如果你祈求，祂就要指示你可以飲用的安慰之泉。沙漠之地必有水泉，垂死孩子身邊必有耶和華的使者。

Jehovah-Jireh; In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided. Gen. 22:14

Abraham knew it would be. Probably he never told Sarah what God had asked of him till he and the lad were safely back in the tent. What need to trouble her? Her weak faith could not have stood the ordeal. It was with an unfaltering tone that the patriarch told his young men that they two would presently return. Even though he should actually take Isaac's life, he was sure that he would receive him again from the altar in health. It was only at the very last moment that God indicated the ram as the sufficient substitute. So God's deliverances always come; they are provided in the mount of trial and sacrifice.

WHEN THE FOE SEEMS SECURE OF VICTORY. So it was with Israel. Pharaoh, with his hosts, counted on an easy victory, the precipices around, the sea in front. To the eye of sense it seemed impossible to escape: all hope died. It was just then that the Almighty cleft a path through the mighty deep.

"IN THE FOURTH HOUR OF THE NIGHT." Strength was well-nigh exhausted in long battling with the waves. For hours the disciples with difficulty had kept themselves afloat. It seemed as if they must give in through physical collapse. It was then that the form of Jesus drew nigh unto the ship.

ON THE NIGHT BEFORE EXECUTION. Thus Peter lies sleeping whilst the Church is gathered in prayer. To-morrow he will be a corpse. But the angel comes then to open the prison doors. So you may have come to an end of your own strength, and wisdom, and energy. The altar, wood, and fire are ready, the knife upraised, your Isaac on the point to die: but even now God will provide. Trust Him to indicate the way of escape.

耶和華以勒，... 在耶和華的山上必有預備。 創二十二14

亞伯拉罕知道耶和華必有預備。他很可能事先根本沒有告訴撒拉神對他的要求，直到他和孩子安全回到家。何必讓她煩惱呢？她軟弱的信心承受不起這樣嚴峻的考驗。這位先祖以堅定的口吻告訴年輕的僕人們，他們父子兩人很快就會回來。即使他真的殺死以撒，他也確信能從祭壇上平安得回孩子。只有在那最後的時刻，神才指示那隻公羊作為充足的代替。因此，神的搭救總是會來臨的，在試驗和獻祭的山上必有預備。

當仇敵似乎得勝時。對於以色列人也是如此。法老和他的軍隊似乎就要得勝了，周圍是峭壁環繞，前面是滔滔大海。以人的眼光來看，不可能逃脫，一切的盼望都斷絕了。在那時，全能者開闢一條道路，穿過深海(出十四19-29)。

夜裡四更天。門徒們與洶湧的海浪長時間搏鬥，力氣幾乎耗盡。數小時之久他們艱難地使自己浮在水面上。但因身體不支，似乎必須放棄了。就在這時，耶穌的身影就近船來。(太十四25-33)。

在執刑的前夜。彼得躺在監獄裡睡覺，而教會聚集禱告。明天他將被處死，但是天使來打開了監獄的門(徒十二4-11)。我們的力氣、智慧和能力可能已經來到了盡頭。祭壇、柴和火都已經齊備，刀已舉起，此刻你的以撒就要死了：但就在此刻神必預備。你當信靠祂來指示逃脫的路。

I am a Stranger and a Sojourner. Gen. 23:4

The minute details of this purchase are recorded to emphasize the fact that, though the whole land was Abraham's by the divine gift, he would not enter on its possession till God's time was come. We may be sure of certain blessings - ours in God's safe keeping - though they are withheld till the moment that his wisdom sees best. It was a touching confession. The aged patriarch had for long years owned no settled dwelling-place. After years in the land of promise he was still without land enough for a grave.

FAITH CANNOT BE SATISFIED WITH THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD. The sons of Heth had goods and lands, but Abraham did not envy them; he had caught a glimpse of the city which hath foundations, and this so satisfied and attracted him that he had no desire for aught that Palestine could yield.

FAITH DETACHES US FROM THE PRESENT. We are content to dwell in tents, because here we have no abiding place. The shows and vanities of the world, in comparison with the vision of eternal realities, are as the glare of the streets compared with the steady glory of the constellations of the night.

FAITH PROMPTS TO CONFESSION. It betrayeth itself. We should be careful and orderly in our business arrangements; but, in our dealings with our fellows, in our justice, fairness, honor, the lightness of our hold on the present world, we should make it manifest that we are seeking a country not our own.

FAITH CANNOT BE ASHAMED. The God who prompted it must satisfy it, else He would have reason to be ashamed of having failed the souls that trusted Him. But now He is not ashamed to be called our God, because He has prepared for us a city.

我在你們中間是外人，是寄居的。 創二十三4

這段買賣的記載，細節極詳盡，為了強調一個事實：儘管所有的土地，神都賜給了亞伯拉罕，但他並不想據為己有，直到神的時候來到。我們確實有某些屬於我們的福分，但仍在神的保管中，這些福分還被保留，直到神看為最好的時刻才賜給我們。這是一個感人的告白，這位年老的先祖，長年沒有固定的居所。他在應許之地許多年了，卻連一塊墳地也沒有。

信心不因世事而滿足。赫人的兒子們有貨財和土地，但亞伯拉罕並不羨慕他們，他瞥見那座有根基的城(來十一10)，這就使他很滿足且受吸引，以致他對巴勒斯坦(即：迦南地)所出的任何事物沒有慾望。

信心叫我們脫離現今的事。我們滿足於住在帳棚，因為我們在這世界沒有永久處所。世界的樣子及其虛榮，比起永遠真實的景象，就像以街道上的燈光，與夜晚群星所發出不變的榮光相比。

信心激起告白。信心無意間顯露它自己[不能隱藏]。我們在處事情上應該謹慎有序；但是在我們對待同伴、有關公正、公平、榮譽、和淡泊世界的事上，我們應該表明我們尋求的，不是我們自己的家鄉(來十一14-16a)。

信心絕不致羞愧。神發起了，祂必定會成就，否則祂就會因失信於那信靠祂的人而蒙羞。現在祂被稱為我們的神，並不以為恥，因為祂已經為我們預備了一座城(來十一16b)。

My Master Abraham. Gen. 24:12

This worthy man, Eliezer, the steward of Abraham's house, was almost garrulous about his master. Count up the number of times in which he contrives to bring in the two words, "my master." We may learn from him how to speak of our Master, whenever we get the opportunity. "Rabboni, which, being interpreted, is, My Master."

WE TOO CAN SPEAK OF THE LORD GOD AS OUR MASTER. The servant did not know Jehovah directly; it was enough that he had seen and heard Abraham pray to Him. This encouraged him to draw near for himself. So we are emboldened to draw near, because God is the God and Father of our Master Jesus. We love Him that was begotten, and are attracted to Him of whom Jesus said, "I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God."

WE, TOO, CAN PLEAD FOR OUR MASTER'S SAKE. When asking for good speed to be sent to himself, he alleged as his plea that it would be showing kindness to his master Abraham. So when we ask great things from God, we can plead in the name of Jesus, and urge that in answering our petition God will be showing kindness to his Well-beloved.

WE, TOO, SHOULD BLESS IN OUR MASTER'S NAME. When the answer was given, this reverent soul gave thanks as though the favor had been shown to his master. Indeed, all through his intercourse with Bethuel and Laban he seems to have lost his identity in Abraham. He could talk of nothing else but that one scheme; was only eager to carry his point for his master's sake; and when the errand was done, longed only to get back to his master's side. It is a beautiful lesson for those who call Jesus Master and Lord.

我的主人亞伯拉罕。 創二十四12

這位值得敬重的以利以謝是亞伯拉罕的管家，他一直不停地談到他的主人。算算看他多少次設法提到「我的主人」這個詞。我們可以從他學習，如何一有機會就提說我們的主人。「拉波尼就是夫子(我的主)的意思。(約廿16)」

我們也可以提說耶和華神是我們的主人。這位僕人不是直接認識耶和華，但他看見並聽見了亞伯拉罕向神禱告，這就足以鼓勵他親近神。我們之所以敢大膽親近神，因神是我們主耶穌的神與父。我們愛祂所生的，因而被吸引到祂跟前來，祂就是耶穌所說的「我要升上去見我的父，也是你們的父，見我的神，也是你們的神。(約廿17)」

我們也可以為我們的主人祈求。當他請求拉班快快打發他回主人那裡去時(54-56節)，他聲稱這樣的請求是以慈愛對待他的主人亞伯拉罕(49節)。所以當我們向神求重大的事時，我們是奉主耶穌的名祈求，催促神，祂答應我們的祈求就是向祂所喜悅的兒子(太三17)顯出祂的慈愛。

我們也應當奉我們主人的名祝福。當懇求得到答應時，這個敬虔的僕人表示了感謝，好像這恩惠是顯示給他主人的。的確，在他與彼土利以及拉班交談的過程中，他自己的身分好像已經消失在他主人亞伯拉罕裡面。他不談別的，只談一個主題，僅僅渴望為他主人達到目的。當使命一完成，只想趕緊回到他主人身邊。對那些稱耶穌為主的人，這實在是一個美麗的功課。

And he sold his Birthright. Gen. 25:33

Every one is born with a birthright, which the devil tries hard to make him barter away for a mess of pottage. In that birthright are included:-

INNOCENCE AND PURITY. The child of the vilest ancestry enters this world unsullied by the filthy touch of unclean habit. But how eager Satan is to induce us to part with this for his unsatisfying pleasure.

THE LOVE OF OUR KIND. Few are the children, of all the myriads of our race, that are not loved by some fond heart. In some cases the infant life is cradled in love. But Satan is glad when he can get the soul to break away from all earthly affection, which might possibly soften and refine it, and to renounce mother, sister, wife, child, for the drunkard's cup, the wanton's kiss.

THE REDEMPTION OF JESUS CHRIST. Every one is born into a redeemed world; the propitiation of the blessed Lord, the blood that flowed on Calvary, the concealment of the effects of Adam's sin, are for all. As all the world was affected by Adam's sin, so all are included in God's love in Jesus. But again Satan is eager to induce men to abjure and cast away these benefits; he blinds the eyes of those that believe not, so that they refuse to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

THE GRACE OF THE SPIRIT. Every one may build up a strong and beautiful character by yielding to the Holy Ghost's gracious promptings. That grace knocks, like sunshine, at the windows of every soul; but how often it is sold for a mess of pottage! The choice between these two is constantly being presented to us. God help us always to choose the divine, the spiritual, the eternal!

他出賣了他長子的名分。 創二十五33

每個人都有與生俱來的名分，這名分是惡者竭力要使人因著一碗紅豆湯就賣掉的。這名分包括：

天真和純潔。最卑賤家族的孩子出生時，並未沾染不潔淨的習慣。但是撒但為了自己永不滿足的願望，急切地引誘我們離開純潔。

人性的愛。在人類所有各種種族中，很少有孩子不被愛心呵護著。有些情形下幼小的生命在愛裡被撫養長大。親情可以使人心柔軟並純淨，但是撒但樂於引誘人脫離所有地上的親情，引人為著酒色拋棄母親、姊妹、妻子和孩子。

耶穌基督的救贖。現今每個人都生在一個蒙救贖的世界：有可稱頌的主作挽回祭，在各各他流下的寶血(路廿三33)，亞當犯罪的後果已被遮蓋，這些都是為全人類的。正如亞當的罪影響全人類(羅五12)，照樣全人類也都被算入神在耶穌裡的愛中。但是撒但再次急切引誘人們放棄並拋掉這些好處，他弄瞎那些不信之人的眼睛，使他們拒絕去「看神的羔羊，背負世人罪孽的。(約一29)」

聖靈的恩典。每個人都可以藉著順從聖靈慈愛的催促，建立一個堅強而美好的品格。恩典好像陽光，來敲叩每個靈魂的窗戶，但多少次，這樣的恩典竟為著一碗紅豆湯被出賣！我們經常面臨這兩者之間的選擇。願神幫助我們去選擇那屬神的、屬靈的、和永生的福分。

Because that Abraham obeyed My Voice and kept My Charge. Gen. 26:5

It is awful to realize how our sins may repeat themselves in our children. Here is Isaac following in the precise steps of Abraham, who had acted in a similar manner toward Sarah when entering Egypt. In each case there was a sad lapse of faith; but it was even worse for Isaac, with Abraham's example to warn him. But a man may pass blessings on to his children, as well as the sad entail of evil habits.

HE LEAVES THE BLESSING OF THE DIVINE COVENANT. God had entered into covenant with Abraham, and was prepared to fulfill its provisions to his son. "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee." So a godly ancestor may be able to secure for all his seed a share in the divine grace and favor. The spirit that is put on him does not depart from his seed, or his seed's seed forever.

THE BLESSING OF HIS PRAYER. - It is impossible to over estimate the effect of a good man's prayers; they are as streams or trees, which go on flowing and bearing fruit long after they were originated. The legacy of a good man's prayers is of priceless worth. He may have long since passed to his rest; but God remembers them, and answers them in blessings to the next generation. How often in this chapter we read that "God blessed Isaac."

THE BLESSING OF A NOBLE NAME. - We may all leave that, if we can transmit nothing else. To have had a father that knew God, walked with God, pleased God; who was on intimate terms with Him, and could speak to Him, as a man with his friend - illumined the ordinary nature and existence of Isaac with unearthly beauty. Let us live so that our children may be ranked as nobles, because they bear our name.

都因亞伯拉罕聽從我的話，遵守我的吩咐。 創二十六5

實際感受到我們的罪可能在我們的兒女身上重演，這是何等可怕的事。以撒步了他父親亞伯拉罕的後塵，就是亞伯拉罕下埃及時因妻子的緣故撒謊。每一次都有一段信心軟弱的可悲情形；以撒這一次更糟糕，因為他已經有亞伯拉罕的前車之鑑。一個人可能將祝福傳給他的兒女，也可能可悲地傳下邪惡的習慣。

他留下聖約的祝福。神與亞伯拉罕立約，樂意在他的兒子身上履行聖約的條款。「我是你的神，是你後裔的神。」所以一個敬虔的祖先，能夠使他所有的子孫蒙神的恩待。降在他身上的聖靈，不會離開他的後裔，甚至他的子子孫孫，直到永遠。

他禱告的祝福。我們不可能高估義人禱告的功效，這功效像溪流，又像樹一樣，一旦開始就不停地流淌，且不斷地結果子。一個義人禱告的果效是無價的，禱告的影響很長久，可以持續到他死後，神仍記念這些禱告，應允這些禱告，賜福給下一代。在這一章經文中我們多次讀到「神賜福給以撒」。

一個尊名的祝福。如果不能為後代留下別的，我們可以留下尊貴的名聲。有這樣一位父親，他認識神、與神同行、討神喜悅、與神親密、能像朋友一般與神說話，他以脫俗的榮美，啟發資質平凡的以撒。讓我們這樣生活，使我們的兒女因我們的名，可以列在尊貴人之中。

Esau cried with an exceeding great and bitter Cry. Gen. 27:34

On this incident the writer to the Hebrews founds the impressive lesson, that the choices of the past may cast a bitter and irrevocable shadow on all our future. When he afterwards desired to inherit blessing he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears (Heb 12:16, Heb 12:17, R. V.).

BEWARE OF THE CRAVINGS OF APPETITE. In an evil moment Esau yielded to these, and sold his birthright to secure their gratification; he found afterwards that the choice made in that hour was irrevocable. How needful that we watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation!

There are four facts which, when borne in mind, guard us against the sudden oversetting of passionate appetite.

WE WERE ONCE DEAD IN SINS. Surely we do not want to go back again to the charnel-house with its corruption.

WE DIED FOR SINS IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST OUR REPRESENTATIVE. In Him we have met the demands of God's holy law; but surely that must be an awful thing which cost our Saviour so dearly.

WE DIED TO SIN WITH THE LORD JESUS. We have passed with Him on to Resurrection ground; so that we belong to the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

WE ARE CALLED ON RECKON OURSELVES DEAD IN SIN. The nearer we live to God, the more sensitive we shall be to the most distant suggestion of evil, closing doors and windows against its entrance, reckoning ourselves "not at home" to it, and yielding our members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

以掃 ... 放聲痛哭。 創二十七34

希伯來書作者在這件事上，發現令人印象深刻的教訓，就是從前的選擇，對我們的將來，投下痛苦不可改變的陰影。後來以掃想要承受祝福，卻被棄絕，因為他沒有反悔的餘地。雖然他號哭切求，也無結果(來十二16-17)。

謹防貪吃。在不幸的時刻，以掃屈服於他的貪慾，為了滿足口腹之慾，他出賣了長子的名分。以後他才知道當時的選擇是無法更改的。我們多麼需要儆醒禱告，免得入了迷惑！

這四個「事實」存記在心，就能護衛我們對抗強烈慾望的突然傾下。

我們已經在罪裡死了。當然我們不需要再回到停屍骨之處歸於敗壞。

我們在代表我們的基督之身位裡，向著罪死了。在基督裡，我們已經滿足神聖潔律法的要求。神律法的要求確實很嚴厲，使得救主付上極大的代價。

我們已經與主耶穌一同向罪死了。我們與主一同進到復活的地位；因此我們是屬於新天新地，在那裡有義居在其中(彼後三13)。

我們蒙召向罪看自己是死的。我們向神活著，越親近祂，對罪從遠處來的誘惑就越加敏感。我們關閉門窗，不讓罪惡進入，當作我們不在家。並將肢體當作義的器具獻給神(羅六13)。

Behold a Ladder set up on the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven. Gen. 28:12

All men feel that earth and heaven touch at the horizons of the distant past and future; but we ought to feel that the present moment of time and this bit of the world's surface are linked with heaven. This is what the ladder meant for Jacob. The moorland waste, where he lay, and Laban's home, whither he journeyed, were as near God as his father's tent. Earth is linked with heaven:

BY GOD'S DAILY PROVIDENCE. His loving eye is ever upon us, his ears always open to our cry, and his angels go to and fro on our world performing ceaseless ministries.

BY OUR SAVIOUR'S MEDIATION. As He intimated to Nathanael, his own nature as uniting God with man, and especially his Ascension glory as the man Christ Jesus, is the one great connecting link. "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

BY DAILY FELLOWSHIP AND HOLY THOUGHT. We should practice the sense of God's presence, often stopping ourselves amid our ordinary avocations and interests to say, aloud when possible, "God is near, God is here." In all likelihood we are daily living amid the glories of the eternal world; but our eyes are blinded. Oh that by humility and purity we may become more sensitive, and awake to the things that are unseen and eternal! Lord, open our eyes, that we may see! (2 Kings 6:17).

BY HOLY YEARNING. When Jesus ascended, He unrolled a path behind Him, along which we shall one day travel to meet Him. Hope treads that glorious Ascension ladder; and as she does so, again we see the heaven opened, and our destiny unfolded at Christ's right hand.

夢見一個梯子立在地上，梯子的頭頂著天。 創二十八12

人們都認為地與天相接，是在遠古的地平線和將來的地平線。然而我們應該感到，此時此刻地上的這點與天是相連的。這就是梯子對雅各所表示的意義。他所躺臥的曠野、他所要去拉班的家，都與神相近，像在他父親以撒的帳棚裡一樣。地與天是連接起來的：

藉神天天的眷顧。神慈愛的眼目常在我們身上，祂的耳朵總是聽我們的呼求，祂的使者在我們的生活圈中來來去去不停地服事。

藉著救主作中保。正如祂向拿但業宣告的(約一47-51)，祂的本性就是神與人的聯合，尤其是基督耶穌以人的身分升天得榮耀，祂就成為一個偉大連接的環。「你們將要看見天開了，神的使者上去下來在人子身上。(約一51)」

藉每天與神相交和默想。我們要操練與神同在的感覺，在我們平常作業餘愛好和樂趣的事情時停下來，儘量大聲地說：「神是近的，祂就在這裡！」我們極有可能每天活在永世的榮耀中，然而我們的眼睛卻被蒙蔽了。但願藉著謙卑與純潔，我們能更敏感察覺到那些不可見、永生的事！主啊！求你開我們的眼睛，讓我們可以看見！（王下六17）。

藉著神聖的嚮往。當主升天的時候，祂展開一條跟隨祂的路，我們可以循著這路前行與祂相會。「盼望」踏上那榮耀上升的梯子；當「盼望」這樣做時，我們就再次看見天開了，我們的結局展現在基督的右邊(詩十六11)。

But a few days, for the Love he had. Gen. 29:20

That touch is enough! We can fill in all the rest. This old-world love was of the same quality as our own. Oh, blessed God! what a priceless inheritance this is! Time itself never tedious, but always too short; labor never hard; distance never long; sacrifice unheard of, the word almost in disuse - where Love is queen. This is how we would feel to our dear Lord: so that the missionary away from home and friends, as well as the invalid suffering for Jesus, might feel years of loneliness and pain but a few days, for love of the beloved Master. We may acquire such love thus:

MEDITATE MUCH ON THE LOVE OF JESUS. Sit with the Apostle beneath his cross, and say, each time with deeper appreciation: He loved me, He gave Himself for me. Do not think of your love to Him, but of his. It is well to take the Lord's Supper frequently, as affording opportunities for remembering his dying love.

BE ON THE ALERT TO DETECT HIS LOVE IN DAILY PROVIDENCE AND TRIFLES. It is amazing how much is ever being arranged by his tender thoughtfulness to alleviate and brighten our lot. If you cannot detect it, dare still to believe it.

ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BREATHE HIS LOVE INTO YOUR HEART. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit; and when the doors are open between Christ and the soul, the aroma of his love freely enters.

SHOW HIS LOVE TO EVERY ONE. Whether you like people or not, do to them as He would do; let his love flow through you to them; what we manifest to others for his sake, we shall come to feel toward Him, and them also. "This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

他因為深愛拉結，就看這七年如同幾天。 創二十九20

那輕輕一筆的描述已經夠了，其餘的我們全部都可意會。古時的愛情與我們現在的愛情具有相同的品質。哦，可稱頌的神啊！愛真是一分無價的產業！愛情稱后之處，時間永不冗長，反覺太短，辛勞不覺艱難，距離不嫌遙遠，未曾聽聞犧牲，言語幾乎無用！我們對親愛的主，該有如此的感受。這樣，那離開家人親友的宣教士，為主久病受苦的人，雖然長年疼痛孤單，因著愛親愛的主，就覺得不過是幾天而已。我們能取得這樣的愛乃在於：

多多默想耶穌的愛。你要與那使徒一起坐在祂的十字架下，每次懷著深深的感激說道：祂愛我，將祂自己給我。你不要想到自己對主的愛，只要想到主對你的愛。常常守主的晚餐，就有機會記念祂捨命的愛。

在日常神的看顧及瑣事中，留意發現祂的愛。令人驚奇的是，祂溫柔的關切，一直做了許多安排來減輕我們的痛苦，並照亮我們。如果你不能察覺，仍要勇敢地相信神的愛。

求聖靈將祂的愛吹進你的心。與主聯合的，便是與主成為一靈（林前六17），當人的心門向主敞開，主愛的香氣必不受拘束地進來。

將主的愛與人分享。無論你是否喜歡別人，要像主那樣對待他們。讓祂的愛透過你而流向他們。為主的緣故向人顯明神的愛，我們就會與人一同感受神的愛。「愛神的，也當愛弟兄，這是我們從神所受的命令。（約壹四21）」

The Lord has blessed me for thy sake. Gen. 30:27

Laban requested the longer stay of Jacob because he felt sure that the divine blessings had been brought by him into his home. It was a selfish, low, motive for desiring the postponement of his departure; and Laban was destined, alas! to be terribly undeceived. He would wake up one day, to find that during his sojourn with him, and under the cloak of religion, Jacob had been ruthlessly plundering his property. It was a shameful betrayal of trust on Jacob's part; and it conveys a searching warning to those who, because of their religious professions, are trusted by their relatives or others:

WITH THEIR PROPERTY. Always do the best possible for your employer or friend, who has entrusted his interests to you, acting toward him as the servant and steward of God. Bear in mind that God has bidden you undertake the office for Himself, and accepts your fidelity as rendered to Him: He will recompense.

WITH THEIR FRIENDSHIP. Be very careful here. God puts us into one another's lives, that we may be the medium through which his love and tenderness may enter them; but there is such danger of our monopolizing for ourselves the place He would fill. Sometimes we almost unconsciously deteriorate rather than elevate our friends by the intrusion of our own personality.

WITH THEIR CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING. Ministers of God's holy gospel must specially guard against the tendency to make name, fame, money, out of a position which they should occupy only as God's stewards. There is such subtleness in the temptation to attract men to ourselves, instead of attaching them to Christ.

耶和華賜福給我，是為你的緣故。 創三十27

拉班請求雅各多住些日子，他確信神的祝福是藉雅各帶進他的家。要雅各延期離開的動機是自私而低下的，唉，拉班注定要徹底醒悟。有一天他醒來，發現雅各在他家寄居的日子，在宗教的外衣下，已經無情地奪取了他的財產。在這一面，雅各實在不忠所託；這點對於那因宗教信仰，而受親友信任的人，傳達一個嚴厲的警告：

財產方面。你的雇主或親友將他的利益託付你，你要盡可能為他效力，好像是神的僕人管家一樣。你要記住神吩咐你為祂的緣故承受職分，把你的效忠當作是給主的，這樣祂必報答(西三23-24)。

友情方面。你要小心，神將我們擺進別人的生命裡，我們就成為神的慈愛憐憫進入他們生命的管道，在此有一個危機叫我們獨佔了神該有的地位。有時我們會無意中敗壞而非提升我們的朋友，因著我們個性的干擾。

在教導真理帶領人方面。傳神福音的人應特別謹慎，免得利用職分謀取名聲、財利，只要做神的管家。試探會狡猾地吸引人到我們這裡，而非到基督跟前。

Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. Gen. 31:24

This visitation of God made a deep impression on Laban. He refers to it afterwards as restraining him from injuring his runaway son-in-law. Jacob, too, was struck by it. It is very wonderful to find the Holy God casting the mantle of his protection around this crafty and deceitful soul. No doubt it was due to his covenant relationship with the family and race, of which Jacob was a most unworthy member (13,42). But if God thus interposed for Jacob, will He not much more interpose for those who desire to be his obedient children?

GOD WILL LAY AN ARREST ON YOUR PERSECUTORS. Israel was rebuked because the exiles in Babylon thought they would perish before a man that could die, and the son of man who was as grass, and forgot their Maker, the Lord of heaven and earth. All around you the fire may rage; but you shall walk amid it unscathed, if only you trust. No weapon formed against you shall prosper.

GOD WILL LAY AN ARREST ON TRIAL. His finger is always on our pulse; and the moment the pain becomes more than we can bear, He will stay it. His eye is ever upon his own.

GOD WILL LAY AN ARREST ON THE POWER OF THE EVIL ONE. We shall not be tempted beyond that we are able to bear. There is always a thus far and no farther. "The Lord maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters." The Only-begotten of the Father keeps the sheep whom his Father has entrusted to Him. Not one of them can be devoured by the lion of hell. If only we believed this, we should be calmer, happier, even though circumstanced as Jacob. No need to altercation with Laban, but to look beyond him to the "Fear of Isaac."

你要小心，不可與雅各說好說歹。 創三十一24

神的顯現給拉班留下深刻的印象。之後拉班提及這次神的顯現，禁止他傷害他那逃跑的女婿。這事也給雅各相當的震撼。聖潔的神以保護的斗篷披在這個詭詐欺騙的人身上，這件事十分令人驚嘆。無疑地，這是因神與他家族有立約的關係，雅各在這個家族中是最不配的人(13, 42節)。如果神這樣介入保護雅各，祂豈不更加介入保護祂那存心順服的兒女嗎？

神必阻止逼迫你的人。以色列人受責備，因為在巴比倫那些被擄的人，以為他們將毀滅在一個會死的人手中，一個如草一般之人的兒子[可能指巴比倫王]，他們忘記了那位造他們的，天地之主。你四圍雖有火焰肆虐，只要你信靠神，必安然經過，毫髮無傷。凡為攻擊你而造的器械，必無效用(賽五十四17)。

神必止住試煉。祂的手指按在我們的脈膊上。當我們忍受不住痛苦的時候，祂必止住它。祂的眼目看顧屬祂的人。

神必禁止兇惡的權勢。我們所受的試探，不會超過我們所能忍受的。只能到某一種限度，不能再多。「耶和華在滄海中開道，在大水中開路。(賽四十三16)」父神的獨生子牧養祂父所交託祂的羊。沒有人會被地獄的猛獅吞喫。縱然處在雅各那樣的環境中，我們只要這樣相信，必更加平靜與歡喜。不必與拉班爭論，只要越過他，仰望以撒所敬畏的神(42節)。

He touched the Hollow of his Thigh. Gen. 32:25

Our greatest victories are wrought out through pain, and purchased at the cost of the humbling of the flesh. Jacob learned that the secret of prevailing with God and man was not in the strength, but in the weakness and suffering of the flesh. It must ever be so. The victor Lamb bears still the scars of Calvary, and appears as one who had been slain.

Had Laban met Jacob that morning, he would have pointed to that limp as an indication of God's wrath and displeasure; but if he had looked into his face, he would have seen all its hardness and cunning gone, and would have been arrested by the unwonted tenderness in his voice.

THE SHRUNKEN SINEW COUNTERACTS PRIDE. So high a spiritual achievement as to prevail with God might have tempted Jacob to arrogance and self-esteem. But God anticipated the possible temptation by this physical infirmity, which was constantly present to Jacob's consciousness.

THE SHRUNKEN SINEW WAS THE SECRET OF VICTORY. Had it not been shrivelled by the angel's touch, Jacob would have continued to resist in the pride of his strength, and would never have clung convulsively to the angel, crying, "I will not let thee go." It was only in that act that he became Israel, the Prince.

THE SHRUNKEN SINEW MAKES US THINK LITTLE OF THIS WORLD AND MUCH OF THE NEXT. From this moment Jacob takes up more of the pilgrim attitude. He finds that for him, at least, the pace will have to be slower; but it is well, for he relaxes his hold on the seen to entwine more tenaciously about the unseen. "The days of the years of my pilgrimage"—such is his epitome of his life.

將他的大腿窩摸了一把。 創三十二25

我們的大勝利，是經過痛苦而作成的，並且是付上降卑肉體的代價才獲得的。雅各學會了，與神、與人較力都得勝的祕訣，不在於有力氣，而在於肉體的軟弱與受苦。必定永遠如此！得勝的羔羊仍然帶著各各他的傷痕，顯示祂曾被殺過(啟五6)。

如果那天早上拉班遇見雅各，他就會指著雅各的跛腳，說這是神的震怒與不悅的記號。但是如果拉班注意看雅各的臉，他會看見一切的冷酷和詭詐已經從他臉上消失。拉班會受到雅各語氣中不尋常的溫和所吸引。

萎縮的筋消解驕傲。與神較力得勝，是何等高的屬靈成就，這成就會使雅各受試探感到驕傲自負，但是神預先為可能的試探，預備這個身體的殘疾，這個殘疾將一直在雅各的意識裡。

萎縮的筋是勝利的祕訣。如果雅各大腿窩的筋，沒有經天使摸一把而萎縮，他一定會繼續驕傲用力抵抗，絕不會拚命抓住天使而喊叫：「我不容你走！(26節)」。只有這樣的行動，才使他成為以色列，就是王子。

萎縮的筋使我們少思念今生，而多思念來生。從此雅各開始有寄居的態度。他發現至少他的腳步該放慢，他可以對看得見的事鬆手，更緊緊擁抱那看不見的。「我寄居在世的日子」(四十七9) — 這是他一生的縮影。

I will lead on softly . . . Until I come unto my lord unto Seir. Gen. 33:14

This was rather unworthy of the man who, the night before, had seen the face of God, and learned to prevail. The man who had seen God, and prevailed, was doubtful of his newly-given blessing! He did not realize that it would carry him through the difficulty that threatened him. He had not as yet learned to apply it to every emergency. It is a solemn lesson to those who have passed through some rapturous experience.

AFTER BLESSING, OFTEN TRIAL. When the fair colors have been laid on, the vessel is plunged into the furnace, that they may be burned in.

THE TRIAL FREQUENTLY PRESENTS ITSELF IN THE HOME OR ORDINARY LIFE. Some are led into the wilderness to be tempted; but more often it is the contact with our Esau that furnishes us with the supreme test of the worth of what we have received.

FAILURE COMES FROM NOT RECKONING ON GOD. Jacob looked at Esau's four hundred armed men, and compared his own following with despair. So Peter looked at the winds and waves. At such times we must fail, if we rely on schemes or plans, instead of saying, God is.

*Oh for the peace that floweth as a river.
Making life's desert places bloom and smile;
Oh for the faith to grasp Heaven's bright "for ever"
And the shadow of earth's "little while."*

WE MUST ACT FAITH. If Jacob had refused to use this subterfuge, and had spoken simply and manfully, he would have found that Esau would have acquiesced and left him. The angels who had gone forward to deal with him (Genesis 32:2) had done their work effectively, and God had changed his purpose.

我要...慢慢的前行，直走到西珥我主那裡。 創三十三14

這個相當卑下的人，前晚還看見神的面，學到得勝的功課。這個見到神且得勝的人，竟然懷疑最近賜下的祝福！他沒有意識到，這個經歷將帶他渡過威脅他的難關。他還沒學會將這經歷應用在每一個緊急事件上。對於一個剛有過狂喜經歷的人，這是很嚴肅的功課。

祝福之後常有試煉。陶器塗上美麗的色彩，然後就放在火爐裡燒，使色彩固定。

試煉常出現在家裡或平常生活中。有些人被引到曠野受試探；但更多時候是在接觸我們的以掃時，就提供最好的試驗，看我們所領受的值多少。

失敗來自不倚靠神。雅各看到以掃四百個武裝男丁，比較自己所有的，就喪膽了。彼得看著風浪也是如此(太十四29-30)。在這種時候，如果我們只倚賴策畫，而不宣告神的存在，我們就必定失敗。

但願平安如河水湧流，
使生命的沙漠綻放快樂的花朵；
但願憑著信心抓住光明永遠的天家，
渡過在地短暫的陰霾。

總要憑著信心行事。如果雅各不用藉口，只簡單且有氣概地向以掃說話，他會發現以掃將默默離開他。天使早已前去對付以掃了，且有效地完成任務。神已經改變了以掃的意圖(卅二2)。

Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the Inhabitants of the Land. Gen. 34:30

The Bible does not hesitate to hold the mirror up to our fallen nature, or show us what we are. Here is Israel, the prince with God, who had power with man, in a very sorry plight. His children had involved him in it; but first, he had involved them.

DINAH. Little did she realize all the evil which that visit of hers would bring on her people and on those whose guest she was. What took her there? Had her upbringing been unnecessarily strict, and did she want a little more freedom? There is an inevitable rebound with young people to the other extreme, if needless severity has been brought to bear on them in their early days.

The probability, however, is that the laxity of her father's home, and the effect of her mother's gods, had made the line of separation a very faint one, and she felt no difficulty in overstepping it.

SIMEON AND LEVI. "Ye have made me to stink." On his dying bed Jacob remembered this treacherous cruelty and pronounced their scattering in Israel; though Levi undid the effect of that bitter curse by his obedience and devotion. In after days it was said, "My covenant was with him of life and peace," and though scattered, he was as salt. In Simeon's case the curse was not cancelled by any subsequent manifestation of obedience and devotion, and ran out its course. There is encouragement and warning here.

JACOB. The real mistake of it all was that Jacob bought that land, and settled too near the city (33:18). As a pilgrim he had no right to do this. If Christian parents will settle down in fellowship with the world, they have themselves to thank for all the misery which accrues to themselves and children, and the dishonor to God.

你們連累我，使我在這地的居民中有了臭名。 創三十四30

聖經毫不遲疑地舉起鏡子，照出我們墮落的人性，指出我們的實情。以色列——與神同作王的人，他理應有權柄管理人，卻落入悲慘的處境。這是他兒女拖累他，但首先是他把他兒女們捲進去的。

底拿。她沒有意識到，她的出訪，給她的家人和她所拜訪的主人，帶來這一切罪惡。是什麼使她出去到示劍人那裡呢？是家教太嚴，使她想有些自由？如果在孩子年幼時管教過嚴，在他們青少年時期會反彈而走極端。

然而另有一個可能的原因，在她的父親這邊太放鬆，在母親那邊又受偶像影響，促使她界線模糊，很容易就越界了。

西緬與利未。「你們使我有臭名。」雅各在臨終時，還記得他們詭詐的暴行，而宣告他們要分散在以色列中(四十九5-7)。利未因順從與熱心愛神，而免去可怕的咒詛。以後神與他們立生命與平安的約(瑪二4-5)。他們雖然分散，卻如鹽一般有影響力。西緬就沒有順從並愛神，於是咒詛就自然發展下去。這裡有鼓勵也有警戒。

雅各。真正的錯誤還是在雅各，他買了那塊土地，靠近示劍城居住下來(卅三18)。他是一個寄居者，不應該這樣做。如果基督徒父母與世俗為伍，使自己和兒女們落入一切的患難裡，並且羞辱神，他們只能怪罪自己。

Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there. Gen. 35: 1

God had set his hand to make Jacob a saint. He had given him a glimpse of his ideal at the Jabbok ford, but his nature was not then capable of taking in the divine conception; and, as we have seen, both in his subterfuge to Esau and his settling outside Shechem, he had fallen back into the schemer and money-maker. In this chapter God uses several methods of awakening and renewal.

THE DIVINE SUMMONS. "Arise, go up to Bethel." He had been in the lowlands too long; too long had he "lain among the pots." The voice of God spoke words of resurrection life into his grave, as afterwards into that of Lazarus.

THE POWER OF OLD ASSOCIATION, What memories clustered around that name and place of Bethel! It recalled his distress and fear; the angel-ladder, and the comforting assurance which had inspired him with new hope, directly he heard it, he seemed to have felt the incongruity of the life that was being lived in his camp, and he said to his people, "Put away the strange gods... Arise, let us go up to Bethel, and I will make there an altar unto God."

A FRESH REVELATION. God appeared to him again. For long there had been no vision of God; but now that the idols were put away, his eyes were opened to see Him who had been beside him amid all his backslidings.

DEATH. Deborah, the beloved Rachel, the old father---one after another were taken from him; and there came the far-away look into his eyes which showed that he had imbibed the pilgrim-spirit and had become Israel the Prince. So God stripped him that he might be better able to run the race set before him.

起來！上伯特利去，住在那裡。 創三十五1

神已經著手，要使雅各成為一個聖徒。祂在雅博渡口已經使雅各瞥見祂理想的典型，但是那時雅各的天然本性仍不能真正接受神的觀念。像我們所看見的，他對以掃不實的藉口(卅三13-14)，又在示劍城外定居(卅三18)，雅各倒退成為一個籌劃的人、想發財的人。在本章，神用幾種方法使他覺醒並更新。

神的呼喚。「起來！上伯特利去。」他已在(靈性的)低地太久了，「安臥在羊圈」太久了(詩六十八13)。神的聲音將復活生命的話語傳進他的墳墓中，就像以後這聲音進入拉撒路的墳墓中一樣(約十一43)。

聯想過去而產生力量。許多的回憶圍繞著「伯特利」這地名與地方！使雅各想起他的困苦與懼怕；想起天使和梯子，想起神安慰的保證，使他有了新的盼望。現在他直接聽見神的呼喚，而感到在他營中的生活，與這些回憶極不相稱，所以他告訴所有和他一起的人：「你們要除掉你們中間的外邦神。... 起來，我們上伯特利去，在那裡我要築一座壇給神。」

新的啟示。神再次向他顯現。雅各已經許久沒有神的異象了。現在偶像除去，他的眼睛得開啟，看見神一直在他身邊，即使在他退後冷淡的時候。

死亡。他母親的奶母底波拉、他心愛的拉結、以及老父親以撒——相繼從他身邊被帶走(8, 19, 29節)；使他眼中出現望著遠方的神情，這顯明雅各已經接受在地作客旅寄居的精神，而成為王子以色列。神除去他身上的纏累，使他更有力量奔那擺在他前頭的路程(來十二1)。

The Kings that reigned in Edom before there reigned any King over Israel. Gen. 36:31.

Apparently Esau had the best and happiest lot.

WHAT HE ESCAPED. For him there were no few and evil days of pilgrimage; nor the pressure of famine; nor the going down into Egypt; nor the forty years of wanderings in the desert; nor the vicissitudes of the Judges. All these he escaped--and must have congratulated himself merrily. But he had no vision of God; no communion with Jehovah; no contact with the messengers of heaven.

WHAT HE ENJOYED. A line of dukes; a royal dynasty, which was old when Israel's first king ascended the throne; a rich and fertile territory; peace and comfort. He reminds us of the Psalmist's picture of the man of this world, whose portion is in this life, and who is filled with hid treasure. But Esau never awoke satisfied with God's likeness; nor ever enjoyed the blessedness of the man who is "a prince with God."

HOW HE BORE HIMSELF. His heart was generous, full of good nature, jovial, and free-handed. When the land could not bear both Jacob and himself, he went off into another, and settled down in Mount Seir. It was no hardship with him to leave the land of promise. Most would, doubtless, have preferred his society to Jacob's; but God did not (Mal. 1 : 2, 3).

WHAT MADE THE LOT OF THESE BROTHERS SO DIFFERENT. The one lived for the world; the other was a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, a pilgrim to the City of God. The one was an ordinary man of the world; the other had been selected of God as the channel of blessing to mankind. The flower and fruit which are to be propagated require the special attention of the gardener's knife. What solemn words! (Amos 3: 2).

以色列人未有君王治理以先，在以東地作王的 ...。 創三十六31

以掃顯然擁有最好最愉快的天命。

他所逃脫的。他沒有經歷又短又苦的寄居生涯，沒有受到饑荒的壓迫，也沒有下埃及，更未曾在曠野飄流四十年，以及士師的更換。這一切他所逃脫的，以掃必為自己快樂地慶祝。然而以掃沒有神的異象，沒有與耶和華相交，也不曾與天上的使者來往。

他所享受的。王侯的族系，王朝。在以色列人第一位國王登基時，這些君王統治的事，在以東已經不是新鮮事了。土地肥沃富庶，和平安舒。他使我們想到詩篇作者所描述今世的人，他的福分在今生，並且他充滿隱藏的寶物。但以掃不會醒來以神的形像為滿足(詩十七14-15)，也不會享受與神同作王的福分。

他的為人處事。他心地慷慨，性情好且快樂，出手大方。那地既不能容下雅各與他，他就離開迦南到西珥定居。對他來說，離開應許之地沒有為難。無疑地，大多數人寧願喜歡以掃的社會，不要雅各的社會，但神不是這樣看法(瑪一2-3)。

是什麼使兄弟倆如此不同。一個為這世界而生活；另一個卻是天上耶路撒冷的子民，在地上作客旅，向神的城這個目標前進。一個是世上的尋常人；另一個卻被神揀選成為帶給人類祝福的管道。花、果要繁增，必須受花匠的剪刀特別修剪。多麼嚴肅的話語(摩三2)！

They took him and cast him into a pit. Gen.37: 24

It is impossible to read this inimitable story without detecting in the water-mark of the paper on which it is written the name JESUS. Indeed, we lose much of the beauty and force of these early Scriptures if we fail to observe the references to the life, character, and work of the blessed Redeemer. Notice some of these precious analogies:

Our Saviour's shepherd-heart (2).

The love of the Father before the worlds were made (3).

The dreams of empire, which are so certainly to be realized, when we shall see Him acknowledged as King of kings and Lord of lords (7).

Envied by his brethren, to whom he came, though they received Him not (11).

His alacrity to do his Father's will, and to finish his work, in which will we too have been sanctified (13).

Cast into the pit of the grave, as a seedcorn into the ground to die, that He might not abide alone, but bear much fruit (24).

The thirty pieces of silver for which He was betrayed (28).

The indifference of the Jewish people to their great Brother's fate (25).

Rejected of the Jew, and turning to the Gentile (28).

The bitter grief which his rejection has brought on the Jewish people (35),

It is as though the Holy Ghost, eager to glorify the Lord, could not wait for the slow unfolding of history, but must anticipate the story of that precious life and death which were to make the world new again.

把他丟在坑裡。 創三十七24

讀這個獨特的故事，我們不可能沒有發現在紙上的透明水紋寫著「耶穌」的名字。如果沒有注意其中提示到可稱頌救贖主的生平、品德與工作，我們的確就沒有看見這些早期經文中文字的優美和力道的強大。請注意一些這種珍貴相似之處：

- ✧ 我們救主的牧人心腸(2節)。
- ✧ 在創立世界以前就擁有，天父的慈愛(3節)。
- ✧ 有關國度的夢一定會實現，我們必看見祂被公認為萬王之王，萬主之主(7節)。
- ✧ 祂來到弟兄們中間，他們不但不接受祂，還嫉妒祂(11節)。
- ✧ 祂樂意遵行父神的旨意完成祂的工，因祂的工作我們也得以成聖(13節)。
- ✧ 被扔在墳墓的坑中，好像一粒種子落在地裡死了。不再只是一粒，而是結出許多的子粒來(24節)。
- ✧ 祂被賣，身價值三十塊錢(28節)。
- ✧ 對他們偉大之弟兄的遭遇，猶太人卻毫不關心(25節)。
- ✧ 既遭猶太人棄絕，祂就轉向外邦人(28節)。這樣棄絕祂，給猶太人帶來極大的悲哀(35節)。

這好像聖靈切望要榮耀基督，不能等待歷史慢慢披露，但必須預先看明那寶貴生命的生和死將使世界更新。

Judah. Gen. 38: 1.

This was the destined heir of the birthright of which Reuben had shown himself unworthy; and yet this chapter is a dark story of his unbridled passion. O my soul, remember that the possibilities of all these sins are latent in thee! Thou mightest have been as one of these men or women but for the grace of God.

There is nothing so absolutely priceless as the white flower of a pure and blameless life. The pure in heart are the children of the presence-chamber--entrusted with secrets hidden from the wise and prudent--vessels by which God does not hesitate to quench the thirst of men, because the water of the crystal river will not be diluted or contaminated by contact with their natures. Above all other gifts, covet that of a cleansed heart. You may be very conscious of temptation, and that naturally you are no better than others, and yet if you will constantly live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, you will be kept absolutely pure; and the sea of ink that is sweeping through the world will leave no stain on you.

THE BLOOD CLEANSETH: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1 : 7).

THE SAVIOUR KEEPETH: "The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Thess. 3 : 3).

THE SPIRIT FILLETH: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and that ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6: 19).

God can take in hand the Judahs amongst us, and so deal with them as to produce such a character as is forthshadowed in chap. 49: 8.

猶大。 創三十八1

猶大是命定要繼承長子名分的人，這名分流便顯明他自己不配(創卅五22, 四十九3-4)。然而本章是猶大放縱情慾的黑暗故事。我的心啊，務必記住這些罪的可能性，是潛伏在你裡面的！若不是神的恩典，你可能就是犯這些罪的男女裡的一個。

純潔無瑕的生命，如潔白的花那樣全然寶貴。清心的人是神謁見廳裡的人，他受託保管神的祕密，這些祕密向聰明通達的人是隱藏的(太十一25)。清心的人也是神可以沒有遲疑地使用的器皿，來解除人的乾渴，因為水晶河的水，不因他們的性情接觸，而稀釋或污染。你要渴慕清潔的心，勝過渴慕其他一切的恩賜。你也許對試探十分有感覺，而對於抗拒試探，你的天性並不比別人強；但是你若不斷活在聖靈裡，在聖靈裡行事，必蒙保守純潔，不被橫掃世界的黑墨水所玷污。

寶血潔淨：「祂兒子耶穌基督的血，洗淨我們一切的罪。」(約壹一7)。

救主保守：「主是信實的，要堅固你們，保護你們脫離那惡者。」(帖後三3)。

聖靈充滿：「豈不知你們的身子就是聖靈的殿麼？這聖靈是從神而來，住在你們裡頭的，並且你們不是自己的人。」(林前六19)。

神能把我們中間的眾猶大放在祂手中加以對付，而產生一種在四十九章8節所描述的品格。

How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God. Gen. 39: 9

What a contrast between this chapter and the former: that, like a Rembrandt background, throws up the bright colours of this. Where the older brother fell, the younger stood victoriously; and the light of God shone on the young heart, so that even the dungeon gloom could not extinguish it. Who does not know what it is to be misunderstood, misrepresented, accused falsely, and punished wrongfully ? Yet God reigns: and in his own time "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

GOD ALLOWS STRENGTH TO BE TESTED. We do not know what we are, or where we stand, till we are compelled to choose. Insensibly character is ever forming--unconsciously we are taking sides; but the testing-hour that compels us to declare ourselves causes the solution suddenly to crystallize, and we know ourselves in our choice. The man who has chosen the pure and good once, will choose them more easily next time; and at each choice will become stronger.

GOD ALLOWS VIRTUE TO BE MALIGNED. In all Egypt there was not a purer soul, and yet Joseph lay under a terrible imputation; but he committed his cause to God, sure that He would not leave him in Hades; and the time came when the King's word cleared him, and he stood forth vindicated. "Fret not thyself. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

GOD ALLOWS CONSCIENTIOUSNESS TO BE ILL-REPAID. Of what avail that he had so well cared for his master's goods? Ah, but that dungeon was the subterranean passage to a throne; and through those fetters iron entered into that young soul. We all need more iron in our blood!

我怎能作這大惡得罪神呢？ 創三十九9

本章的記載與前一章有多麼尖銳的對照，前一章好像林布蘭特[註]畫作的背景，襯出這一章的鮮明色彩。兄長失敗的地方，弟弟就在那裡勝利地站立。有神的光照耀在年輕約瑟的心上，即使在牢獄中的陰暗，仍不能熄滅這光輝。誰不知道什麼是被誤會、被誣告，被冤枉受罰？但是神作王掌權：在祂的時間裡，「祂要使你的公義如光發出，使你的公平明如正午。（詩卅七6）」

神允許毅力受試驗。我們不知道自己的身分，不知道自己的立場，直到我們被迫作出選擇。品格常常是在不知不覺中被塑造的，不知不覺中我們選擇了立場，但是試驗的時候，我們被迫表白時，使得解答突然變為清楚具體。在抉擇中，我們認識自己。凡是曾經擇善固執的，下一次作抉擇時就更容易，也更加堅定。

神允許美德被誹謗。在埃及全地沒有比約瑟更純正的人，但是他卻被誣告。然而約瑟將他的理交託給神，深信神不會把他撇在陰間，時候到了，王的命令使他無罪開釋。「不要心懷不平。你當默然倚靠耶和華，耐性等候祂。（詩卅七1, 7) 」

神允許憑良心行事的人受惡報。約瑟盡力來照管主人的貨財，得到什麼好處呢？啊！牢獄竟成為通向寶座的地道，鐵的鎖鍊竟使這個年輕人堅強如鐵。我們都需要更多鐵質的成分在我們的血輪裡。

[註] 林布蘭特 Rembrandt van Rijn, 1606-1669, 荷蘭畫家。他畫作的風格就是以暗的背景襯托亮的主題，對比鮮明。

Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day? Gen. 40: 7

We may learn from Joseph the true method of bearing grief. Joseph might have become moody and sullen, absorbed in his own misfortunes, and pessimistic about the course of human life. How far removed from all this was his behaviour!

HE FILLED HIS TIME WITH MINISTRY. The captain of the guard charged him with two state-prisoners, and he ministered unto them. A new interest came into his life, and he almost forgot the heavy pressure of his own troubles amid the interest of listening to the tales of those who were more unfortunate than himself. Do not nurse your grief in lonely brooding: arise and minister to some one; do something in the world; exert yourself to alleviate the sufferings of those close by your side, who have not so clear a conscience or so bright a trust in God.

HE WAS QUICK TO SYMPATHIZE AND COMFORT. Quick to notice traces of sorrow, because he had sorrowed; able to sympathize, because he had wept; adept at comforting, because he had been comforted of God. We gain comfort when we attempt to comfort. Out of such intercourse we get what Joseph got--the key which will unlock the heavy doors by which we have been shut in. Light a fire in another's heart, and your own heart will be warmed.

HE KEPT HIS FAITH IN GOD. Depression, captivity, loneliness, separation from those he loved, could not quench his faith in God. Still God was near and precious to him. The stifling darkness and oppression of the prison were irksome to the free child of the camp; but God was as near as in Jacob's tent. There is no evil to them that love God; and the believer loses sight of second causes in the contemplation of the unfolding of the mystery of his Father's will.

你們今日為甚麼面帶愁容呢？ 創四十7

從約瑟身上，我們可以學習忍受悲痛的真正方法。約瑟可以陷在不幸的遭遇裡悶悶不樂，對人生悲觀消極，但是他的行為表現遠遠的脫開這些情緒。

他以伺候人填滿他的時間。護衛長交給他兩個被囚的官員，他就去伺候他們。一個新的關心的對象來到他的生命中，他就去聆聽那些比他更不幸的人的故事，而幾乎忘記他自己苦難的重擔。不要孤孤單單的老想著你的悲傷，起來服事人，為世人做點事，盡力減輕你身邊人的痛苦。他們還沒有清潔的良心，也未明朗地信靠神。

他機敏地同情安慰人。由於自己經歷痛苦，他機敏地注意到別人痛苦的痕跡。他曾哭過，所以能夠同情人。他既得著神的安慰，就擅於安慰人。在嘗試安慰別人的時候，我們就得安慰。從這樣的與人交往，我們將得到約瑟所得到的那把鑰匙，這鑰匙要打開關閉我們的那些沉重的門。點燃別人心中的火，你自己的心必得著溫暖。

他保持對神的信心。沮喪、囚禁、寂寞、與所愛的人分離，這些不能熄滅約瑟對神的信心。對約瑟來說，神仍然是相近而且寶貴。監牢令人窒息的黑暗及壓迫，對於這個在帳棚長大自由的孩子是很煩的；但神是一樣的相近，好像在父親雅各的帳棚裡。對於愛神的人沒有兇惡；當信徒注視父神旨意的奧祕展開時，眾多次要的原因就看不見了。

It is not in me; God shall give. Gen. 41 : 16

It is beautiful to notice Joseph's reverent references to God in his first interview with Pharaoh. When the heart is full of God, the tongue will be almost obliged to speak of Him; and all such references will be easy and natural as flowers in May.

These words might have been uttered by the Lord Jesus. They are so perfectly in harmony with the tenor of his life. He loved to say that his words, and works, and plans, were not his own, but the Father's. Once, when a ruler called Him good, He reminded him that only One was good, and that all goodness was derived from God. Men knew little enough of Jesus, because He sought ever to be a reflecting mirror for his Father, and to glorify Him on the earth. But the Spirit reveals Him to those that love.

These words might have been the Apostle Paul's. He delighted to say that he worked, yet not he, but the grace of God in him; that he lived, yet not he, but Christ in him; that he knew and spake the mysteries of God, yet not he, but the Spirit of God.

Thus we should speak. Our light must so shine that men may turn from us to Him from whom we have derived it. Whenever the temptation arises to revert on ourselves, to attract men to ourselves, to lead them to think that we can meet their need, let us count ourselves dead to the suggestion, saying, "It is not in me; God shall give." (Acts 3: 12). What strength and comfort come into our hearts, in view of demands which are too great for our weak nature to meet. "It is not in me; God, shall give." If our hearts were inditing a good matter, they would boil over, and we should speak more frequently of the things that touch our King.

這不在乎我，神必將平安的話回答法老。 創四十一16

約瑟第一次見法老時，就恭敬地提及神，這是值得注意、美好的事。當人內心充滿神，談話之間一定會提到祂；這樣的提及神，就像五月花開那麼自然。

主耶穌也曾說過這樣的話。這些話與主生命的路線完全和諧。主喜歡說：祂的話、工作、計畫，都不是祂自己的，而是父神的。有一次一個官稱呼祂「良善的夫子」，祂就提醒那人，只有神一位是良善的(路十八18-19)，一切良善都是從神而來。人們對耶穌認識得很少，因為祂只求作一面鏡子反映父神，並且在地上榮耀祂。然而聖靈將基督啟示給那些愛神的人。

保羅也曾說過這樣的話。他喜歡說：他作工原不是自己，而是神的恩典在他裡面(林前十五10)；他活着，不是他自己，乃是基督在他裡面活着(加二20)；他認識並且講論神的奧秘，乃是出於神的靈，不是他自己(林前二7, 11)。

我們也該如此說話。我們的光也當這樣照在人前，叫人從我們轉向祂(太五16)，因我們是從祂得著光。每當試探興起，叫我們回到自己、吸引人歸向我們、引導人認為我們能應付他們的需要，這時讓我們向這提議看自己是死的(羅六11)，並且說：「不是我，是神。」(徒三12)。當我們看見需要太大，我們軟弱的本性無法應付，我們說：「不是我，是神。」這叫我們的心得著力量與安慰。如果我們的心要發起一件善行，我們心就沸騰而滿溢，這時我們更該常說那些論及我們王的事。

The man spake roughly to us. Gen. 42: 30

HE SPAKE ROUGHLY, BUT HE DID NOT FEEL SO. When he had spoken in these harsh tones, he restored their money; turned aside to weep (24); and did his best to alleviate the toils of travel. So sometimes God seems to deal harshly, and speak roughly; but there is no change in the tender love of his heart. It costs Him immeasurably more than it does us. Often when some unusual severity has been evinced, if we could but see his face, it would be full of pity, pain, and pleading on our behalf. He feels yearnings over us which He restrains, and dares not betray till the work of conviction is complete.

HE SPAKE ROUGHLY TO AWAKEN CONSCIENCE. It had slept for twenty years. They had almost forgotten that scene at the pit's mouth; but as he repeated their tones, and words, and treatment, it all came back again, and they cried, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." There must be repentance and confession before God can take us to his heart. We must confess the wrongs done to our Brother in heaven and our brothers on earth; and many of the roughnesses of God's Providence are intended to awaken us, and bring our sin to remembrance.

HE SPAKE ROUGHLY TO TEST THEM. How did they feel toward each other: was there rivalry or bitterness, or angry feeling? Beneath his biting words, Joseph would mark their behaviour! Would they disown each other, or cling to one another? There was an opportunity for their doing one or the other; and he was glad to notice how their love approved itself. So we are led over stony roads, that God may know what is in our hearts. He gives us opportunities of showing our real feeling towards our brothers, that He may test our love towards Himself.

那地的主對我們說嚴厲的話。 創四十二30

他說話嚴厲，但給人的感受卻不嚴厲。當約瑟說話的聲調嚴厲，卻將銀子還給他的弟兄們，轉身退去痛哭(24節)，他盡力減輕他們旅途的勞累。同樣的，有時神對我們似乎很苛刻，說話也嚴厲，但祂心中溫柔的愛並沒有改變。祂這樣做，付出的代價遠超過我們所領會的。常常當不尋常的嚴苛表明出來時，如果我們能看到祂的臉，就知道那是充滿同情、痛苦並且正為我們代求。祂壓抑對我們思念的表情，不敢露出來，直到定罪的工作完成。

他說話嚴厲為要喚醒良心。過了二十年之久。約瑟的哥哥們幾乎已經忘記坑口的場景。但是當約瑟用哥哥們那時所用的語氣和言語對待他們，他們就回想起來並呼喊：「我們在兄弟身上實在有罪。(21節)」。我們必須先在神面前悔改、認罪，才能被帶回到祂的懷抱。我們必須承認得罪天上的那位弟兄，也得罪地上的弟兄們。神主宰安排許多嚴厲的事，都是為要喚醒我們，使我們想起自己的罪來。

他說話嚴厲是要試驗他們。他們兄弟間彼此的感情如何？有否敵對、苦毒、惱怒呢？約瑟用尖銳的話語來給他弟兄們的行為評分！他們會彼此斷絕關係呢？或是彼此緊緊靠在一起呢？在這種為難的情況下，他們可能這樣做或那樣做；約瑟很高興看到他弟兄們的愛被驗證了。神帶我們走崎嶇的路，要看出我們內心的情況。祂給我們機會顯示我們對弟兄們真實的感情，藉此驗出我們對神的愛。

Every man's money was in the mouth of his sack. Gen. 43: 21

Joseph, who gave corn to save his own brethren and the Gentiles from starvation, is a type of Him who gives the bread of life to Jew and Greek--to all that hunger and come to Him for supplies. And in this return of the full money in the sack's mouth, we are reminded that salvation and satisfaction are all of grace. They are without money and without price. Whatever we yield to Him, He returns in full weight.

We bring Him works of merit as a price of our pardon; but they are not noticed.

We bring Him emotion, tears, anguish of soul; but He will have none of them.

We bring Him our faith as a price, instead of as a hand that accepts; and He refuses it.

How many are our mistakes and misunderstandings! Yet He does not for that reason withhold his blessed gift. We get the corn as an act of his free grace; and afterwards He explains why it was that our careful dues were not accepted.

There is bread enough in God to supply every mouth of desire and hunger in your soul. You may have it for the seeking. The law is--ask, and have. What if you have no money with which to purchase, no earnestness, no merit! Nevertheless the best wheat of heaven may be yours. Our Father's love is constantly devising means of expressing itself. It puts money into our sacks; it invites us to its home, and spreads banquets before us; it inclines stewards to meet us peacefully; it washes our feet; it takes a tender interest in those we love; it wishes us grace from God; it adjusts itself to our temperaments and puts us at our ease, so that gleams of light as to the love of Jesus strike into our hearts!

各人的銀子仍在各人的口袋裡。 創四十三21

約瑟給自己的弟兄和外邦人糧食，救他們脫離饑荒。他預表基督將生命的糧賜給猶太人與希利尼人，就是一切饑餓來到祂面前得供應的人。約瑟將各人的銀錢完全歸還，放在口袋裡，這事提醒我們救恩與罪債償還完全出於恩典。不用銀錢也不用價值(賽五十五1)。我們向祂支付甚麼，祂分量足數歸還。

我們以功德作為代價換取赦免，這些功德得不到祂的注意。

我們以眼淚痛苦博取同情，祂一概不要。

我們以信心作為代價，而不伸手接受，祂也拒絕。

我們有太多的錯誤與誤解；但祂不會因此扣留祂的恩典。我們得著糧食，是祂白白的恩惠。然後祂會解釋，為甚麼祂不接受我們細心付出的代價。

神有足夠的糧食供給我們一切的需要與饑餓。你尋求，就必得著。原則是：求，就必得著。如果你沒有銀錢來買，沒有熱誠，沒有功績，天上最好的糧食仍然可以是你的。我們天父的愛常用自己方法表現出來。父神的愛將銀錢放在我們的袋裡；帶我們回家給我們擺上宴席；吩咐僕人來迎接我們；為我們洗腳；也關照我們親愛的人；祝福我們。父神的愛照著我們情形，使我們得著安寧。耶穌的愛如光芒照亮我們的心！

And I said, Surely he is torn in pieces. Gen.44: 28

These are words caught from his Father's mouth by Judah; and here repeated, in his most pathetic intercession, with the hope of softening the Governor's heart, and moving him to spare Benjamin at least. They are very sad, and, without doubt, justified by the vision of that blood-stained coat. Yet there was another interpretation to the sad and dark suggestion which it made: Joseph was alive, and they were soon to know that it was he with whom they were dealing, and that he was conducting them through these strange experiences.

We are often tempted to judge hastily, and by appearances; by our own despondent, sorrowful hearts; or by the reports of others. We may say that certain things are against us, when, if we would only look beyond appearances and circumstances to God, we should find that He had been working, and was working, mightily on our behalf--that all was for our lasting good.

Do not say that you have lost your Joseph; he lives, and will yet be a comfort to you. He was taken from you for a little, to bring blessing to your whole family, but to be given back to you, more yours than ever.

Do not look on the sad, but on the bright side of God's Providence. All things are working for the best. "In all these things is the life of the spirit." Do not judge Him, or try to understand; be still and trust. You will some day be ashamed of your little faith.

*Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain,
God is his own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.*

我說他必是被撕碎了。 創四十四28

猶大在極其可憐的哀求中，覆述他父親雅各說過的話，希望這位埃及地的統治者心腸軟化，並且感動他，至少饒了便雅憫一命。無疑的，這些話語是非常悲傷，因看見那件血染的外衣作證明。然而對於這血染的彩衣所引出悲慘陰暗的提示，還有另一種詮釋：約瑟仍然活著，他們很快就知道他們正與約瑟交涉，而約瑟正引導他們走過這些奇特的經驗。

我們常會因看外表，或因自己心中的沮喪感傷，或因別人傳說，而匆忙下判斷。我們說某些事與我們作對，但只要我們越過表面、環境，而仰望神，我們就必發現神一直在作工，強有力地作工，為著我們永久的益處。

不要說你失去約瑟，他還活著，且必成為你的安慰。神暫時帶他離開你，為使你全家得福，還要帶他回到你這裡，更加屬於你。

不要盯著悲傷的這面，要看神旨意的光明面。萬事都互相効力，在這些事上有屬靈的生命，不要批判神，或試圖要理解祂，要安靜等候、堅心信靠。有一天你會因自己的小信而羞愧。

盲目不信必犯錯，
細查祂工也徒勞，
神自己會作解釋，
祂必使事情明朗。

God did send me before you. Gen. 45 : 5

There was great delicacy in Joseph's command, "Cause every man to go out from me." He did not want to expose his brethren; yet he wanted to say words which could not be understood by the curious courtiers. Then he made himself known, and said, "Be not grieved, nor angry, for God did send me before you." This was not only a kind way of alleviating their remorse and sorrow, but was the standpoint from which Joseph was wont to review his life-course. It was his habit to trace the working-out of God's plan, and the interposition of his Providence amid and through the malevolence and treachery of men (50: 20).

This was also David's habit, who, in the cursing of Shimei and the revolt of Absalom, saw the evolution of God's permissive purposes.

Thus also Jesus spoke, when anticipating the coming of Judas to betray Him. "The Son of Man goeth, as it was written of Him." "The cup that my Father giveth Me to drink."

It is one of the inexplicable mysteries of Providence that bad men subserve God's purposes and unwittingly execute his plans. It is not for us to explain it, but to consider the perplexities and disaster which we suffer at the hands of evil men as being permitted by God for the furtherance of some divine and hidden purpose. Paul's prayer that he might preach the Gospel at Rome was fulfilled through the hatred of the Jews; and he went to Rome at the Emperor's expense. We may comfort ourselves whenever the storm is high, that God is at the helm, and is making the wrath of man praise Him, whilst the remainder of it shall be restrained. Yes, Joseph, God is sending you through that pit and prison: but there is a way out into sunlight.

神差我在你們以先來。 創四十五5

「人都要離開我出去！」約瑟這個吩咐裡有一個非常微妙的地方。他不要暴露他的哥哥們，況且他要說的話，好奇的朝臣也不明白。於是他與弟兄相認說：「不要自憂自恨，這是神差我在你們以先來。」他不但這樣仁慈地減輕哥哥們的悔恨和悲痛，而且也習慣用這種角度來回顧他的人生過程。約瑟習慣追尋神的計畫是如何達成，以及在人的惡毒、背叛之中，神眷顧的手如何介入。

這也是大衛的習慣，當押沙龍背叛，他遭示每咒罵時，大衛看見神允許的旨意是怎樣發展(撒下十六5-14)。

耶穌也是這樣，當祂預料猶大來要出賣祂，就說：「人子必須去世，正如經上所記。(太廿六24)」 「我父所賜給我的那杯，我豈可不喝呢？(約十八11)」

在神的旨意裡有一個難以理解的奧秘，就是惡人促成神的旨意，且是毫不知情的執行了神的旨意。我們不必去解釋，但我們要認識，我們在惡人手下所忍受的困惑災難是神許可的，為要促成神聖隱藏的目的。保羅祈求要去羅馬傳福音，結果是藉著猶太人的憎恨實現的，而且他到羅馬是皇帝付錢用軍隊護送去的(徒廿三11-24)。我們可以安慰自己，無論何時風浪高，神依然掌舵，祂將人的憤怒變成讚美，而且阻止人的餘怒。是的，約瑟，神差遣你經過那個坑和監牢，但從那裡卻有一條通到光明的道路。

Fear not to go down into Egypt. Gen. 46: 3

Probably the old man, remembering the experiences of Abraham, was very fearful to adventure himself into Egypt. Besides, was it not as though, in going thither, he renounced the Land of Promise? Therefore this special bidding and assurance were the more necessary.

WHEN OUR HEART MISGIVES US, LET US LOOK OUT FOR ONE OF GOD'S FEAR-NOTS. His eye is ever upon the righteous, and his ear open to their cry. One upward glance or tremulous prayer will make Him ride on a cherub to our side, and whisper, "Be not afraid; fear not, I am with thee."

GOD'S PROMISES ARE FULFILLED IN MOST UNEXPECTED WAYS. He had always foretold that the seed of Abraham should outnumber stars and sands; but who would have supposed that the promise would be realized amid the pressure and persecution of Egypt? Yet so it happened. "I will there make of thee a great nation." We must not judge after the sight of our eyes, nor act on what is known as our common sense; faith is led by very uncommon paths. Trust and obey!

GOD'S PRESENCE IN EGYPT ACTED AS AN ANTIDOTE TO ITS EVIL, AND DELIVERED FROM ITS TYRANT'S GRASP. Ah, my soul, thou mightest descend without fear into hell itself if God said, "I will go down with thee, and will surely bring thee up again." The divine Presence is strength to the fearful--security and consolation in life, peace in death. It was probably thus that the Father spake to the Son by the lips of the Angel in Gethsemane: "Fear not to go down into the grave: I will surely bring thee up again." Thus He speaks to us. He is with us, and will deliver.

你下埃及去，不要害怕。 創四十六3

這位老人可能記得他祖父亞伯拉罕的經驗，害怕自己冒險下埃及去。況且他去了，豈不是好像放棄這應許之地嗎？所以更加需要神特別的吩咐及保證。

當我們心裡不安時，就要等神說一句「不要害怕」之類的話。神的眼目看顧義人，祂的耳朵聽他們的呼求(詩卅四15)。仰望與戰兢的禱告，必使祂駕著基路伯來到我們身邊，並且低聲說：「不要懼怕；不要害怕，因為我與你同在。(耶一8, 賽四十一10)」

神的應許，以最意想不到的方式實現。神曾預言亞伯拉罕的後裔要比天上的星、海邊的沙還多。誰曾想到神的應許是在埃及的壓迫苦害中實現的呢？但事就那樣成了。「我要使你在那裡成為大族。」我們不可憑眼見，或以我們的常識判斷，信心的路是很不尋常的。你要信靠並且順從！

在埃及，神的同在如同一帖對付邪惡的解藥，拯救他們脫離暴君的控制。我的心啊，你可以不用害怕下到陰間，如果神說：「我要與你一同下去，並且必定再帶你上來。」神的同在，是「害怕之人」的力量——活著時的保障和安慰，死亡時的平安。在客西馬尼時，可能天父也是如此藉著天使的口對祂的兒子說：「不要害怕下到墳墓裡，我必定再帶你上來。」祂也這樣對我們說。祂與我們同在，必定拯救我們。

Thou hast saved our lives: . . . We will be Pharaoh's servants. Gen. 47: 25

Nothing less would have extorted such an acknowledgment from those proud Egyptians. They were willing to serve their saviour. No doubt, had there been no provision made by Joseph, the streets would have been filled by emaciated skeletons picking their way feebly amid the heaps of the dying and the dead. Gratitude brought them into the dust before him who held the keys of the granaries.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST IS A MATTER OF SUPREME IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS AND THE WORLD. He is not ambitious of power for its own sake; but that He may be able to exercise it more fully for our benefit, and that He may finally render up the kingdom to God, even his Father, that God may be all in all. He will never, therefore, be perfectly satisfied till He has triumphantly entered all closed gates, as King.

HIS KINGDOM IS GIVEN HIM BY THE GLAD CHOICE OF THOSE WHOM HE HAD BLESSED AND SAVED. The song of heaven reflects this thought: "Thou art worthy,, for thou wast slain." His empire depends on the sacrifice by which He has saved a multitude whom no man can number. Meditate much on the love of Calvary, and you too will feel that his empire should begin within your heart, and hasten to subdue the kingdoms of the world.

WHEN HE BECOMES KING, HE STILL FURTHER BLESSES US. The first hour of Joseph's supreme power was the beginning of Egypt's brightest days. The Egyptians could not do so well for themselves as he for them. We shall never know the real blessedness of living, its peace and joy and strength, till we have utterly surrendered to Christ's supremacy. To serve such a Master utterly is to drink of the river of perfect blessedness.

你救了我們的性命。．．． 我們就作法老的僕人。 創四十七25

正是這飢荒，迫使驕傲的埃及人如此招認，他們願意為救命恩人効勞。如果約瑟沒有這樣供應糧食，街上必定充滿骨瘦如柴的人，小心的在一堆堆垂死的人，及已死的人中間蹣跚行走。對這位拿著糧倉鑰匙的人，埃及人感激得五體投地。

基督的國度對每個人及全世界，都是極重要的事。祂的雄心不是為權力本身，而是為著我們的益處而運用權柄，並且為著最後祂能將國交還給父神，使父神可以在萬有中充滿萬有(林前十五24, 弗一23)。因此，除非祂凱旋地進入一切關閉的門作王掌權，祂必不全然滿足。

所有蒙福得救的人，甘心將王權交給祂。天上的頌讚反映這個思想：「你是配得．．．，因為你曾被殺。」祂犧牲自己的生命，拯救無數的人而建立國度。你要多默想各各他的愛，你會感到祂的國是從你心中開始，很快就要征服世上的列國。

祂作王之後還要更進一步賜福給我們。約瑟至高的權力，開啟埃及最輝煌的日子，埃及人自己不能達到像約瑟為他們達到的，這麼好的光景。除非我們完全降服在基督至高的權柄之下，我們絕不會認識生活中真正的福分，就是平安、喜樂與力量。服事這一位主人，全然就是汲飲美福的河水。

Behold, thy son Joseph cometh. Gen. 48 : 2

How needful Joseph was to Jacob! The aged patriarch could not die without seeing him. His presence lit the dark valley. His hand closed the tired eyes of the aged pilgrim. And Joseph was as quick to come at the first intimation of his father's desire to see him. There was a perfect sympathy and reciprocity between them, just as there may be between Christ and those who owe all to Him.

JESUS IS EVER LEADING US ON TO NEW AND DEEPER EXPERIENCES. In no true life is stagnation admissible. So the nest is constantly being stirred up, and the trumpets sounded for the striking of our tents. But there is a divine motive in it all. Jesus cannot rest satisfied with less than the best for those He loves, as Joseph could not permit Jacob to remain in Canaan whilst Goshen with its plenty awaited him.

IN ALL THE NEW EXPERIENCES JESUS MEETS US. When his father entered Egypt, Joseph was waiting for him. When he was summoned to stand before Pharaoh, Joseph brought him. When he lay a-dying, Joseph was at his side to receive his last commissions. So, trembling soul, if Jesus presses you into the unknown, He does not leave you there, but keeps coming again, meeting you at every point of anxiety and distress. Yea, He does what Joseph could not do. He stands, not on this side only, but on the other side, of death. Here to calm with his benediction; there to receive into his glory.

JESUS IS CAREFUL FOR BODY AS WELL AS SOUL. The dying man was anxious about the disposal of his body, and Joseph readily undertook to see it buried in Machpelah's cave. So Jesus cares for us. He is the Saviour of the body in this life and in the resurrection.

請看，你兒子約瑟到你這裡來了。 創四十八2

雅各多麼需要約瑟！這位年老的族長不能沒有看見約瑟就死去。約瑟的出現，照亮那死蔭的幽谷。他的手使這位年老的客旅疲倦的眼睛合上。所以約瑟一得知父親要見他的訊息，就立即前來。他們之間完全的和諧與彼此的關係，也可說明基督與對祂感恩之人的關係。

耶穌一直引領我們進入新的、更深的經歷。真實的生命不能容許停滯。所以巢窩必須常常攪動(申卅二11)；號角一響，就要拆卸我們的帳棚。但是在這一切，有神的目的。耶穌若沒有看見祂所愛的人得著最好的福分，祂就不能滿意；正如約瑟不能讓雅各停留在迦南，因為歌珊地有豐富的糧食正等待著他。

耶穌在我們新的經歷中與我們相會。在他父親來到埃及時，約瑟等著他。法老召見雅各時，約瑟帶著他。雅各臨終時，約瑟在他身邊接受他最後的囑咐。所以，驚恐的人啊，如果耶穌迫使你進入未知的領域裡，祂不會留下你不顧，祂會再來到，在焦慮與困苦時刻，與你相會。是的，祂做約瑟不能做的事，祂不只站在死亡的這一邊，也站在死亡的另一邊。在今生祂以祝福使你心安寧，死後把你接進祂的榮耀裡。

耶穌看顧我們身體與靈魂。臨終的人掛心他身體的處置。約瑟負責將他父親的身體葬在麥比拉洞(廿三19)。同樣地，主也看顧我們。在今生和在復活裡，祂都是我們身體的救主。

Until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the obedience of the peoples be. Gen. 49:10 (R.V.)

Old experience is said to attain to something of prophetic strain; but there is more than old experience here. From these aged lips the Holy Ghost is speaking.

THE MISSION AND WORK OF JESUS ARE DESIGNATED. He is Shiloh--the Maker, Giver, and Bringer of Peace. The troubled conscience, smitten with conviction, finds peace when He reveals his all-sufficient sacrifice and atonement. The discordant elements within us settle into a great calm when He enters to reign, bringing every thought into captivity to his rule. Nor is his work for individuals only; it is for man, for the world, the universe. Peace was made at his cross; it is proclaimed by his Spirit; and it will be consummated when God is All in all.

THE TIME OF HIS ADVENT PREDICTED. Not till the Romans came and annexed Palestine as one of the provinces of the empire, did the semblance of the Hebrew monarchy expire. And it was then that the Shiloh came. Surely these words must often have been quoted by the pious Jews, with whom Simeon and Anna consorted, as pointing to the near advent of the Messiah. Let us be wise to discern the symptoms of his second advent.

THE INEVITABLENESS OF HIS DOMINION. Ah, Saviour, it is predicted that all peoples shall obey Thee; and we know well that it is only through obedience that men can enter into thy peace. Teach us to obey, to do all thy commands, to bear all thy burdens, to wait before Thee, that thus we may know the peace that passeth all understanding.

Ponder this well, O my soul; the Peacegiver must be obeyed. Only so can He give thee peace that floweth as a river.

直等細羅來到，萬民都必歸順。 創四十九10

有人說，從前的閱歷會使人得到幾分先知的特點，然而這裡不只是從前的閱歷，是聖靈透過年老的雅各說話。

主耶穌的使命和工作被指定。祂是細羅 — 和平的締造者，祂賜下和平，且帶來和平。當祂啟示全備的犧牲及贖罪時，因罪受到良心譴責，而心裡不安的人找到平安。當祂進來作王掌權，使所有的思想服在祂的管理之下時，我們裡頭不協調的天性就大大平靜下來。祂的工作不只是為個人，也為眾人，為全世界以及整個宇宙。和平是在祂十字架上作成的，由祂的靈來宣告，當神充滿萬有時，和平就達到完全。

預言主降世的時候。直到羅馬人來佔領巴勒斯坦，將其編為帝國的一省，希伯來王朝的樣子才完全結束。那時細羅才來到。指著當時即將來臨之彌賽亞的這話，當然會被敬虔的猶太人所引用，西面與亞拿也與他們一致引用(路25-38)。但願我們作聰明人來分辨基督第二次降臨的徵兆。

基督必定統治全地。救主啊，曾有預言說萬民都必歸順你，我們清楚知道，只有藉著順從，人才能進入你的平安。求你教導我們順從，遵行你的命令，背負你的一切擔子，在你面前等候，那麼我們就可認識那意外的平安。

我的心啊，要好好仔細思想，這位賜平安的主是你必須順從的。惟有祂能賜下平安，如江河湧流。

God meant it for good. Gen. 50:20 (R.V.)

God's deeper meanings! We are apt to see a malicious meaning; are we equally apt to detect the divine and benevolent one? Our enemies are many, and they hate us with perfect hatred; they are ever laying their plots, and working their unholy purposes. But there is a greater and wiser than they, who, through all these plottings, is prosecuting his divine purpose. There is another and deeper meaning than appears to the short sight of sense.

LET US BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A DIVINE AND DEEPER MEANING IN THE ADVERSITIES OF OUR LIVES. Joseph might be forgiven for not doing so; but with his history and that of many others before us, we have no excuse for despair in the face of crushing sorrow. Whether it comes from man or devil, all creatures are under the divine control, holding to our lips cups which the Father's hand has mixed. He has no complicity with their evil, but they unconsciously perform his will. Even if you cannot see the divine meaning, dare to believe that it is there.

AWAIT THE DISCLOSURES OF TIME. Even here we sometimes reach an eminence from which we detect the meaning of the path by which we have been conducted. It may have been rough and circuitous, but there was a reason in it all. Often God rewards patient trust by allowing us to see and know.

AND FOR THE FULL REVELATION OF ETERNITY. One day God will call us to his side in the clear light of eternity, and will explain his meanings in life's most sorrowful experiences; and we shall learn that we suffered, not for ourselves only, but for others, and, as part of his great remedial scheme, "to save much people alive."

神的意思原是好的。 創五十20

神更深的心意！我們容易看到壞的用意；我們是否同樣很容易就覺察神良善的用意呢？我們的仇敵很多，他們也十足地恨我們。他們設下詭計，要實現邪惡的目的。但是有一位比他們更大更有智慧，藉著一切這樣的計謀，祂執行神聖的目的。另有一個比短淺眼光所看見的更深的意義。

讓我們相信在人生的逆境中，有神更深的心意。約瑟如果沒有這樣相信，是可以原諒的，但我們既有約瑟一生，和其他在我們以前的古聖作借鏡，我們就沒有藉口在壓碎人的煩惱面前失去盼望。不論逆境是從人或從惡者來，所有的受造之物都在神的掌管之下，他們拿著父神所調的苦杯叫我們喝。父神並未與惡者串通共謀，只是他們毫不知情地執行了神的旨意。即使你不能看到神的旨意，仍要勇敢相信，神的旨意就在那裡。

等時間來顯明。有時我們到達一個高地，發現我們被引導走這條路的意義。崎嶇迂迴確實有它的道理在。神常獎賞忍耐的信心，使我們看見並明白。

在永世完全揭曉。有一天神必召我們到祂身旁，在永恒清晰的光中，祂必解釋在我們一生最困苦的經歷中祂的用意。於是我們明白，受苦不只為自己，也為別人，作為祂補救計畫的一部分，「要保全許多人的性命。(20節)」